



The "Shap Gathering" held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015 (photo courtesy of Patrick Neaves)

### Chairman's Chat.

Spring is (nearly) upon us and the latest Bulletin is here to lure you into a fresh season of Local History. The inter-group get-together-event described elsewhere by Liz Kerrey, hosted by the Shap society, on 7 March gave us a great start with a good representation from neighbouring member societies, lots of evidence of work undertaken and work in progress, publications, displays – and loads of enthusiasm. It was a great success and something societies in another part of Cumbria might well like to think about. Follow in the pioneers' footsteps, or in a spirit of friendly rivalry try to go one better! Oh yes, and the cake was superb, and there was lots of it!

Another great pleasure is to tell you that my predecessor as CLHF chairman, Richard Brockington, has been chosen by the British Association for Local History to be the recipient of a Personal Achievement Award. Many of you will be familiar with Richard's enthusiasm for, and involvement in, many aspects of local history including a great deal of work to do with the VCH project. The award recognises Richard's "extensive and long-standing voluntary work in local history". CLHF's founder Jill Wishart, and former CLHF secretary, treasurer, editor etc. Derek Denman have both received such awards for their personal contributions to Cumbria's local history – perhaps a tradition has been established. We offer Richard hearty congratulations on such well-deserved recognition.

Jenni Lister

## Contents

Chairman’s Chat – Jenni Lister	Cover
Editor’s Thoughts	2
CLHF Members Area	3
CLHF Theme 1 - The Shap Gathering	3
CLHF Theme 2 - World War I	4
Reports from Groups	7
Membership News	8
Members Publications	8
Can You Help?	10
CWAAS Research Grants	10
Regional Heritage Centre –Lancaster University	11
Cumbria County History Trust CCHT	11
Exhibitions & Events	11
Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group	12
Events Diary	13
BALH Personal Achievement Award – Richard Brockington	17
CLHF Committee Meeting Summary	19
Editors Final Thoughts	19
Contacts	20

### Editor’s Thoughts.

Thank you for the kind comments made on my first attempt to produce the CLHF Bulletin and for your responses to my requests for contributions. I hope they did not prove too onerous. With this Bulletin I will continue the theme in Bulletin 66 which of course supports one of the aims of CLHF which is to:

*“provide a means of liaison between organisations interested in Cumbrian local history and a forum for exchange of ideas and information” .*

I will also publish a selection of your responses and report the **“Shap Gathering”** which provided an excellent opportunity to meet, compare notes and eat cake. I have also included a few more items which I hope are of interest and I would like ideas for Bulletin content from members and groups for inclusion in subsequent publications.

If you have not already responded to my request for a short piece on what makes you or your Society tick such as particular interests, how and where you meet, groups you run or new ideas you have tried please get in touch. Your text can be in an email or an attachment as I am getting quite proficient in cutting and pasting!

Best wishes, Nigel Mills, Editor.

## CLHF Members Area.

The membership of CLHF includes some 70 plus groups and individual members all of whom have an interest in the local history of our county. As the reason for this Bulletin is to keep you all in touch with each other I hope you will circulate it and give your members the website link [www.clhf.org.uk](http://www.clhf.org.uk). I also hope group members and individuals feel they can



contribute thoughts on one or both of the following two themes adopted for 2015. Comments and responses to the Editor please.

### Theme 1:- Liaison between Members.

At our AGM the suggestion was floated that area gatherings of CLHF Members and Groups might be an interesting way of helping individuals and societies develop their local history interests. The CLHF Committee fully backed this idea and first off the blocks were Shap Local History Society.

#### The Shap Gathering

The idea for our day came from the CLHF conference last November. Some societies had brought work to display, which made me realise how rarely we

had the chance to see what other societies were doing. I was inspired by seeing such a valuable resource and I felt it should be more widely appreciated.

The initial idea was to invite our nearest societies, and they were contacted individually to sound out what kind of event they would like. The unanimous response was that people wanted the chance to talk to each other at an informal gathering with no set talks – so we decided on a Tea & Cake event!

A date was set quickly, before people could get too drawn into other things; we agreed a Saturday afternoon some four months in the future to give us the best chance of avoiding a collision – but beware, I didn't check the date of Lancaster Uni's Archaeology Forum which eventually lured some people away! We sent out fliers, and emailed from time to time to keep the date in people's minds and agree requirements as to tables etc. I did forget to ask about the need for power points, I'll learn for another time!

Invites snowballed as we thought of more and more groups, so numbers were impossible to estimate & catering arrangements needed to be simple.



Some brought work to display, some came just to look and make new acquaintances - many of the people present were unknown to each other,

which made for an especially interesting & lively meet!



Photos were taken and our Heritage Centre opened for viewing. Emails received after the event were appreciative, so I'm hoping that other events will follow. It would make sense for societies within reasonable travelling distance of each other to combine resources, possibly for research, possibly to occasionally book a more specialist (or more expensive!) speaker that would be beyond the means of one society alone. It would be so good to break new ground, and make new contacts across those parish boundaries!

Liz Kerrey

On behalf of the CLHF Committee, I would like to thank the Shap LHS and the groups represented for an interesting and varied display of local history material. I was especially impressed by the "buzz" of conversation in the hall which I think confirmed the success of the event. The groups represented included, *in no particular order*, Upper Eden, Lowther and Askham, Orton and Tebay, Appleby, Ravenstonedale, Kendal, Friends of Penrith Museum, Lazonby, Penrith Remembers, Kendal Archives and of course Shap. Editor.

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## Theme 2:- Exchange of ideas.

As I mentioned in Bulletin 66 the anniversary of the First World War, otherwise known as The Great War, is a subject being addressed by members in a variety of ways. For example:

### Orton & Tebay LHS.

Because 2014 being 100 years since the start of World War 1 it was decided in 2013 to try and research the war memorials in Orton and Tebay with the idea of not only using it as a presentation for our November meeting but also to leave this information in the churches for others to use.

Some years previous we had looked on *The Commonwealth War Graves Commission* website for details such as regiment, regimental numbers and place of death and placed this information in our churches but now we needed to look further into the details of these men. I started by going to Kendal Archives to get copies of the Rolls of Honour for both villages as I felt that all men should be remembered and followed this by using *Ancestry* to try and trace the war memorial soldiers and their families on the 1911 census. By putting the details obtained onto our web site I had some of the relatives of these men contact me giving more information and photographs. It was always good to be able to put a face to a name. We even had personal contact from one lady who was on holiday from Wales and brought more personal information about her relative including letters and photographs.

When the Cumbria newspaper database of WW1 soldiers was formed I spent several hours at Penrith library using their microfiche to read reports of

soldier's deaths. Still there were a few blanks (and remain so) but in most cases we were able to find out where the men lived and worked before joining up.



There were stories of heroism and some just very sad like the young man who died 3 months after he married and his widow never remarried. The 3 young children whose father was shot while on sentry duty and their mother dying 2 years later. The soldier who was awarded the DCM one day and died the next before it could be given to him and another who lost his life recovering bodies from the field of action. The stories of all of the men on our two war memorials were put onto a DVD for our November meeting and hard copies of the information with other war

memorabilia were in Tebay Methodist Church for 2 days as an open exhibition.

The anniversary may have passed but we will go on looking for and collecting information on our war memorial men of World War I and plan to do the same for World War II

Heather Ballantyne

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### **Lowther and Askham History and Archaeology Society. W.W.I.**

We had a talk in April 2014 from Stuart Eastwood on the XI Battalion of the Border Regiment (Lonsdale Pals). Another is programmed for June 2015 by Bill Myers on Cumbria in WWI. In November 2014 we held a



commemoration in Askham Village Hall just before Armistice Day: we had arranged for the Askham Roll of Honour to be restored and this was the centrepiece; members of the society and others contributed various memorabilia and these were on display; the refreshments had a WWI flavour; the C&W Herald sent a photographer and they published his pictures and the piece we'd written the following Saturday. The main research done for the occasion was on the men named on the Roll of Honour: files containing the information were displayed and attracted a lot of interest. Muriel

Austwick, who had carried out the research, is now working in the same way on the Lowther Roll of Honour. We have been involved in discussions with the Lowther Castle and Gardens Trust about the events they are planning for 2016 and we may mount another display at the Castle similar to the one we did at Askham. Our members will be invited to join the trip to the battlefields which is being organised for July 2016 under the auspices of the LCGT (actually by the Western Front Association). Plans for 2017 and 2018 not yet developed.

Jane Penman.

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### **Cartmel Peninsula LHS. Allithwaite Roll of Honour.**

For the commemoration of the First World War members of Allithwaite Church and Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society researched the lives and deaths of the 11 men named on Allithwaite Church Memorial. Inside the Church the Roll of Honour shows a further 57 men who served their country and returned to Allithwaite Parish. We wondered if we could find information about them too.

Research into those who died always ended with a burial or a memorial, in most cases in a Commonwealth War Cemetery but it sometimes proved difficult to discover what happened to those who returned after the war ended. Initially censuses were used, particularly the 1911 census, to find out if they lived in the village then and where they lived, their families and occupations. In 1911 some were still scholars whereas others were married with families. There were cousins with

the same name which caused confusion. Those not living in the area were less easy to identify. Service records, medal roll index cards and pension records were searched to find out when they signed up, their



regiment and where they fought but not all service records survived the bombing of the London store in WW2. Local newspapers often gave an insight into injuries and incidents relating to the soldiers and so the online Cumbrian newspaper database was also consulted.

As it is not possible to look at the 1921 census other methods had to be used to see what happened to the men when they returned home after the war ended. The Grange Red Books proved informative but publishing was suspended after 1916 and only recommenced in 1923. The local electoral roll held in Cumbria Record Office (Barrow) recommences in 1922 and gives names and addresses but neither of these records give occupations. Marriage and death records were also searched. Passenger Lists were used and a number of men were found who were emigrating to Canada, US and Australia in the 1920s.

Some were found to have emigrated before the war and had served with their new county's forces. Prisoner of War records showed which regiment 2 captured soldiers had served in, where they were captured and where they were held prisoner.

Talking to the descendants of some of the men who still live in the area gave further information.

List of sources: Census, Grange Red books, Birth, Marriage and Death records, Electoral Roll (Barrow Record Office), WW1 Service records, Passenger Lists, WW1 Medal roll index cards, Westmorland Gazette, WW1 pension records, Family of soldiers International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), WW1 prisoner of war records.

Several of the men have proved to be elusive as we cannot find their connection to the Parish but we will continue making enquiries. The stories we have rediscovered deserve to be remembered and we have learned so much about our village that it has proved to be a very satisfying project. A book will be published later this year.

Barbara Copeland and Pat Rowland

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## Reports from Groups.

### Solway History Society.

Our society is in its 21<sup>st</sup> year. Membership has been good during this time until recently when numbers have dropped due to perhaps a sign of the times as other groups in the area have suffered similar problems. We try to find interesting speakers for our winter

talks and historical places to visit in the summer. Our coach trip in July is a visit to Rosslyn Chapel near Edinburgh and our Annual Dinner is in May at the Greenhill Hotel.

Last summer we published a colourful commemorative Journal featuring the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. The following articles included were "Motto-Service not Self" by Anne Graham; "Zeppelin", "The Lonsdale Battalion", "Aliens, Belgian Refugees" these three by Trevor Grahamslaw; "The Great War" by Mary Ashurst; "171152 Bombardier William Park" by Shirley Thornhill and "Alexander Denholm" by Margaret Sharp. In December we invited Stuart Eastwood from the Border Regiment Museum to give us a talk on "The Home Front", this we complemented with a small exhibition. It was an enjoyable evening with mulled wine and mince pies. We still have a few of our Commemorative Journals left, if anyone would like a copy they are for sale @ £3.50 each either from the King Street Newsagents in Wigton or from the Society secretary, postage included.

Shirley Thornhill (Secretary)  
016973 44257

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### Lowther and Askham History and Archaeology Society.

To respond to some questions in the last Bulletin: Speakers. We have had many excellent talks. June Hall is a regular and popular speaker. Perhaps less well known is John Sharpe of Clifton, who has a range of interesting talks on unsung heroes of Cumbria. We try to encourage members of the society to give talks, as well as bringing in speakers. We reserve one evening a

year for members (and others if they wish) to bring along their own artefacts, historical knowledge and ideas - a kind of Show and Tell.

Interests. We aim to cover a broad range, to suit all interests, not just local history. So, last year's talks included the milns and kilns of Martindale (very local), the buildings (other than the Wall) of Hadrian's empire (global), the geology of the Lowther Valley, methods of genealogical research, Cumbrian pioneers in the American West, as well as the talk on the Border Regiment.

In July and August we organise field trips instead of evening lectures: last year 1) to Ravenstonedale Deer Park; 2) a study of the domestic architecture of Newbiggin (Stainton); this year 1) to look at the rock art of Patterdale and 2) a tour of Brougham Hall. The name of the society includes 'Archaeology' and we are trying to develop this side of our activities: this year there will be a talk on the northern native tribes of Romano-Britain and one on the pre-history of Shap. We are also hoping to get our trowels dirty at some local sites, but we lack funding as well as professional expertise within the society: help from another society with greater archaeological experience would be welcome.

Membership. Usually about 35, nearly all retired people. Occasionally someone younger comes as a visitor, attracted by a particular topic.

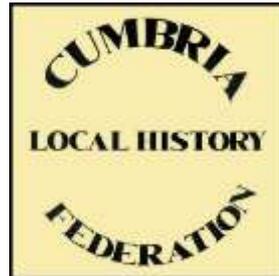
Jane Penman

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## Membership News – Sally Newton.

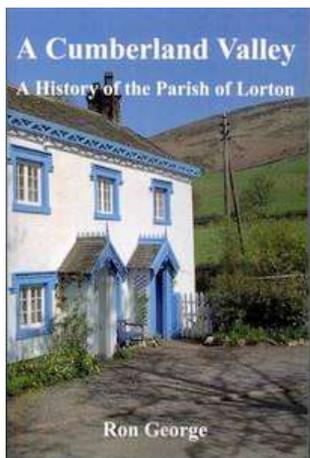
Thank you to those of you who have renewed their subscription for 2015. For others the subscriptions are now overdue. A membership form is enclosed with this Bulletin if at the time of going to print your 2015 subscription had not been received.

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## Members Publications.

Noticing the books for sale on the table displays at the *Shap Gathering* reminded me about the importance of publishing research which itself has often taken years of effort to produce. As an aim of the CLHF is to: provide a forum for exchange of ideas and information, I have added this column to the Bulletin. Please let me know if this is something you would value in each issue of the Bulletin. Editor.



**Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS are offering the following:**

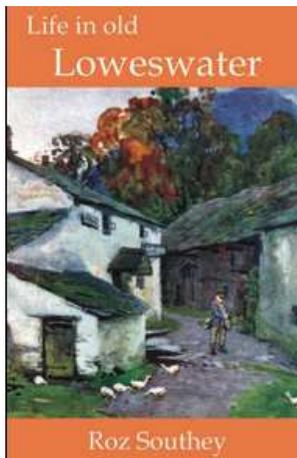
***A Cumberland Valley; A History of the Parish of Lorton***

was written by Ron George the late founder of the society. It was published in 2003 and launched for sale at the society's tenth anniversary exhibition at the Loweswater Show. Ron's study covers the parochial chapelry of Lorton, which included Brackenthwaite, Buttermere and Wythop, from the earliest times to the turn of the twentieth century. Although aimed at the general reader, there are some chapters which are the result of lengthy and detailed research and are naturally more challenging as a result. The book is illustrated and divided into 15 chapters each of which is fully referenced. There is a comprehensive index and bibliography. Ron George made his home in Lorton from 1980 to 2000 and this book is a product of the journey that began with his curiosity about the history of the home he and his wife had purchased. In his final years, Ron George and his wife had moved to Canada to be near other

family members and it is for that reason that Canadian publishers were selected. Copies may still be obtained from the society for £13.95 incl.p&p. To buy please e-mail

[sms.1825@btinternet.com](mailto:sms.1825@btinternet.com)

***Life in Old Loweswater*** is a collection of historical sketches by Dr Roz Southey initially published separately in the 1970s and 1980s.



Roz was brought up in Loweswater and these articles, the fruits of her early researches had been reproduced in The Link or the Loweswater Parish Papers. These were collected together with additional material and illustrations, edited by Derek Denman and published in book form by the society in 2008. The decision was taken to reproduce the articles as they had been written but to group them together under broad themes with added notes and supportive material. These were very much aimed at a general readership and there is no index. Copies may still be obtained from the society for £9.95 incl. p&p. To buy please e-mail [sms.1825@btinternet.com](mailto:sms.1825@btinternet.com)

## Can you help?

### Responses to Question: Can anyone suggest a good publisher to use for the publishing of a 90 page local history book please?

Philip Tuer of Cumbrian Railways Association CRA tells me that they use Amadeus Press of Cleckheaton for their books and HSP Milners in Barrow in Furness for their Journal.

Steve Matthews of Bookcase in Carlisle is known to specialise in publishing books by local people. Youcaxton is an internet based publisher with the benefit of print on demand. Please note these are not given as recommendations but as possible options if you are looking for a publisher. Editor.

### An Enquiry - Seamen's Graves.

BALH has given us permission to pass on this enquiry about differing practices for burying unidentified drowned sailors. Professor Dr Juergen Hasse of the University of Frankfurt is researching the subject and believes that until the end of the 19th century on northern Atlantic sea coasts, it was the usual practice to bury drowned anonymous seamen according to three methods:

- 1) In the northern corner of official local cemeteries
- 2) Outside of the area of the official cemetery – sometimes with a little grave cross
- 3) Near where the unidentified seaman was found, without any grave marker, so their graves were lost or forgotten. Where several bodies were found they were sometimes buried in a common grave. Professor Hasse suggests they

were seen as a charge on the local parish or other local body as no family or friends could pay for their burial. If you are able to help in any way with information from records, or newspapers, or observation of graves please contact him via e-mail (please copy editor) info@jhasse.com

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## CWAAS Research Grants.

The Research and Grants Committee of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society administer the Society's fund for grants to people and groups carrying out research into some aspect of Cumbria's past. The research can be an archaeological survey, an excavation, analysis of material recovered or publication of the results of an archaeological project. Historical research covers a range from individual or group research into a single subject such as the history of a place, prominent person or house to the history of an industry or occupation. Grants can be awarded for subsequent publication costs of a research project as well as helping towards the costs of travel to sources, photocopying etc. To gain an idea of the types of work the Society has aided see the Society Newsletter for Spring 2015 which has a number of reports of recently supported projects. Applicants do not have to be resident in Cumbria or be members of the Society but their research topic must be one that will add to the known history of the county. Each application is considered on its merits and must be accompanied by references from two referees. If you wish to have a chat about making an application contact the secretary of the

R&G Committee Harry Hawkins on 01697472466 or at [harry.hawkins68@btinternet.com](mailto:harry.hawkins68@btinternet.com). Alternatively download an application form from the CWAAS website, [cumbriapast.co.uk](http://cumbriapast.co.uk).

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## Regional Heritage Centre, Lancaster University.

I know the events hosted by the Heritage Centre are of interest to some members and although Lancaster is a bit of a trek for some of you it is worth keeping an eye on their programme. Website [www.lancaster.ac.uk/rhc](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/rhc) Unfortunately you have just missed a fascinating talk by Derek Denman of Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS, a CLHF Member, entitled *Landowners, Poets and Oak Trees*. A future event on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015 which will interest many is *Studying the history of religion in local communities*. The website is worth a look.

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## News from Cumbria County History Trust. (CCHT)

Tiffany Hunt, secretary and Bryan Gray, chair of CCHT have advised us that the CCHT is hosting a lecture by David Starkey titled *The Magna Carta 800 Years On* at Rheged on Thursday 11 June at 7pm followed by a buffet supper. Tickets cost £25 for the lecture and supper, £10 for lecture only and are available at Rheged or can be booked via email on [enquiries@rheged.com](mailto:enquiries@rheged.com) or by calling 01768 868000.

David Starkey needs no introduction but you may be interested to know

that his new book on Magna Carta is due to be published in April. This should be an extremely good event so I do hope that you will be able to be there.

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## Exhibitions & Events of Interest.

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2015**; Cumbria Industrial History Society Conference at Shap Wells Hotel. Theme is "Industry and the Arts in Cumbria – a look at links between industry and the arts". See [www.cumbria-industries.org.uk](http://www.cumbria-industries.org.uk) for details.

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015** at 2.30pm in Kendal Library: Cumbria's Herbarium History by Ian Hodkinson. Booking essential 01539815597.

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015** at 2.30pm in Kendal Library: Mining Histories of Cumbria by Mike Dewey. Booking essential 01539 815597

**May 23<sup>rd</sup> to November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015**. The Keswick Museum, Keswick. *Wainwright: A Love Letter to the Lakeland Fells*. A major exhibition exploring Wainwright's world using archives, artefacts, film and interactive exhibits.

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015**. Kendal Historical & Archaeological Society: *Kendal's Real Queen* by Dr David Starkey at 7.30pm Kendal Town Hall. Tickets available from the Brewery Arts Centre Kendal.

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015**. CCHT lecture by Dr David Starkey on *The Magna Carta 800 Years On* at Rheged. See CCHT paragraph in this Bulletin.

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## News from Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group.

So far this year ten members attended a three day course in recording techniques, using an empty farmhouse in Mosedale, to measure draw plans and elevations, take photographs and attempt to work out its history and development. The tutors were professional surveyors Stuart Eve and Paul Lewis, both CVBG members and Allen Adams, illustrator for English Heritage. This experience should give members confidence in using skills in the coming months to record buildings around Cumbria.



In March a study day at Kirkby Lonsdale concentrated on vernacular survivals in Cumbria's small towns. Several members made presentations of their findings – a surprising amount of early building is to be seen in the nooks and crannies of Kendal, Penrith, Dent, Alston and Appleby.

Mike Kingsbury led a walk in glorious sunshine round the town.



The next events are a walk round Allonby, a former coastal spa, on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2 – 4 pm, and a day in Grasmere, seeking out the village known to William and Dorothy Wordsworth around 1800. Venue the Wordsworth Museum 10.30 – 3.30, £15.

All enquiries for membership and events please e-mail [m.kingsbury455@btinternet.com](mailto:m.kingsbury455@btinternet.com) or see [www.cvbg.co.uk](http://www.cvbg.co.uk)

June Hall, Chairman.

Q: Why were the early days of history called the Dark Ages?

A: Because there were so many Knights.

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Teacher: Can you tell me Napoleon's origin?

Pupil: Course I can!

## Events Diary

All meetings start at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated

### May 2015

|      |                                                                                                  |                                                                   |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6th  | Alston Moor HS<br>Folklore, Traditions & Customs of the Lake District                            | Masonic Hall, Alston<br>Jean Scott-Smith                          |
| 12th | North Lonsdale History Society<br>AGM followed by An Evacuee in Ulverston                        | Methodist Church, Ulverston<br>Brian Hopkins                      |
| 14th | Cartmel Peninsula LHS<br>A Soldier of The Great War                                              | Village Hall, Cartmel<br>Howard Martin                            |
| 14th | Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS<br>"Counting Sheep" A celebration of the pastoral Heritage of Britain | Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton<br>Philip Walling                      |
| 18th | Shap LHS<br>AGM +Traditional Life in the Lake Dist.                                              | Memorial Hall Green Room, Shap<br>Donald Angus                    |
| 19th | Duddon Valley LHG<br>AGM                                                                         | Victoria Hall, Broughton in Furness                               |
| 20th | Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS<br>Acorn Bank Outing                                                  | Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton<br>Tim Stanley-Clamp tdsc50@icloud.com |
| 21st | Levens LHG<br>Gems from Kendal Local Studies Library                                             | Village Institute, Levens<br>Jackie Fay                           |
| 21st | Orton & Tebay LHS<br>"The Black Settlers of Cumbria"                                             | Orton Methodist Church<br>Susan Dench                             |

### June 2015

|      |                                                                                      |                                                     |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 3rd  | Alston Moor HC<br>"Alston and the Great War"                                         | Masonic Hall Alston<br>Alastair Robertson           |
| 5th  | Bampton & District LHS<br>Revisiting the History of Bampton                          | Memorial Hall, Bampton<br>Prof. Patricia Garside    |
| 8th  | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>Guided Tour of Penrith & Eden Museum<br>**2.00pm**            | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Dr Sydney Chapman |
| 11th | Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS<br>AGM followed by The Lake Poets & the French Revolution | Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton<br>Bill Speck            |
| 18th | Levens LHG<br>Lyth Valley Drainage                                                   | Village Institute, Levens<br>Fred Martin            |

22<sup>nd</sup> Shap LHS Sleddale Hall  
Sleddale Hall visit-Members Only

27<sup>th</sup> Orton & Tebay LHS TBA  
Summer Outing, Burbanks

### July 2015

1<sup>st</sup> Alston Moor HS Masonic Hall, Alston  
Out of hours visit to the Hub

7<sup>th</sup> Bampton & District LHS Memorial Hall, Bampton  
Annual BBQ

9<sup>th</sup> Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton  
The Sun if High and Oxford Far Away etc Richard Brockington

16<sup>th</sup> Orton & Tebay LHS Tebay Methodist Church  
History of Toys Rod Moor

27<sup>th</sup> Shap LHS Memorial Hall Green Room, Shap  
Return Visit to Yarnworth Hall

### August 2015

17<sup>th</sup> Shap LHS Drybeck Hall  
Visit to Drybeck Hall Kind permission of Lord Hothfield

20<sup>th</sup> Orton & Tebay LHS Tebay Methodist Church  
The Fell Pony Sue Millard

### September 2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Cartmel Peninsula LHS Village Hall, Cartmel  
The Yellow Earl's Big Adventure Dr Rob David

10<sup>th</sup> Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton  
A Fox in the Fell - The Quakers in Cumbria Janice Wilson

17<sup>th</sup> Levens LHG Village Institute, Levens  
Rheged, Cumbria & Levens Dan Elsworth

17<sup>th</sup> Orton & Tebay LHS Tebay Methodist Church  
Ravenstonedale Retailers Val Fermer

21<sup>st</sup> Holme & District LHS Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall  
Lowther Castle & Gardens Hazel Abbott

28<sup>th</sup> Shap LHS Memorial Hall Green Room, Shap  
Ninekirks, St Ninians, Brougham Tony Greenwood

**October 2015**

|                  |                                                                                                              |                                                   |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | Cartmel Peninsula LHS<br>The Victoria County History Project                                                 | Village Hall, Cartmel<br>Prof. Angus Winchester   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Bampton & District LHS<br>Northern England Hiring Fairs 1890-1938<br>followed by AGM                         | Memorial Hall, Bampton<br>Dr Stephen Counce       |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>Waiter, Miner, Butcher, Spy: Austrians in<br>Cumbria during the First World War | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>Dr Rob David |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>The Ancient Woodlands of Cumbria                                                      | Friend Meeting House, Penrith<br>Mike Winn        |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> | Levens LHG<br>Cumbrian Customs                                                                               | Village Institute, Levens<br>Jean Scott-Smith     |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> | Orton & Tebay LHS<br>Roadside Heritage                                                                       | Tebay Methodist Church<br>Andy Lowe               |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> | Shap LHS<br>The Jacobite Rebellions                                                                          | Memorial Hall Green Room, Shap<br>Paul Heslop     |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> | Holme & District LHS<br>A Career in Ruins                                                                    | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>Andy Lowe       |

**November 2015**

|                  |                                                                                                                         |                                                                   |
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| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Bampton & District LHS<br>Oral History of Farming in Dentdale                                                           | Memorial Hall, Bampton<br>Anthea Boulton                          |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>The Remarkable Literary History of<br>Mirehouse                                            | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>John Spedding from Mirehouse |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Cartmel Peninsula LHS<br>AGM & Bring and Show                                                                           | Village Hall, Cartmel                                             |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>"It's not what you think": the melodrama of<br>Anglican Parish Magazines.                        | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Dr Jane Platt                   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS<br>"Discovering Derventio" – recent<br>archaeological finds at Papcastle.                    | Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton<br>Mark Graham                         |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> | Shap LHS<br>Social Evening, 7.00 for 7.30. Supper<br>followed by author of Ivver Sen/Jos/Jack's<br>Yak and River Greta. | Memorial Hall Green Room, Shap<br>Keith Richardson                |

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| 16th | Holme & District LHS<br>The Excavation of Richard III | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>Dr Carol Allen-Glaister |
| 19th | Levens LHG<br>Recent National Trust NW Archaeology    | Village Institute, Levens<br>Jamie Lund                   |
| 19th | Orton & Tebay LHS<br>Food History                     | Tebay Methodist Church<br>June Hall                       |

### December 2015

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| 1st              | Bampton & District LHS<br>Annual Quiz                                                                  | Memorial Hall, Bampton                                                                              |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>Roman Archaeology: recent excavations & finds at Vindolanda               | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>Dr Andrew Birley, Director of Excavations,<br>Vindolanda Trust |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | Orton & Tebay LHS<br>Christmas Get together – Members Only                                             | Tebay Methodist Church                                                                              |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>William Robinson and his Penrith School followed by festive tea and prize quiz. | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Marjorie Smith                                                    |
| 14th             | Holme & District LHS<br>Christmas Function – Talk - Missed Cues' theatrical anecdotes                  | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>Steve Beattie                                                     |

### January 2016

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| 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>Ruskin, Rawnsley and the Lakes: a study in influence | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>Howard Hull, Director of Brantwood. |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>The History of Sheep and Wool                              | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>June Hall                              |
| 18th             | Holme & District LHS<br>Cumbrian Vernacular Buildings                             | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>June Hall                              |

### February 2016

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|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>The Thirlmere Hundred: Lakeland's first reservoir – a miracle of Victorian engineering | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>John Butcher, Regional Manager, United Utilities |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>Arthur Ransome                                                                               | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Rob Matthews                                        |
| 15th            | Holme & District LHS<br>AGM – Members Evening                                                                       | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall                                                        |

**March 2016**

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|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 2nd  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>TBA                                                          | Parish Room, Main Street, Keswick<br>Dr Mike Winstanley  |
| 14th | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>Investigating, describing and Presenting the<br>Past: 150 of CWAAS | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Prof. Angus Winchester |
| 21st | Holme & District LHS<br>Monasteries & Their Influence in N. Lancs &<br>S. Cumbria         | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>Alan Crosby            |

**April 2016**

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|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 11th | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>Alms houses of the North West.                                   | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Dr Jean Turnbull |
| 18th | Holme & District LHS<br>The Border Regiment's Involvement in the<br>Battle of the Somme | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>Stuart Eastwood  |

**May 2016**

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| 9th | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>The First Roman Map Of Britain | Friends Meeting House, Penrith<br>Dr Bill Shannon |
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**BALH Personal Achievement Award**

As Jenni announced in her Chairman's Chat our former Chairman, who is still a member of our committee and our representative on the Cumbria County History Trust, Richard Brockington, has been honoured by the British Association for Local History with a Personal Achievement Award. At last year's CLHF Convention Richard gave a talk entitled *The Renwick Cockatrice*. I found his style of presentation and the content so fascinating I decided to invoke Editor's privilege and asked Richard to turn his talk into an article for this Bulletin. I hope you enjoy it. Editor.

**The Renwick Cockatrice** by The legend was first recorded (in part) in the pages of William Hutchinson's *History of Cumberland* (1794, p212), and therein as part of John Housman's footnotes on agriculture Housman commented on tithes, and in that context recorded that one John Tallentire of Scalehouses claimed to be exempted from payment - but Housman himself attached no credence to this "simple fable". A cockatrice was a basilisk, an anciently recorded monster, part cockerel, part lizard or snake. It was created from an egg laid by a male bird, fertilised by a serpent. It was reputed to slay human beings just by looking at them. The belief in their existence was both ancient (described by Plini the Elder in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) and widespread throughout Europe. So far as I know, this is the only recorded Cumbrian cockatrice, but there is a fine depiction of the beast on a 15<sup>th</sup> century misericord in Carlisle cathedral. The English name for a basilisk, used by Shakespeare in "Romeo and Juliet", seems to be of French origin (OED), so perhaps arrived with the Normans.

One wonders just how old the Renwick legend is. Most commentators so far (in books, websites and lectures), directing their attention to known rebuildings of Renwick church, have alighted on 1733, a date given in error by Nicolson & Burn. The only fully documented rebuilding, of the present church, was in 1845/6: earlier than that we have a comment in 1747 by Chancellor John Waugh that he had been “surprised on visiting Renwick to find a clean new built church”. There are recorded complaints about the condition of Renwick church up to 1736: in VCH Renwick I suggested 1737, but I now think that the acquisition of the patronage of Renwick church by James Westmorland in 1739 suggests 1740/1. However, I think the legend had its roots a long time before this - for three reasons, the first of which is that there would have been several Renwick people alive in the 1790s who were old enough to have seen the rebuilding of the church in 1740 and to tell of any unusual events thereat. Oral history is just that - history. Legends are something else. (An example of a Cockatrice)



So we should disregard the C18 rebuilding as having anything to do with the legend, and search further back in time. At least we can say that if a rebuilding in mid C18 was unrecorded, so also might have been earlier rebuildings; and if a church built in 1740 had to be rebuilt in 1845, it would not be foolish to suggest the possibility of a rebuilding between 1600 and 1640. But instead of such speculations we should turn again to Hutchinson where we find a footnote by Housman giving 7 Jas I as the date of a document which John Tallentire had mentioned to him. In other words, in a conversation in about 1790, John Tallentire had told John Housman that he believed there was a document of about 1610 confirming the exemption from tithes. This is my second reason for urging the rejection of 1733 or any later date<sup>1</sup>.

My third reason comes from an entirely different direction - the choice of weapon which the brave John Tallentire used to kill the cockatrice. The rowan tree has a prominent place in English folklore as a defence against witchcraft: did they think that sorcery had been used? Some belief in witchcraft perhaps still lingers in C21 Britain, but for most it lost its grip a long time ago. The last major witch trials, and the Hopkins witch hunting, took place before or during the Civil War. Legends about young men wielding rowan boughs to kill monsters summoned up by witches also seem to belong before the Civil Wars. Browsing the net, there appear to have been several sightings of basilisks in European cities between 1600 and 1620 - which suggests that if the people of Renwick thought they were confronted by one in about 1610, that would not have seemed so very improbable at the time<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> cf also Queen's College, Oxford, 5A-42, a 1608 document mentioning a John Tallentire

<sup>2</sup> cf, eg, blog by one Mauro on “Mysterious Britain and Ireland” website - room for further research!

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## CLHF Committee Meeting Summary: Keswick, 24 March 2015

After three years as Membership Secretary and Treasurer Sally and Ray Newton are standing down at the next AGM and we have hopes that we have found a volunteer to be Membership Secretary but we are still looking for a treasurer. A new Speaker's A-Z Directory will be produced shortly so please advise Editor of any changes or additions you recommend. We had a long discussion on improving the Federation 'offer' to both member and non-member groups. We noted the success of the Shap event in March and we suggested that this could be replicated across the county, with the Committee members meeting a number of member groups or representatives from groups to discuss activities and assistance. The Committee are also conscious that there are a number of local history groups across the county who are not members of CLHF. We intend to make contact with them by sending copies of the bulletin and offering to meet, again with a view to offering assistance.

On a similar theme, we approved the payment of an annual subscription of £100 to the Cumbria County History Trust as our initial five year subscription had now ended. We noted the importance of supporting CCHT and also that the Federation had been instrumental in helping CCHT start and providing groups and individuals to contribute research to its projects. We were particularly pleased to see that Committee member and former Federation Chair Richard Brockington had received a British Association for Local History Personal Achievement Award for Local Historians 2015.

Our new editor Nigel Mills is keen to extend the use of the *Bulletin* to publicise members' and member groups' publications and activities and he will expand on this in the present and future editions. Plans are in hand for our Autumn Convention – a theme has been settled on for both morning and afternoon sessions (speakers permitting), and more of this to follow soon.

### Final Thoughts from the Editor.

Well, did you read right through? What do you think of my efforts so far?

I find that meeting members of different societies, groups and individuals and learning about their various interests is a fascinating aspect of researching local history and a way of picking up more information about pet subjects. The Committee supports this and is thinking about how we might do this, perhaps in an informal way. Any ideas please?

To help us, if you produce Newsletters or something similar for your members I would be grateful if you could email a copy to me please, point me to your website or if you produce paper copies only please let me know.

If anyone is attending a local history event and is happy to hand out a few Bulletins for CLHF publicity purposes please let me know. I usually have a few left over for a good cause!

On a more serious note both our Membership Secretary and Treasurer are standing down at the end of this year after 3 years of ~~trying to keep the Committee in order~~ encouraging membership and keeping the books. As the “new boy” to CLHF I really appreciated Sally and Ray’s help in bringing me up to speed and providing me with the information I needed to quickly produce my first Bulletin. Thank you Sally and Ray.

We now hope we have a volunteer for Membership Secretary but we are still looking for a Treasurer. Please think about volunteering. If you wish to know more please ask me or Ray or any one of the contacts listed below.

Best wishes

Nigel

(Apologies for my weird sense of humour above, you have my wife’s sympathy)

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