

# The CLHF Convention

**25 September 2010**

Our annual Convention, held at Newton Rigg, and organised by June Hall, began as usual with the Annual General Meeting. Following the resignation of Richard Brockington to concentrate on his work for the Victoria County History project, Jenni Lister, the former Bulletin editor, was elected Chairman. David Bradbury was elected Bulletin editor. There was a shortage of volunteers for the post of Treasurer, following the retirement of Derek Denman. The Committee did, however, gain two new members, Robert Baxter and Peter Robinson. There was some controversy over whether the Convention should commit the membership to paying for Founder Member status with the new County History trust (since resolved by anonymous benefaction).

The convention topic "Local History and Material Culture" began with a presentation from Vicky Slowe of the Ruskin Museum in Coniston- see her essay starting on page 3 for a flavour (but sadly without the fascinating collection of objects she brought to the Convention). The afternoon session was, as usual, split to provide different options. In the main hall were six short presentations based on single objects, starting with a Furness Railway crest which Peter Robinson used, with illustrations of other railway company crests, to show how heraldry reflects the reality of company mergers etc. Other short presentations were given by Dr John Hudson, Nina Jennings, Ian Campbell, Richard Brock-



ington and Colin McCourt, the objects ranging from a piece of "staple" thatch to a long-case clock by a local maker.

Meanwhile in the Caldbeck Room, for the first of two half-hour sessions, Stuart Eastwood, curator of the King's Own Border Regiment Museum at Carlisle Castle, used a table-full of objects to explain how military memorabilia- not just medals and badges but almost any item which has been used in a military context, can be used, given sufficient background knowledge, to help build a historical picture. In the second half-hour, Helen Clifford, curator of the Swaledale Museum (who has also provided some thoughts for us on page 3) split her audience into small groups and gave each an object to study; again the importance of background knowledge was stressed.

The final presentation of the day was given by Jeff Cowton, curator of the Wordsworth Trust Museum, Grasmere, who showed how a wide variety of resources are being used in efforts to understand the places and times which produced the works we now celebrate. He also left the audience with a few questions which haven't quite been answered yet...



## ACT NOW PLEASE!

Cumbria County History Trust had its first AGM on 30th October. Bryan Gray is now chair, I am secretary, and June Hall is now also a trustee. We have 110 members plus societies (including CLHF as a founder member) and we have matched the CWAAS offer of £10K pa for 5 years - but we still want as many as possible of you to join as members and/or volunteer to take part, and if you are thinking of becoming a founder member you have until 31st December to do that.

We have until 10th December to prepare our formal application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It's looking good, but it's still all to play for. We need every written letter of support we can get, so please be sure to add your society's voice by writing to me:

Richard Brockington, secretary, CCHT  
Highland Hall  
Renwick  
Penrith  
CA10 1JL.

Put it any way you like but remember that HLF are being asked to support the creation of the **Cumbria Community History Resource Bank** (an essential component of the VCH project) - which will greatly enhance public accessibility, allow much easier publication of what we do, and may well expand both the number of local history societies and the membership of every society in the County. If in doubt please ring me on 01768 870352.

We have to convince HLF that there is a demand for the project, and that it is needed now. Your voice counts - so please ACT NOW.

*Richard Brockington*

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## *Archive News*

I'm pleased to have the opportunity of updating readers about some important issues for Cumbria Archive Service.

First of all, these are exciting times in Carlisle, as we look forward to opening the new Cumbria Archives Centre at Petteril Bank. The new centre is part 19th century mansion house, and part ultra-modern 21st century purpose-built archive, in lovely grounds. We will be able to provide comfortable, light, airy and inspiring surroundings for archive researchers, as well as a range of new features such as exhibitions, access to film archives, and a base for support groups (such as CLHF) to share contacts and information with like minds and interests. The move of the archive collections from The Castle and other sites in Carlisle is now well under way, and we are aiming to reopen the archives to visiting researchers early in the New Year. Please keep an eye on our website

**[www.cumbria.gov.uk/archives](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/archives)**

in mid-December for the publication of our reopening schedule. And don't forget, whilst there is naturally much attention on Carlisle at the moment, our other offices in Barrow, Kendal and Whitehaven are still open for business - and exciting research - as usual.

And now for the less good news . . .

I'm sure everyone is aware that public finances are facing major reductions. The Comprehensive Spending Review announcement on 20<sup>th</sup> October earmarked a 28% cut in local government finances. It is too early to say exactly

how this may affect Cumbria Archive Service, and our researchers. By the end of the year, Cumbria County Council should have a clearer picture of its proposals for service delivery in the next financial year, and is intending to consult with the public in December and early January about future priorities. The Council provides many vital services, and faces some very difficult decisions in coming months. If you want to have your say, please look out for information on the Council's website [www.cumbria.gov.uk](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk) or in local libraries and archive offices.

*Anne Rowe, Archive Service Manager*

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## *Every Object Tells a Story* *Thoughts from two of our* *Convention contributors*

*First, Helen Clifford, curator of the Swaledale Museum:*

The Swaledale Museum in Reeth like so many other local history museums is a treasure house of everyday objects. These objects although of little value in the antique market are priceless stimulators of memory, and potent primary historical evidence available for first hand study. As T.S. Eliot commented in his 'Notes towards a definition of culture', written in 1947

*"Even the humblest material artefact, which is the product and symbol of a particular civilization, is an emissary of the culture out of which it comes".*

A useful exercise in releasing the 'biography' of objects is to submit them to a quick fire interrogation, how many questions can you conjure up in ten minutes for any given household object? From these questions you can construct a method of analysis that might cover physical attributes, issues about manufacture and maker, consumer and market, techniques and technology, ritual and custom, messages and symbols, all

of which show change over time, and over place.

Objects are an integral part of local history, all we need is the confidence and curiosity to ask questions of them.



*Now to develop the theme, Vicky Slowe, curator of the Ruskin Museum at Coniston:*

Every object provides a tangible link with the past, be it the far distant past - or yesterday. Sometimes you can actually feel where other fingers, other hands, have held the object - in its making, in its use, in domestic peace, in heavy toil, in anger or in war. That sense of connection, through touch, through patina, through texture, has a vital life force that takes us into 'another country', and brings the past to life.

You only have to watch a class of pupils from a Primary School handling Langdale rough-outs, being transported back in time, which is a difficult concept to grasp when one's parents seem 'old' [in the Methuselah sense]. Even the rough-outs fit the hand comfortably, and have a balance, and a seriousness, that does not require explanation. And then, perhaps, a left-handed child discovers that one rough-out, that classmates are dismissing as clumsy, isn't at all: it was made for a left-handed person, by a left-handed person. South-

## Cumbria Local History Federation

paws have always been around. And then another child, whose father is a roofer, notices that the rough-out has been chipped into shape like the edges of a slate. So, did one of his ancestors make Langdale Axes at the Langdale Axe Factory, he asks? Revelation. Curiosity. Will he become an archaeologist? Or a historian? Or a geneticist?

The power of objects works its magic all the time. Any news editor will tell you that a picture is worth a thousand words. And will also tell you to check, and cross-check, your sources. So it is with objects.

It is the curator's job to investigate the evidence inherent in an object and to explore further sources of material evidence - documentary, cartographic, pictorial, photographic, oral, architectural, archaeological, environmental, ethnographical, anthropological, geological, biological - in order to tell that object's story, to place it into a context of time, place and use, to assess and intimate its significance in the historical field, [which may be local, regional, national, international, jointly or severally], in order to 'interpret' it, and display it in such a way that it will engage and inform visitors, stimulate their curiosity, make them consider the value [in an historic rather than monetary sense] of what they have at home, at work, in the family 'collection' or 'archive' that contains their family's historical record.

It is imperative to keep the object and its story and its 'provenance' together, whether in the museum's records, or the family's records, or the historian's files, so that the research and information isn't just locked temporarily in someone's memory, but is recorded for ever, for everyone.

My museum has received on deposit a collection of leases, account books, Shepherds' Guides [or 'Smit Books'], and notebooks and diaries. In the 1955 notebook, there is a page headed Twinters :

15 Nov	8	G	Clouted
		4 W	Redded
16 Nov	8	G	Clouted
		1 W	Redded
17 Nov	2	W	"
18 Nov	14	G	Clouted

What does this arcane entry mean ? A Twinter is a sheep approaching its second winter and its second birthday; [a Thrinter its third]. 'G' stands for 'Gimmer' [Old Norse: *gymbr*], a one-to-two year old ewe lamb. The term: 'Clouted' refers to a form of contraception for a ewe that is basically too young to lamb safely. The Herdwick is smaller than the average sheep, and can die or become poor or stunted in growth, if she lambs before she is fully grown. So some Twinter Gimmers are Clouted or Brated at tup time. A piece of strong, heavy-duty cloth, in dialect a Clout [cloth : as in cloutie bonnets, with a flap over the nape of the neck to prevent sunstroke at hay-time, and cloutie puddings, round and boiled in a cloth], or Brat [Norse for a strong, heavy-duty cloth working apron], is sewn to the fleece over the twinter's tail and bottom, as an ovine chastity belt, in mid-November, before the flock is released on the common fell, where the ewes may well encounter randy rams or 'tups'. The clout or brat remains in place until February, when it drops off.

The museum was fortunate to have the opportunity to film and photograph the celebrated Herdwick breeder, Johnnie Birkett, at High Yewdale Farm, bratting a twinter on a clipping stool. This enables us to explain the entries in the 1955 notebook, and illustrate the technique involved.

The 'W' stands for 'Wether', a castrated male sheep, being kept to fatten for mutton. In the past, some of the Wethers wore bells [the bell wether] to assist the shepherd to find them on the heaf, the particular area of fell where the Herdwicks are heafed, and to which

they are 'hefted', like homing pigeons. There is a Wether Bell in our collection. Sometimes, the Wethers are 'Redded', literally, with 'ruddle' or 'raddle', a red ochreous iron oxide, to increase their visibility. Ruddle was also used for the red 'smit-marks', the black ones being based on graphite, that are illustrated, together with the individual 'lug marks' for each farm in the Shepherds' Guides.

Our collection includes smit-markers and horn-brands, shears, and a sheep band, silky smooth with lanolin, for tethering a recalcitrant sheep. We also have a rare salving bowl, made of turned wood, and on a long turned handle that sits under the shepherd's leg, as he sits astride his clipping stool, preparing to apply a disinfectant, water-proof salve of 'Stockholm Tar and Rancid Irish Butter' to the sheep's skin. The fleece was carefully parted, at one inch intervals, and the salve was coated on the skin and roots of the wool, to protect the sheep from ticks, fleas and other parasites. A skilled man could salve ten sheep in a day. Prior to clipping, the sheep were washed at one of the deeper dubs, [pools], in a beck on the fells, in an attempt to remove the tarry salve. Wash folds consist of a number of gathering pens, leading to a chute into the dub. Holly has often been planted to stop the sheep scrambling out too quickly. The tarrie wool figures in traditional spinning songs; one is quoted by Beatrix Potter in The Fairy Caravan :

*Tarrie woo', oh tarrie woo' -  
tarrie woo' is ill to spin  
Card it weel, oh card it weel !  
Card it weel ere you begin .  
When it's carded, rolled, and spun,  
then your work is but half done,  
When it's woven, dressed, and clean,  
it is clothing for a queen.*

All this material - objects and artefacts, publications, film, photographs, bottle of ruddle, fleeces, song, dialect - coalesces

to provide our visitors with an impression of the shepherd's life and calendar. Fell-walkers will recognise a wash fold when they see one, and will know the purpose of hogg-holes. Family historians will know what sort of tools their shepherd ancestors had to hand.

But did those ancestors carry out other tasks, such as walling? Did the family card and spin the wool? Did they all dress in 'hodden grey'? Or, like the monks, and Wordsworth's 'Wonderful Walker', did they continue to grow some flax, and produce their own linen, because the Herdwick hair shirt was too irksome? There is certainly plenty of evidence from field names and a residue of built remains to suggest that flax was grown : Righting ['Retting'] House, Scutcheon ['Scutching'] House, Flax Holme. And this was the inspiration behind Ruskin's Langdale Linen Industry, which led to the development of the local art of Ruskin Lace. Ruskin wished to establish a 'home industry' that would profitably occupy wives and daughters, and validate the idea of paid creative work for women.

So the museum curator, like the local historian, must follow the clues. Or, do I mean, follow Ariadne's clew through the labyrinth ?

The problem is that 'the museum collection', like 'local history', is a house with many mansions linked by obvious corridors and staircases, but also by secret passages - and oubliettes for the unwary leaping to unproven conclusions. Most museums are devoted to telling the story of their immediate hinterland, rather than of the world at large, but the micro and the macro do co-incide, of course, from time to time.

You can argue that any place is local to someone - thus making significant historical events, of national or even international importance, local history to that someone. Think of Lockerbie, or

Waterloo, or Agincourt - or The Black Death. Any place is local to some people all of the time, and to all people some of the time. You can argue that simply by being in a place, you are local. At least temporarily.

To me, objects are integral to a sense of place, where nature and history, environment and man, meet in a topographical dimension, and together generate culture. Artefacts made in that place, by or for members of its community, and artefacts imported into that place to supply a perceived need that the community cannot meet itself, or, indeed, exported by that community because it has a monopoly on that artefact or commodity, comprise a material culture that brings alive documents and the written record, explains trade routes and road systems, sustainable - and unsustainable economies - even the outbreak of wars. Objects, artefacts, flesh out the human story.

So, every object tells a story and presents a new perspective on human history and society, whether at local, regional, or national level. Objects are clues, providing quantities of pieces in the jigsaw mirror that reflects humanity's progress.

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### **MAKING PROGRESS, MAKING HISTORY**

**Achievements and initiatives  
from CLHF member groups**

#### *Cockermouth Museum Group:*

During the last six months the Cockermouth Museum Group has seen the launch of its website:

[www.cockermouthmuseumgroup.org.uk](http://www.cockermouthmuseumgroup.org.uk) which has old photographs, articles, publications and news items relating to the group. The new website will shortly have searchable headstone memorial inscriptions for Cockermouth Cemetery

(the older part at present), All Saints' Church (by kind permission of the Cumbria Family History Society), Bridekirk Church inscriptions (by kind permission of the vicar) and Quaker inscriptions (by kind permission of the Society of Friends). We have already answered a wide range of local and family history queries, the latest being a fascinating request from a research group in British Columbia for information regarding a button, discovered in an old gold mine in the Cariboo gold-fields, embossed with the mark of a Cockermouth draper and tailor (J C W Drummond of Station Street). What a wonderful story if we could only match button to owner!

The new website also carries photographs and information about a book launched in the summer by Greg Greenhalgh of the group on the history of amateur theatre in Cockermouth. At the book launch in August Melvyn Bragg spoke enthusiastically about his work to a full house. Copies of the book, published following the award of a Lottery grant, were distributed during the evening and copies are still available, free of charge, from Cockermouth Library and Tourist Information Centre.




Cockermouth Museum Group has recently been involved in a Storyboards project in conjunction with Cockermouth Chamber of Trade and Dr Les Tickner of Cockermouth Town Hall, who was appointed to oversee regeneration







# EVENTS DIARY

Area indicators:  North  South  East  West  Central

## DECEMBER

- |  |    |  |  |
|--|----|--|--|
|   | 1  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>EMERGENCY! How communities dealt with emergencies before the advent of 999<br>– Judith Shingler and Pam Kaye (Ambleside Oral History Group) | Crosthwaite Parish Rooms, Keswick<br>017687 73801  |
|   | 1  | Sedbergh & District HS<br>Afghanistan – An Historical Gallop through 170 years of British (and other)<br>involvement – Anthony Fitzherbert                               | Settlebeck High School<br>015396 22505   |
|   | 6  | Bampton and District LHS<br>Archive Films  | Memorial Hall, Bampton<br>01931 713645   |
|   | 6  | CWAAS Kendal Regional Group<br>Kendal Treasures – Trevor Hughes  | Shakespeare Centre, Highgate, Kendal<br>01539 722439   |
|   | 6  | Orton and Tebay LHS<br>Members Stories of Christmas Past   | Orton Market Hall<br>015396 24780  |
|   | 10 | CWAAS Carlisle Group<br>AGM, + Camp Farm, Maryport – Peter Messinger, Carlisle Conservation Officer  | Tullie House Museum at 7.00pm  |
|   | 13 | CWAAS Penrith Group<br>An Aspect of Cistercian Life – Dr Michelle Moat   | Penrith Conservative Club<br>01768 867581  |
|   | 14 | Appleby Archaeology Group<br>2009 Excavation Boroughgate Appleby   | Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby<br>– Martin Railton North Pennines<br>Archaeology 01768 353463 |
|   | 14 | Staveley and District HS<br>Levens Dated Buildings – Stephen Read  | Staveley School<br>01539 822229  |
|  | 16 | Brampton Local History Group<br>AGM, + Preserving our local history – Edwin Rutherford, Preservator, Tullie<br>House Museum  | Community Centre, Brampton<br>016977 2484  |










## JANUARY 2011

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|---|----|--|--|
|  | 5  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>St Bees Man – the curious story of a well preserved medieval man discovered in a<br>Cumbrian churchyard – Chris Robson and Ian McAndrew | Crosthwaite Parish Rooms, Keswick<br>017687 73801    |
|  | 10 | CWAAS Kendal Regional Group<br>The Vikings and Victorian Lakeland – Matthew Townend  | Shakespeare Centre, Highgate, Kendal<br>01539 722439 |
|  | 11 | Appleby Archaeology Group<br>AGM and Members' Evening  | Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby<br>01768 353463    |
|  | 11 | Staveley and District HS<br>Researching your Family History – John Berry   | Staveley School<br>01539 822229                      |
|  | 13 | Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS<br>Bleeding, Blisters and Opium – Dr Michael Sydney   | Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton<br>01900 85482            |
|  | 17 | Holme and District LHS<br>George Romney – Chris Robson   | Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall<br>01524 782121       |

## Cumbria Local History Federation










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|---|----|---|--|
|  | 17 | Upper Eden History Society<br>Members' Evening + Mallerstang's Railway Navvies – Ian Murray           | Kirkby Stephen Grammar School<br>017683 41007                      |
|  | 17 | Whitehaven LHS<br>History of Iron Ore Mining in West Cumbria – Mervyn Dodd                            | United Reform Church Hall<br>01946 695698                          |
|  | 19 | Lazonby and District LHS<br>The Mines of East Cumbria – Ian Tyler                                     | Village Hall, Lazonby<br>01768 898046                              |
|  | 19 | Sedbergh & District HS<br>From Auschwitz to Ambleside – Trevor Avery                                  | Settlebeck High School<br>015396 22505                             |
|  | 20 | Brampton Local History Group<br>Devil's Porridge – Eastriggs and Gretna Heritage                      | Community Centre, Brampton<br>016977 2484                          |
|  | 20 | Levens Local History Group<br>AGM and Levens Date Stones – Stephen Read                               | Levens Village Institute<br>01539 560318                           |
|  | 21 | CWAAS Carlisle Group<br>Archaeological Work on the Carlisle Northern Development Road – Fraser Brown, | Tullie House Museum at <b>7.15pm</b><br>Oxford Archaeology North   |
|  | 22 | CWAAS SW Group<br>The History of Millom Castle – Tom McCafferty                                       | Supper room, Egremont Market Hall at <b>2.00pm</b><br>019467 24634 |
|  | 24 | Shap LHS<br>Members Night – Stories behind artefacts  | Memorial Hall<br>01931 716244                                      |
|  | 25 | Duddon Valley LHG<br>The Development of National Park Ranging – Chris Berry                           | Broughton<br>01229 716196  |

## FEBRUARY










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|---|----|---|--|
|    | 1  | Bampton and District LHS<br>Grocers Daughters – Society Members   | Memorial Hall, Bampton<br>01931 713645               |
|    | 2  | Friends of Keswick Museum<br>Finding out about the History of St John's in the Vale – Geoffrey and Pat Darrall,<br>and Sally Bickerdyke | Crosthwaite Parish Rooms, Keswick<br>017687 73801    |
|   | 2  | Sedbergh & District HS<br>Gunpowder Mills of Cumbria – Ian Tyler  | Settlebeck High School<br>015396 22505               |
|  | 7  | CWAAS Kendal Regional Group<br>A Recent Survey of the Sizergh Estate – Jamie Lund   | Shakespeare Centre, Highgate, Kendal<br>01539 722439 |
|  | 8  | Appleby Archaeology Group<br>Excavations at Abbeytown – Jan Walker  | Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby<br>01768 353463    |
|  | 8  | Staveley and District HS<br>Ambleside Family History Archives – 35 Years of collecting Local History – Jane<br>Renouf                   | Staveley School<br>01539 822229                      |
|  | 16 | Lazonby and District LHS<br>Local Topics Evening  | Village Hall, Lazonby<br>01768 898046                |
|  | 16 | Sedbergh & District HS<br>Every Home is a Museum – June Hall  | Dentdale Memorial Hall<br>015396 22505               |
|  | 17 | Brampton Local History Group<br>The building of the Carlisle to Settle Railway – David Alison   | Community Centre, Brampton<br>016977 2484            |












## CLHF Bulletin 55, Winter 2010-11

-  17 Levens Local History Group Levens Village Institute  
Medieval Deer Parks of Cumbria – Harry Hawkins 01539 560318
-  18 CWAAS Carlisle Group Tullie House Museum at **7.15pm**  
"Friends of the Lake District" John Cousins, author
-  19 CWAAS SW Group Supper room, Egremont Market Hall at **2.00pm**  
The Miteside Feature – Investigation of an unusual circular embankment –  
Albert Waterhouse 019467 24634
-  21 CWAAS Penrith Group Penrith Conservative Club  
Any Old Iron? Guide Posts in Cumbria 01768 867581
-  21 Holme and District LHS Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall  
AGM 01524 782121
-  21 Whitehaven LHS United Reform Church Hall  
The Demolition of Buildings in Whitehaven – Ralph Lewthwaite 01946 695698
-  22 Duddon Valley LHG Broughton  
Arthur Ransome's Lake District – Chris Wright 01229 716196
-  28 Shap LHS Memorial Hall  
'On Majicke Ground that Castle Stands' – Sheila Fletcher 01931 716244
-  28 Upper Eden History Society Kirkby Stephen Grammar School  
Whaling from Whitehaven, 18th – 19th Centuries – Dr Rob David 017683 41007









## MARCH

-  1 Bampton and District LHS Memorial Hall, Bampton  
Friends of the Lake District – John Cousins 01931 713645
-  2 Friends of Keswick Museum Crosthwaite Parish Rooms, Keswick  
34 Years of photographing Cumbrian People & Events – Fred Wilson 017687 73801
-  2 Sedbergh & District HS Settlebeck High School  
Three Centuries of the Workhouse – Peter Higginbotham 015396 22505
-  7 CWAAS Kendal Regional Group Shakespeare Centre, Highgate, Kendal  
Excavating Early Prehistoric Remains, Stainton, Carlisle – Paul Clark 01539 722439
-  8 Appleby Archaeology Group Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby  
The Gypsum Mining Industry in Cumbria – Ian Tyler 01768 353463
-  8 Staveley and District HS Staveley School  
History of Windermere Town – Pat Campbell & Dorothy Weardon 01539 822229
-  10 Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton  
John Ruskin: The Eye and the Pencil – Dr David Cross 01900 85482
-  14 CWAAS Penrith Group Penrith Conservative Club  
A Career in Ruins – 32 years with the LDNP – Andrew Lowe 01768 867581
-  16 Caldbeck and District LHS Parish Hall, Caldbeck  
North Cumberland People and the Caribbean (17th to 19th century): the Caldbeck  
Connection – Diane Rushworth 016974 78270
-  16 Lazonby and District LHS Village Hall, Lazonby  
In Search of Appleby Street – Richard Brockington 01768 898046

## Cumbria Local History Federation

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17
Brampton Local History Group
Community Centre, Brampton  
Old Records of Brampton – David Bowcock, Archivist, Carlisle  
Records Office 016977 2484
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18
CWAAS Carlisle Group
Tullie House Museum at **7.15pm**  
The Rickerby Family in Cumbria, Dumfries and the West Indies – Dr Alan Crosby
- 
19
CWAAS SW Group
Supper room, Egremont Market Hall at **2.00pm**  
Distington Museum & its Artefacts – Harry and Margaret Fancy 019467 24634
- 
21
Holme and District LHS
Burton in Kendal Memorial Hall  
The Impact of Motor Transport on Westmorland, c1900-1971 – Dr. Jean Turnbull  
01524 782121
- 
21
Levens Local History Group
Levens Village Institute  
Writing Township Histories for the Victoria County History – Dr Angus Winchester  
01539 560318
- 
21
Upper Eden History Society
Kirkby Stephen Grammar School  
Riders of Renwick: the tenants of Leonard Dacre, 1500-1570 –  
Richard Brockington 017683 41007
- 
21
Whitehaven LHS
United Reform Church Hall  
A Talk by Harrington History Society
01946 695698
- 
22
Duddon Valley LHG
Seathwaite Parish Room  
A History of Eskdale and Ennerdale Hunt – Edmund Porter
01229 716196
- 
28
Shap LHS
Memorial Hall  
The History of Carlisle Castle – Leo Holden
01931 716244

## APRIL

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4
CWAAS Kendal Regional Group
Shakespeare Centre, Highgate, Kendal  
AGM, + Gervase Benson: Kendal Mayor, Army Captain and Quaker republican,  
1640s–1670s – David Boulton 01539 722439
- 
5
Bampton and District LHS
Memorial Hall, Bampton  
Historic Floods in Cumbria and the Eden-causes and impacts –  
Professor Ian Whyte 01931 713645
- 
11
CWAAS Penrith Group
Penrith Conservative Club  
The Yellow Earl's Arctic Journey 1888-89
01768 867581
- 
12
Appleby Archaeology Group
Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby  
The Records of North Westmorland – David Bowcock (Carlisle Record Office)  
01768 353463
- 
12
Staveley and District HS
Staveley School  
AGM and Members Evening
01539 822229
- 
15
CWAAS Carlisle Group
Tullie House Museum at **7.15pm**  
Bells and Bellringing – Ronald East, Diocesan Bells Advisor, Carlisle Diocese
- 
16
CWAAS Kendal Regional Group
Meet in Square at Broughton in Furness, **10.30**  
Dunnerdale Fell Walk – Barbara Blatchford
01539 722439
- 
16
Sedbergh & District HS
Settlebeck High School  
Victorian Naturalists and the heyday of natural history – Dr Trevor Pearce  
015396 22505

of the town after last year's disastrous floods. Those of you who have visited Cockermouth recently may have noticed the large collection of old pictures of Cockermouth that have been reproduced on large boards (approx. 3' x 4') and placed in empty shop windows and other locations on Main Street and Station Street. The photographs come from our large archive and are accompanied by a brief explanatory text.

The Storyboards have created a tremendous amount of interest, so much so that we have decided to offer copies of the images to members of the public who wish to purchase them. Readers who are interested in viewing the images may do so by going to our new website and locating the link pages that carry the images. For those people who would like copies, we can offer black and white images, A4 size at £1.75 or A3 size at £2.20. The images will be reproduced on 250 gsm inkjet paper. Full details of how to order are given on the website.

Friday October 1st saw former senior archivist Susan Dench speaking on 'Black History' at the Bernard Bradbury Memorial Lecture. This joint event with the Civic Trust and Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society was a full house and those lucky enough to be present enjoyed a very comprehensive and entertaining talk.

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### *Lorton & Derwent Fells L.H.S.*

We began the process of applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a 'Your Heritage' grant of about £30,000 to enable us to gain more training and experience of archaeological investigations under the supervision of a professional archaeological contractor. We intended to continue investigations at Peel Place, Lanthwaite Green that we had conducted last year with professional archaeologists, by virtue of our relationship with

the National Trust. That was a piece of 'rescue' archaeology.

We formed a steering group [including Jamie Lund of the NT], drew up a project plan, completed the on-line HLF pre-application form and had a site meeting and consultation with a representative of the HLF. We had always feared that the HLF would require us to jump through more hoops in terms of 'community involvement' than we could manage. At the suggestion of the HLF contact, we conducted a formal survey of our own membership, neighbouring local history societies, schools, Young Archaeology Clubs and the local community and that clarified for us that we lacked the interest within our own membership in the core of the whole project, which was to have a reasonably sized group of members with sufficient skills and experience that we could 'go it alone' in future. We therefore very reluctantly had to abandon that particular route and the steering group is trying to find another way of proceeding.

*[Editor's note: Securing funding for major projects is clearly a key theme at the moment, so I'll be asking members to share their experiences in this field for the next Bulletin.]*

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### *Cartmel Peninsula L.H.S.*

Our Treasurer passed your email to the committee to see what we thought was the most remarkable thing our Society had done in the last 6 months.

The unanimous thought was that it is the growth of the Village Research group, an appendage to the CPLHS. This group started about 18 months ago but within the last 6 months it has attracted more members and the research and information being gathered has expanded enormously in those 6 months. From this Nostalgia articles

## Cumbria Local History Federation

have been written for the Westmorland Gazette and House History and Oral History have commenced.

For many years the CPLHS has tried to get a research group together and so now, with the commitment of a focussed few, an energetic group has formed and the enthusiasm is spawning groups for other historical topics. This has been the most remarkable thing for our Society in the last 6 months.

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### *North Lonsdale Society*

The highlights for us are that our meetings regularly attract an audience of 50 rather than 10-20 of a few years ago and that for the third season running we have arranged off-site meetings/visits for the months of June, July and August so we have an all year round programme.

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### *Keswick History Group*

The Keswick History Group was inaugurated in 2009, following the winding-up of the Keswick Historical Society from which it inherited a small cash balance and a vast collection of local archival material. The Group comprises 28 members of whom some are local history researchers, others wish to keep a voice for History alive in Keswick and some continue to work, as volunteers, on the archive.

The archive material is almost entirely from the collections of four local people – the Keswick historian George Bott, the photographer Joe Brownrigg, the promoter of Theatre in Keswick Lindsay Temple and the Keswick “weather man” Ken Bond. Members of the former Society and of the new Group have been sorting and indexing the material, with advice from staff at the County Record Office, since 2005. They have been fortunate in having the use of a room in the

Keswick Museum for working and it is where the material is stored. It has become clear that the Group's material complements the museum's collection and that together they form a valuable tool for researchers into the history of the district.

Those members working on the archives have found it to be a fascinating but slow task. Dating the written material and identifying some of the photographs has been particularly tricky, but gradually the archive has begun to take shape and it is now possible to find answers to some of the questions asked by correspondents and visitors to the museum. It is also clear that some of the records could be used for exhibitions, particularly those of Lindsay Temple and Joe Brownrigg and the weather records are an asset in education. The future of the archive is now becoming a matter of concern. The Group believes that it should remain in Keswick and that it is a valuable adjunct to the museum's collection. For this reason it is supporting the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for refurbishing and revitalising the museum and is actively engaged in fund raising for the appeal.

The Group's first year was successful. As well as the work on the archives, two members have published books and George Bott's previously unpublished “A Cumbrian Anthology” was produced by Bookcase.

As the KHG is deeply committed to the future of the Keswick Museum, I wonder if you might insert a note about the webpage for the appeal? It is [www.keswickmuseum.webs.com](http://www.keswickmuseum.webs.com) We are working hard to collect £137,000 by March!

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**WORTH A LOOK!**

**[www.carlislehistory.co.uk](http://www.carlislehistory.co.uk)**

### *Duddon Valley L.H.G.*

During our team surveys we came across a Wood Chop Kiln in Lind End Woods near Broughton Mills. This had earlier been identified by Mike Davis-Shiel. In researching Wood Chop Kilns I came across a very informative article by Janis Heward on the Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group web site ([www.uwhg.org.uk](http://www.uwhg.org.uk)). Anyone interested in Kilns would do well to look at this article.

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### *Friends of Whitehaven Museum*

The Committee agreed last year 2009, to pay for the restoration of articles (one each year) from our reserve collection, however let the Curator choose. Charlotte Stead the Curator chose an engraved goblet in a very poor state which was sent to Preston to be repaired and eventually, 3rd September 2010, unveiled, looking nearly new, by the Mayor of Copeland, Coun. McVeigh. It is on show in the Gallery which is free. The ceiling in our Meetings Gallery is made of steel, any sound bounces back, which is difficult for any Speaker with a weak voice, so the Friends have installed a new sound system together with a tie pin microphone. Making 'Improvements' is our aim and to help to the Whitehaven Beacon Art Gallery & Museum.

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### *Appleby Archaeology*

An article on an excavation on Bracken Moor in 2009 has been published (see [www.applebyarchaeology.org.uk](http://www.applebyarchaeology.org.uk)) and this year has been one of consolidating that excavation and preparing future projects.

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### *Staveley & District H.S.*

We haven't done anything remarkable in the last six months but we are about to start work on our 20th Anniversary Exhi-

bition which will take place at Easter next year. The dates are on our web site:

[www.sdhs.org.uk](http://www.sdhs.org.uk) The theme will be '200 years of change' taking our history in 10 year 'bites' from 1811 to 2010.

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### *Shap L.H.S.*

Shap LHS doesn't have anything to report for this bulletin but we would like to put something in the next one - it will be our 10th anniversary next March and we are planning a celebration at our April meeting.

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### *Cartmel Fell & District L.H.S.*

Our group has a small working party which is trying to find evidence of John Wilkinson's first iron boat. This has entailed collecting and collating hearsay, old maps, written evidence and archaeology in the Winster valley. We are by no means the first to search for this missing piece of history, but we do know where the boat is not.

Wilkinson launched 'Trial' on the River Severn in 1787 and the assembled crowds fully expected this iron monster to sink immediately, but were confounded. A much smaller version or prototype was said to have been used earlier on the River Winster to transport peat to Wilkinson's experimental iron works at Wilson House, Lindale, but it has since disappeared. Possibly it has been used as a water tank on a farm, or a feed bin, but the Wilkinson castings were of such high quality, we think the first iron boat must still be around, but where?

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### *Levens L.H.G.*

In 2009 the manager of the National Trust's Sizergh Estate asked their regional archaeologist, Jamie Lund, to carry out an Archaeological Landscape Survey of the estate. The National Trust

undertakes this type of survey in order to find out more about its properties, how they have changed and developed over time, and what forms of special conservation management they require. Jamie looked to establish a working partnership with local people through Levens Local History Group [LLHG] and the volunteers working at Sizergh Castle to involve them in the archive research and field survey. He came to talk to LLHG about the proposal in February 2010 and fired our enthusiasm.

In April Jamie and Peter Schofield, of Oxford Archaeology North [OAN], who was the joint leader of the survey provided us with a training day where we spent a morning looking at the history and existing archaeology of the Sizergh Estate and had the methodology behind the archive research and archaeological field survey explained to us. This was followed by a practical afternoon session looking at some of the Prehistoric archaeology on Sizergh Fellside, experiencing the methodology in practice and getting used to using the survey equipment.

The first phase of the investigation was desk based. We provided what information we already had in our own archive and some of our members worked with a professional archivist from OAN to identify information relating to the Sizergh Estate held at Kendal Record Office.

By May the volunteers involved in the archaeological survey were organised into four teams of either five or six, and allocated a survey area each chosen to include some areas of high archaeological potential as well as a good contrast of landscape types – woodlands and meadows or limestone upland and parkland for example. It was anticipated that each group would complete their survey area working one day each week for five weeks. The methodology was to walk the allotted area and once a site of

archaeological interest had been discovered, it was then closely examined to determine its form and extent, before a written description was made using a standardised site recording form. As part of the recording process, each archaeological site was photographed with over 800 digital images being taken, which form a detailed record of the archaeology encountered.

So what were the results of all these efforts? In simple numbers as a result of the field survey and documentary research the number of recorded archaeological sites increased from 336 to 598, spanning human history from the Neolithic to the present. The existing known archaeology was re-measured, re-recorded, had its position fixed by GPS and was photographed. A prominent mound, similar to the one on Sizergh Fellside, and which seems to have escaped antiquarian investigation [there are no records of it ever being opened], was recorded in the northern part of Brigsteer Park. Two other possible Neolithic burial mounds were also found, another discovery was of a burnt mound, believed to date from the Bronze Age, and similar two examples found in Nether Wasdale last year.

Perhaps the greatest achievement was improving our understanding of the origins and development of the deer parks at Sizergh. The project identified three parks on the estate, Brigsteer Park, Sizergh Park and Larkrigg Park through a combination of documentary research and archaeological survey. We know that in 1336 Sir Walter Strickland had license to enclose his demesne lands at Sizergh and to make a park there. We believe that this grant facilitated the creation of the park referred to as Sizergh Park located immediately west of the River Kent. Twenty five years later in 1361 Sir Thomas de Strickland was given a license to im-park his woods and lands in Helsington,

Levens and Hackthorpe. This more general license we believe saw the creation of Brigsteer Park and Larkkrigg Park.

Alongside this strong documentary evidence there now is archaeological evidence in the form of a 200m section of 9m wide probable deer park boundary surviving in Low Park Wood, as well as a large earthwork bank running through a pasture field [both features suggesting a large deer proof boundary enclosing a Medieval Park], and two pairs of massive gate stoops associated with the Medieval Park and a possible deer shelter were also identified.

A new deer park was created, probably during the seventeenth century, in front of the castle. It is this park that you drive through today when visiting, and which shows evidence of nineteenth century designed landscape features that document changing fashions and possibly the keeping of sheep and cattle in the park, rather than deer. By this time the other medieval parks had lost their deer park status and were now woodlands managed as coppice and standard for commercial return. A six to seven foot high wall was identified and dated to 1713.

Different types of industry were also found, including peat cuts, peat stores, gravel pits and limestone quarries. By far the most numerous site type encountered were limestone quarries, most likely to have been worked for walling stone, with many quarries being located alongside dry stone walls. A number of larger, deeper quarries may have yielded building stone, while a handful of others may have produced limestone pavement for use on the estate. Two well preserved lime kilns and two ruined lime kilns were recorded.

Evidence for traditional woodland industries was recorded including charcoal burning platforms, huts occupied by bark peelers and small number of potash pits.

Jamie and Peter presented their preliminary report to LLHG and the National Trust volunteers at a meeting in October, and the full report is being prepared for publication before the end of November.

Both Jamie and I believe the survey to be a great success. NT has greatly added to its knowledge of the estate, an invaluable tool in its day to day management. From LLHG point of view our members have gained substantial skills and experience through the survey. We made new friends, enjoying the stimulating company and fun throughout the project, and we intend to make a joint application with NT for funding to carry out a detailed excavation and analysis of one of the newly found features.

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## *Archaeology in the Lake District 2010*

The Sizergh estate study was one of the main topics at the 2010 Lake District archaeology conference, at Keswick's Theatre By The Lake. Jamie Lund's presentation was preceded by a general summary of the year's work in the region, from Eleanor Kingston of the Lake District National Park Authority. One of the topics she covered was the Environmental Land Management Service, which provided funding for conservation projects in the Lorton and Coniston areas, amongst others. Also of possible interest to CLHF, the recent Bassenthwaite Reflections community-based environmental project is being followed up in the Windermere area.

After the tea-break, John Hodgson of the L.D.N.P.A. introduced one of the key topics for the archaeological study of Cumbria: the development of the long-house. He noted that the "Ring Cairns to Reservoirs" project conducted

by the L.D.P.N.A. with the Duddon Valley History Group has identified numerous long-house ruins which await more detailed investigation. Mark Kincey and Amanda Forster from the University of Birmingham then introduced the archaeological investigation of a longhouse adjoining Tonguesdale Moss, on the moorland south-east of Eskdale Green, which was found, from ceramic evidence, to have been in use from the Middle Ages to the early 18th century. Another project undertaken was a geophysical survey of the area north of Walls Castle at Ravenglass, which revealed traces of a likely civilian settlement and a road heading east towards Muncaster. Rummaging among the roots of a fallen tree provided further evidence of Roman-era occupation.

From fallen trees to drowned trees: the storms of 2009 had uncovered the "sunken forest" off the coast near Bootle, and after lunch another member of the Birmingham team, Andrew Howard, explained how the ancient remnants had been recorded and measured, and how the study of past changes to the landscape may give us guidance for the future.

The final presentation of the day, by Diana Matthews (daughter of George Pattinson who founded the Windermere Steamboat Museum) told the history of boats in the Lake District, beginning with dugout canoes and the first ferries, then moving on through the age of sail (and the early regattas) to the extraordinary era when steamboats were used to carry goods and day-trippers, and the wealthy had miniature liners with every luxury.

# Book Review

**George Weston,  
Vicar of Crosby  
Ravensworth  
1848-87**

by **David Risk**

Published by the author, 2010. ISBN 9780955272417.

Available from bookshops, £8.



George who? This book demonstrates very effectively what can be achieved in local history research on the life of a single individual, unearthing a mass of really rather interesting information about a person who was never much known outside his home community, even during his lifetime. Sixteen pages of detailed notes at the end show how it was done, through research in record offices and libraries across England.

One of the secrets is timing- Weston's tenure at Crosby Ravensworth coincides nicely with the golden age of local newspapers, when minute details of parish meetings would be recorded and published in, very probably, more than one local newspaper. This means that the book contains actual stories, rather than just historical deductions. My only real complaint is that the type is set without right-justification, which makes reading a little uncomfortable.

## CLHF CONTACTS

**Chair &  
general contact**

Jenni Lister

*jenni.lister@cumbriacc.gov.uk*  
**016973 32907**

**Bulletin Editor**

David Bradbury

*pastpresented@tesco.net*  
**01946 591524**

**Membership Sec.  
& Events Diary**

Valerie Halsall

*vhalsall@ktdbroadband.com*  
**01768 898046**