

The CLHF Convention, 29 September 2012

LOCAL HISTORY AND TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS

Building on our experiences last year, the Federation's annual convention will again be held at Higham Hall, in the countryside near Bassenthwaite Lake. This year, we will focus on the value of local building traditions as an element of the historic environment.

Cumbria is rich in its variety and quality of old buildings and is the home county of Dr. R.W. (Ron) Brunskill, pioneer of vernacular architecture studies, and especially of recording systems.

The programme will include:

**Background and the Great Rebuilding
Case studies**

**Recording buildings: What, Why and How
Practical recording sessions**

**CLHF Convention, Higham Hall, 29 September 2012, 9.30 am to 4 pm
Further details and a booking form will be provided in the next Bulletin**



Coniston Old Hall, c1903

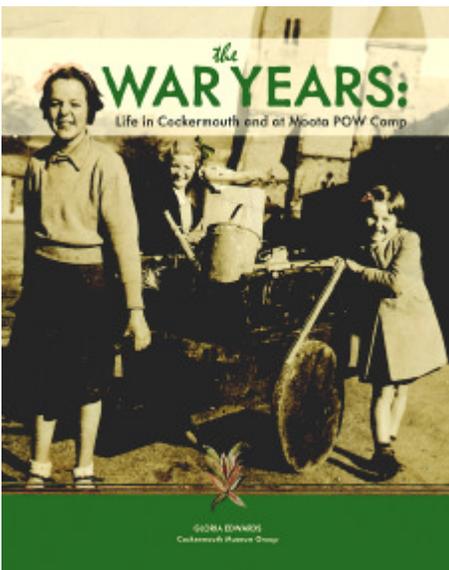
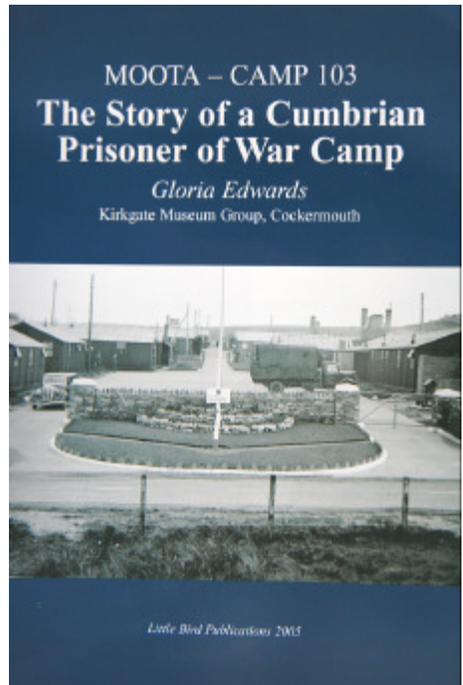
Hard Work and Total Obsession

A story from Cockermouth

The road to publication is paved with good intentions; from the seed of an idea to the harvest of the finished hard copy there will undoubtedly be much tribulation along the way. The book that was published at the end of 2009 (*The War Years: Life in Cockermouth and at Moota POW Camp*) was one such book. It was the result of maybe two years of research and compilation on my part, and its publication was the culmination of many months of hard work and total obsession. A book somehow takes on a life of its own and becomes more than just a book; one starts with the bare bones of raw research and then it is shaped and moulded, taking on one of many possible forms. Then the finished "baby" is presented to the outside world for praise or rejection, with the author fiercely protective whatever the outcome.

Maybe this all sounds a little dramatic, but that's how it felt at the time. I had written a book on the Moota POW Camp in 2005 and had been really excited to discover that very little original research existed on the Camp at

that time, so it was with real pleasure that I set about unearthing what proved to be a goldmine of first-hand memories, photographs, newspaper reports and official reports on life at Moota during World War II. That book was published successfully, but then I discovered that it had triggered further memories and offers of information, which



kept trickling through to me on a regular basis. It gradually dawned on me that I had yet another file full of unpublished information on Moota that really needed to be in the public domain; I needed to add to Moota's story. Then it occurred to me that there was a whole new story that hadn't been told, one that dovetailed in many ways with Moota's story, and that was the story of life in Cockermouth during World War II. Thus the seed was sown for *The War Years* book.

Many days were spent in Workington Library scrolling through the newspapers from the war years; newspapers have a wonderful capacity for diverting attention from the task in hand, and there were all kinds of interesting stories that caught my eye that were not related to what I was looking for – the adverts alone are priceless! Another major source of information for me was the Records Office at Whitehaven, where staff are unfailingly helpful and interested. Town Council minutes and other correspondence needed to be examined in great detail, notes taken and later sifted, redrafted and co-ordinated with other information. They were endlessly fascinating, and I often felt in real danger of information overload! I realised very quickly just what a hive of activity the Town Hall was at that time, and how many groups of people were all attempting to work together for the common good.

I also realised for the first time just how much strain was put on the lives of townspeople who were asked to take in evacuees. Before the research I had a vague, rosy picture of evacuees being welcomed with open arms by a benevolent population. I soon realised, after reading many letters describing the problems caused by taking in evacuees, that there was another side to the picture and it was, understandably, a traumatic time for many townspeople. They may not have been suffering bombing raids, but other aspects of their lives were being radically altered and causing great stress. Additionally, many were worried about friends and relatives serving in the armed forces.

As far as the Moota section was concerned, I had a sizeable collection of International Red Cross reports, which were very detailed as regards the day-to-day operation of the camp, and these provided a wonderful insight into the men's lives there. A very great pleasure for me was the privilege of meeting three of those former German POWs, and corresponding with a further two – we still exchange Christmas cards and snippets of information, and this has improved my German considerably! As recently as Christmas 2011, I was contacted by another former German POW, whose daughter has promised to record her father's memories of the camp. Of course,

these men are very elderly now, and soon much first hand-knowledge of life at Moota POW camp will be lost.

A major problem with research is knowing when to stop; it is possible to go on indefinitely, adding to information, but at some time point enough has to be enough, and then the unruly collection of assorted notes has to be tamed and worked into a coherent form. This requires great self-discipline and many cups of coffee! I was lucky in finding a book designer (Karen Sawrey) who relished the prospect of working on the book. Then there is the little matter of publishing costs; suffice it to say that very few people will be making their fortune in this kind of venture, and the hope must be to cover one's costs. I was lucky enough to receive a small grant from FOCAS towards research expenses, which was most welcome.

Ultimately, there is nothing quite like the satisfaction of holding the finished copy of a book in one's hand, because only the author knows quite how much effort has gone into it. The satisfaction of producing a well-researched local history book is immensely satisfying and, should it receive a warm public response, then the greater is that satisfaction.

*Gloria Edwards
Cockermouth Museum Group*

The Making of a School

Writing the history of a village school must be a common enough task for a local history group. Originally, I was asked to make a few suggestions about an abandoned project on our village school and, when I did so, was then asked to carry on. I found most of my source material in the school log books in the Carlisle Record Office. One or two legal problems about the foundation of the school entailed an enjoyable trip to Lambeth Palace. There were also some old governors' minutes, giving a subtly different view of what was going on at school from what the head recorded. More interesting still was collecting memories from people in the village who had

been at the school twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago. That was the real challenge and any school history is made by the liveliness and multiplicity of its personal memories. Gathering photographs also presented difficulties, particularly in the sixties, when people were using instant cameras. Newspapers were the worst source, since going through microfilms is one of the most advanced forms of torture known to modern man (or woman). The best illustrations were the drawings kindly provided by children from the school itself - lively matchstick figures often. When it was all finished, set up on the computer in PDF files, the disk was taken to Reeds, the printers in Penrith, who performed a masterly, professional job at an economic price. We managed to obtain no commercial sponsors but the printing costs were generously supported by the local area magazine, the Raven. The book sold at £10 a copy and all the profits went to the school. Now that it is finished, we could produce a better one, with all the extra material that the book itself encouraged people to bring out.

Bill Roberts
Kirkoswald Local History Group.

The Pleasures of Publication

Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society aims to provide information and encourage local history research and this is being achieved through our website. The Village Histories Group was set up to provide information about the Peninsula villages, for the website, to help family historians learn something about where their ancestors came from as well as increase the historical information about the area for future researchers. By providing a place for publication we hope to encourage research which will be shared with a bigger audience.

An example of the mutual benefit that arises from sharing the research on the website is illustrated by my recent experience. I have had a very interesting exchange of emails with a lady who found an article that I had researched and written about the connection between the development of Kents Bank and James Simpson Young, who was a relative of her

husband's family. It enabled her to fill in gaps in her family history research and she was able to provide me with background information about the family than I had not been able to discover and so the piece has been updated to include that information.

Nigel Mills who is the Society's treasurer maintains the website www.cartmel-peninsula-lhs.org.uk and is also responsible for steering the Village Histories Group. Without his ideas, knowledge and enthusiasm we would not have started the project. A smaller group of us are also involved in the Victoria County History Project which will use and build on the village histories research and will lead to further publication.

Pat Rowland
Cartmel Peninsula LHS



JUBILEE DIGESTS

As part of her Jubilee celebrations, Her Majesty has graciously agreed to rededicate the Victoria County History of England project (started in Queen Victoria's reign 113 years ago). In response, Cumbria County History Trust have undertaken to produce, during 2012, Jubilee Digests for every parish and township in Cumbria, some 340 in all. The digests will be short and factual, covering only (1) name and status of place; (2) acreage, extent of common and date of enclosure; (3) population; (4) landownership; (5) economic activity; (6) places of worship; (7) schools and other institutions.

Precise research guidelines have been prepared by Angus Winchester, and only a

limited number of prescribed sources are to be used. So this task is straightforward - easy for the experienced, and an excellent introduction to research for others. Already volunteers are at work on about half of the digests, but we are still looking for new volunteers, particularly in Westmorland, south and east of Kendal (but other places too).

Many of our member societies are already involved: those that aren't should act now to make sure that all their catchment area is covered. To find out, please contact any of the following - me, June Hall, or CCHT volunteer coordinator Sarah Rose at s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk.

Richard Brockington
Cumbria County History Trust

Lorton & Derwentfells LHS Journal reaches its 50th issue.

In August 2012 the Society will publish its fiftieth issue of the Journal, formerly the Newsletter. From January 1994 the Society produced three Newsletters a year for its members, containing both administrative items and articles, but these were split in 2005 with the new Journal containing just articles and being published twice a year.

The Journal is printed and distributed to all members, many of whom are some distance from the area. The Journal has always sought to be inclusive, and is written by the members and for the members. Therefore academic standards of research and writing are not required, though often achieved. There has been a wide mix of contributions, which adds up to a body of knowledge related mainly to the rural district to the west and south of the Derwent.

We feel that a printed Journal, by Firpress of Workington, is still appreciated, though the increasing cost of postage of around 150 items causes the Society to review this from time to time. But also the articles are of interest to many non-members with links to the area, and so each time a new issue is published, the previous issue is then published on our



website in pdf form. This costs nothing. To celebrate the fiftieth issue we have now placed all the Newsletters and Journals on the website, and anyone can see these on www.derwentfells.com/journal and may download or print a copy for personal use. The next project might be an index!

We look forward to the 100th issue in August 2037, but wonder whether it will be printed on paper.

Derek Denman
L&DFLHS

The Theme...

In case you hadn't guessed, the theme for this issue of the CLHF Bulletin is Publishing- getting your research or your stories recorded in some more-or-less permanent form for others to use, so that with luck, they can in turn build on your work, and so on, and so on. Over the page- the biggest recent example of all...

TELLING SELLAFIELD STORIES

Many of you will have heard by now about Sellafield Stories, the major oral history project that I have been fortunate enough to manage for the last (is it really only 3?) three years. After a successful bid to BNFL we were able to set about collecting, processing and making available the 100 hundred recordings that make up the Oral Archive that is Sellafield Stories. The name may sound a bit non-specific but this is deliberate – woven from the words of workers, locals and opponents is the tapestry of West Cumbrian life in the second half of the twentieth century, intricate and richly textured.

How we have set about delivering our research – “publishing” it in its widest sense – was driven partly by our undertaking to have a book written, and partly by our recognition that the printed word is not everyone’s choice in this digital era. We chose to make several versions of the material available, and I thought I’d tell you a bit about how we did stuff, and what the difficulties, or benefits, were.

First of all there’s the book. We had the money to pay a well-known Cumbrian author, widely enjoyed for his chatty style, to put historical details, opinions and information together with selections from about a third of our interviews to create an informal history of “the Factory”. (I

can thoroughly recommend the short Afterword written by the CLHF Chairman!). It’s selling well and people have enjoyed it. The publishing side was dealt with by Constable, but the proof-reading of the contributors’ pieces was done by me – and it was time-consuming and arduous, and had to be done twice. This was partly due to the need for extreme accuracy when you are using people’s actual words. The author’s bits were dealt with in the usual way by proof-readers and editors. There are a lot of bits you never think of – contracts, royalties, cover design, images, correct attributions, copyright, review copies – until you are confronted with them and Hunter Davies, as a much-published author, was able to help us. Constable undertook the publicity and the book launch, and so far all is well.

The exhibition actually came a good while before the book. This is a large portable display that takes a fair bit of putting up and taking down – more than we originally envisaged – but can be abbreviated to accommodate smaller venues. The display boards are very flexible and can be arranged in some intricate shapes to fit in the spaces available. The panels were created by a design company in Carlisle, Liquid Design, who took great pains to give us what we wanted – even when we didn’t know! Each panel is printed onto heavy duty card and attached to the backing boards by heavy Velcro. This



New housing for Windscale workers, seen in 1964 (thanks Judith !)



The Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactor at Sellafield, c 1970

© David Bradbury

approach allowed us to use images coupled with quotations to explore themes from the recordings. It was another labour-intensive task, working closely with the designer who put it together for us – panels, introductory leaflet, posters and accompanying booklet – but the work of finding and choosing images and quotations was down to the project. Again, much proof-reading and working to deadlines were needed, and it has to be done by someone really familiar with the material. Included with the exhibition are three wonderful machines that let you listen to a variety of different short excerpts from the interviews at the press of a button – a fantastic opportunity to sample the different voices and subjects. Making the clips is another time-consuming process but well worthwhile when you see rapt visitors listening to Sellafield Stories.

The booklet I mentioned is also designed to complement the CD/DVD (one or the other depending on how many images we use) that will be produced with a range of audio clips from a wide selection of contributors. Although final decisions are still to be made, we're thinking that, like the exhibition, themes that have run through the various stories will be grouped together. We're planning to make the CD and booklet, or DVD, available through libraries as well as for purchase by the general public. It will also accompany the education pack that is being created for us by an educa-

tion specialist. This is designed principally to help primary schools look at the nuclear element in local history in the same way as the mining industry. The wealth of details on different topics such as travel, education and farming is a bonus.

And finally much of what we've collected will be published on the internet. All contributors were asked to consent to this, and we are able to put images, summaries of the interviews, and transcriptions onto the website. A simple login and password procedure is necessary – to allow us to collect some information about people using the website – before you gain access to the material. This is very much still work in progress, but has already attracted a number of enthusiastic enquirers. Audio clips, but not whole audio files, are available with many of the transcripts to whet your appetite for the real thing – only available in their entirety to visitors to the Local Studies Library in Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre at Whitehaven.

So you can see we are publishing in lots of ways – and we still haven't really explored podcasts and a few more technical wizardries – and I haven't mentioned conference presentations and lectures.....I begin to think Sellafield's is turning into the Never-Ending Story!

*Jenni Lister
Chairman/Project Manager*

EVENTS DIARY

Area indicators: North  South  East  West  Central 

Meetings start at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated

MAY 2012

-  10 Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton
The People of Roman Britain – Lindsay Allason Jones 01900 85482
-  14 Cartmel Fell & District History Society ?Jerwood Centre 6.00pm
Historical gems in the Jerwood Centre Grasmere 015395 68389
-  17 Levens Local History Group Levens Village Institute
The Kendal Union Workhouses – Peter Higginbotham 01539 560318
-  21 Shap LHS Memorial Hall
Life in Flookburgh – Jack Manning 01931 716244
-  22 Duddon Valley LHG Broughton Victory Hall
AGM 01229 861511
-  24 Lamplugh and District Heritage Society Lamplugh WI Hall
Plants in Lore and Legend – Harry and Margaret Fancy 01946 861493

JUNE

-  12 Cartmel Fell & District History Society meet at destination, 6.00pm
Tour of Broadleys (Windermere Motor Boat Club) followed by a light supper
015395 68389
-  14 Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton
AGM (details of post AGM tba) 01900 85482
-  21 Levens Local History Group Kendal 6.30pm
Kendal – A Guided Walk – Trevor Hughes 01539 560318
-  25 Shap LHS
Visit to Howgill Castle, Milburn 01931 716244
-  26 Duddon Valley LHG Broughton Victory Hall
Diaries of William Fleming – Michael Stevens 01229 861511

JULY

-  3 Bampton and District LHS Memorial Hall, Bampton
10th Birthday Celebrations Annual BBQ at Lattrigg, Rosgill courtesy of Heather
and David Pitt 01931 713645
-  12 Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton
Mosser: A Cumbrian rural community across 800 years – Dr Angus Winchester
01900 85482

JULY 2012 continued

-  16 Shap LHS Numbers strictly limited to 12 –Fare £4.50
Cruise on Lancaster Canal 01931 716244
-  24 Duddon Valley LHG Broughton Victory Hall
Whaling from Whitehaven – Dr. Rob David 01229 861511

AUGUST

-  20 Shap LHS numbers limited – Donations to charity
Visit to Newby Hall 01931 716244

SEPTEMBER

-  13 Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton
The Baroness of Belsfield by Windermere – Ian Jones 01900 85482
-  20 Levens Local History Group Levens Village Institute
Commander Walter Strickland R.N. – Barry Jolly 01539 560318
-  24 Shap LHS Memorial Hall
Abbots, Canons and the Community (Shap Abbey) – Harry Hawkins
01931 716244
-  26 Duddon Valley LHG Broughton Victory Hall
The Story of Ravenglass – Peter van Zeller 01229 861511
-  27 Lamplugh and District Heritage Society Lamplugh WI Hall
Whitehaven Potteries – Florence Sibson 01946 861493

OCTOBER

-  2 Bampton and District LHS Memorial Hall, Bampton
Lancaster Canal Trust- Before, Present and Future – Speaker – member of Trust
01931 713645
-  3 Sedbergh & District HS Settlebeck High School
St. George as a Patron Saint in late Medieval England – Dr. Sam Riches
015396 22505
-  17 Sedbergh & District HS Settlebeck High School
The Ancient Kingdom of Northumbria – Sheena Gemmel 015396 22505
-  18 Levens Local History Group Levens Village Institute
Members Evening – Where are we now? 01539 560318
-  25 Lamplugh and District Heritage Society Lamplugh WI Hall
West Cumberland at War – Jeff Wilson 01946 861493
-  29 Shap LHS Memorial Hall
English Folk Songs – Sheila Fletcher 01931 716244

PUBLISHING LOCAL HISTORY

Twenty-five years ago, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, I discovered hidden treasure. I admit, it wasn't very well hidden; the local studies librarian had catalogued it in detail. However, it was kept in a locked safe, in a locked room, for use only by special request. Worse, it wasn't an it, they were a them- about a dozen manuscript notebooks by an enthusiastic local historian who had died in 1932. His name was Albert Sorby Buxton, and he was locally famous, both for his two published volumes on the history of the town from about 1700 to 1830, and for his many charming watercolour renderings of historic local scenes, which are still a highlight of Mansfield Museum.

With the agreement of the library, and of Mr Buxton's almshouse trust (to which a payment was made) I set to work and published a new book, telling the story of Mansfield before 1700, using his words (including some material which had been published in his lifetime as newspaper articles etc.), maps and line drawings. The material scattered throughout the notebooks was arranged and indexed, and now, if you visit a library in the vicinity of Mansfield, you should be able to pick a copy straight off the shelf to study, and quickly find material on the topic which interests you.

A great deal has happened since then to make the publishing of local history research easier, but inevitably, there's no single "best way" to do it. Here are my thoughts on the pros and cons of various of various current options.

The Royal Road- get selected by a national book publisher

If you look at the local history shelves in W.H. Smith or Waterstone's, you will quickly recognise that the main national publishers of local history tend to go for winning formulae, which can be reproduced for every county, or every large town. At county level, the best bets seem to be murders (usually from about the 1850s onward, when newspapers began to proliferate) and the supernatural. If you want

to publish the history of a county's agriculture, or probably even sport, you are probably going to have to get really serious and attract the attention of a university history department.

At town level, sport becomes a winner, particularly if your local football / rugby team once won something beyond the county boundary. The catch is that, unlike a book about murders, a book about a football team will need as many action photographs as you can find. Indeed, photographs are the key to national publishers' books about individual towns. Many such books are basically just collections of photos, with captions (one variant popular in recent years being "then and now" with two photos of the same scene side-by-side; if you're going to do this, please make an effort to stand where the "then" photographer stood, and if the result is a much uglier photo, make a cheeky comment on modern architecture and planning). If you are offered the chance to produce a book of photographs with "History" in the title, then consider it a challenge, to convey to the reader / viewer a sense of the town's progress through time.

The dignified approach- books published by a local specialist.

Some people really love their local history, and a few even love to publish their local history. If there's a subject you are passionate about, which might be interesting to at least a thousand other people if you can put your enthusiasm into the writing, it's probably worth looking on the shelves of a local library to see who's publishing serious history in the local area. Do take the time to study the publishers' output in some depth before deciding whom to approach- better to waste your time than theirs.

The CLHF approach- books published by a local society.

The ultimate aim of this article, of course, is to persuade local history societies to take on the responsibility at the next level of book publishing, subjects too localised to be taken on by any commercial enterprise. Almost any village history is likely to fall into this category. I'm not using the word "responsibility" lightly here;

money will have to change hands at various points in the process, and the society will need some proper organisation to deal with that.

Local societies have some advantages over commercial publishers, perhaps the most important of which is the ability to tap into non-profit funding. While grants are of course available for the highest levels of academic research, as published by universities, community involvement is the key to a cornucopia of riches, which can even make it possible to give free copies of a community-produced book to every household in the area. Funding has been discussed in a previous Bulletin, and yes, to get serious grants the society will have to fill in serious forms, and tick serious boxes. The end result, however, will be a book produced to commercial standards, which would otherwise have been impracticable. If you go down the grant-aided route, the important thing is to make very sure that the quality of the work matches the quality of the production. Think hard about the structure, and the writing, and any specially-created artwork.

If, on the other hand, the society, or some individuals within the society, can stand the loss of some hard cash, then there are no real constraints. If one or more society members are known to have a particular expertise relating to some topic which is of general interest to the community (but not necessarily ticking the boxes of the grant-givers) then they should be encouraged to put it in writing, and get it published by the society with their names on. The production quality will be entirely dependent on the society's resources, but bear in mind that those might well include the resources of individual members who have access to equipment which can produce a perfectly respectable booklet (*hint* the really tricky part is trimming down the opening edge, so that the centre pages don't stick out further than the covers and look ugly; this will need a specialist guillotine). If such resources are not available within the society, then the stakes have to be raised, and a commitment made to the production of a batch of copies at an "instant print" shop. Be realistic when you do this- if there are 150 houses in your village, ordering 200 copies is quite a gamble! "Instant print" has come a long way in recent years,

with the replacement of photocopiers by laser printers, which can produce very high quality given the right input.

Which brings me to another challenge for local societies producing their own books. Back in 1987, I produced artwork by physically sticking the computer-typeset text and copies of Mr Buxton's pictures onto blank pages, from which printing plates were then produced photographically (as, I am told, my grandad had done half a century before, on the dining-table, for the production of the well-known "Told in Pictures" series of history books by C.W. Airne, M.A. (Cantab.)). Getting the best out of physical artwork is one of the skills for which quality printers are paid high fees; for a society to produce something which can be laser-printed at a bargain price, somebody will have to learn how to use a word-processor effectively (for example, as a sequel to the earlier hint, if the pages are to be trimmed, the printing towards the centre pages of the book should be a little further from the edge of the untrimmed paper).

Illustrations are the biggest challenge. First, they are the element which is most likely not to be the author's own work, so always try to get permission from the creator (or more likely the creator's heirs) where known. That includes commercial creators- the Francis Frith Collection, for example, has built a major business on the work of generations of photographers whose copyright it owns. With defunct commercial publishers, a small local publication is unlikely to attract the attention of whatever body now technically owns their rights, but for any image less than about a century old, you should at least make an effort to check.

Second, the technical requirements for book illustrations are somewhat more demanding than for, say, a web page. The most obvious aspect of this is the resolution; a typical computer or tablet will have about 1000 to 1250 pixels across its longer dimension. A colour-printed photograph in a book needs about 1250 pixels across a width of 10 centimetres. Thus, if you simply copy an image from your website and put it in a book, it will either look as if it's made up from little blocks,

or it will be much smaller than it appears on screen. One moral of this is- when preparing images for your website, make them much bigger than you need, then create a reduced-scale copy to appear on screen.

When creating original artwork, such as maps and plans, take some tips from A. Wainwright. If you can't approach his standards of neat drawing and writing, either find somebody else who can, or use the graphic facilities of your computer.

Colour printing costs a lot more than black-on-white, but there are very few types of book today which can reasonably be published without at least a colour cover. Bearing in mind that the cost of a single sheet printed on both sides is less than two sheets printed on one side, you should consider putting "bonus" colour images on the inner side of the cover. If the budget permits, having the centre-spread of the book's middle pages in colour will also be attractive (the centre spread is also the best place for a large single image, such as a map).

Here's a problem to which there really is no ideal solution. At the most cheap and cheerful level, you can produce a 64-page A5 booklet with a nice full-cover colour by having 16 pages of ordinary A4 80gsm paper (don't worry too much about gsm, grams per square metre, but you'll see if you look at the packets in stationery shops that 80gsm is the flimsiest paper considered generally acceptable) printed in black on both sides, and one sheet of 160 or 200 gsm card printed in colour as above, then having the bundle folded in half, stapled a couple of times, and trimmed down the opening edge. But when you put that on a bookshelf, it will effectively disappear, because all that's visible is the fold. For this reason, even for books with only a few dozen pages, many people opt for more up-market techniques. My A.S. Buxton creation, back in 1987, was sewn in signatures; that is, it was divided into groups of 16 pages (4 folded sheets), each of which was sewn together as a separate bundle, then all the bundles were joined together within the cover, which had a proper flat spine instead of a fold, with the title printed along it.

Sewn binding is the most durable, but of course it's also the most expensive, so to create a book with a proper spine many choose the compromise of "perfect binding". For this technique, only the cover card is folded; the inner sheets are gathered unfolded into a single bundle, their inner edges in perfect alignment, then the whole bundle is glued inside the spine of the cover. When done correctly, this works well, but the smallest fault in a "perfect" binding will lead to individual pages becoming unglued and falling out of the book. For libraries in particular, that's a nightmare, so if you decide to use this technique, you should at the very least find samples of work from the same printer to see how well they are standing up to use, then take one of the approved samples along when ordering the job, and say "I want the same paper, card and glue as this if possible" (actually, this technique works best with the cheapest paper, which is why all standard mass-market paperbacks are perfect bound; conversely it works worst with the glossy heavyweight paper sometimes used to bring out the best in photographs).

Spines with titles printed down them are not just useful for your own bookshelves. The selling of the book is the next important point to consider. If you have no intention of selling through bookshops, but are happy to do a deal with one or two local shops, or simply sell most copies at society meetings, then the spine issue is not so important (and you can save quite a lot of money on production costs). But in a bookshop, a book with an invisible spine is a book that will probably only sell when specially requested, because there just isn't room to display every book cover-forward.

Another consideration in the selling area is price. The problem is that the seller is the only person in the production and supply chain who has to undertake a separate transaction for every single book; also, keeping half-a-dozen copies of a book on display in a shop is more expensive than keeping a couple of hundred in a cardboard box in your wardrobe. Therefore, like it or not, the book-seller is generally agreed to be entitled to between 40 and 50% of the amount a

customer pays for each book. Selling at society meetings obviously cuts out this expense; selling via the local newsagent you should not be offended if such a percentage is suggested.

A quick word about ISBNs. International Standard Book Numbers are used both by booksellers and by librarians. You can get a block of 10 or 100 ISBNs assigned to your society, but it will cost money. See www.isbn.nielsenbook.co.uk

For further details. The good thing about assigning ISBNs to your books is that, notification to the ISBN Agency of the details of a new book associated with a given ISBN automatically generates a listing in the database used by booksellers throughout the world. Which brings me to....

Online sales. If your society has a website, it is possible to set up a basic online sales system using a payment service provider such as Paypal. Every time a payment is received, the payment service will email your designated sales-person with details of the transaction, so that the items can be dispatched. Even if the society does not have its own website (or uses a website hosting service which does not permit third-party transactions) there are other routes, such as Ebay shops. Even if you decide that none of these options is appropriate for you, if you have paid the fee to have International Standard Book Numbers allocated, then your books can potentially find buyers anywhere in the world.

Here's a big secret: online retailers like Amazon only keep a fairly small selection of books in stock. Instead, they have arrangements with some of the bigger traditional wholesalers to tap into their stocks. Even the biggest wholesalers can't stock everything, so if you suddenly receive an order for your local history book from an industrial estate on the south coast, that could well be an Amazon customer in Australia, whose order has been passed on to a UK wholesaler for fulfilment, and is in turn passed on to your society as publisher, so you can send the book to the wholesaler, with an invoice, so it can be put in Amazon packaging and sent to the original customer. A word of advice: Amazon can

charge what they like, and you are going to have to do more work fulfilling an order like this than if the customer had simply sent you a cheque and asked for the book directly. Don't feel obliged to give any trade discount!

(An important caveat to the above: cheques from overseas customers can be a nightmare, so if you do receive one, wait until it clears and check how much real money you've ended up with before sending the goods).

The mad approach- self-published books from individuals.

There is something of a stigma to publishing your work yourself, but ultimately, it's your own money you are throwing away if you're useless. If you're as good as your keenness makes you believe, you may even make more money this way than by the more respectable routes outlined above (in particular, royalties paid to local history authors by commercial publishers tend to be somewhat parsimonious). For an individual, all the advice above relating to societies applies, with the addition that if you can create one or two illustrated talks, you can promote your book to a variety of local groups and sell copies to members while they are enthusiastic about what you've just told them.

The 21st century approach- 1) E-books

So far, I have not created any e-books in the truest sense of the word, although of course you may well be reading this bulletin on a computer or tablet screen rather than on paper. E-books, however, are not supposed to be imitations of paper books, and the pdf format used for the online Bulletin sits uneasily on the typical e-book reader, with its electronic ink display. It seems to me that the e-book format is ideal for publishing truly specialist text material, with little or no illustration.

For example, you could produce a collection of 18th and 19th century newspaper stories relating to your village; it is most unlikely that

these will be illustrated, but that doesn't make the stories any less interesting. Alternatively, how about something very dry, but still potentially very useful, like a transcript of parish poor-rate records. Because there is no printing cost for an e-book, and because the text is fully searchable, niche topics like this could find their ideal outlet.

I hope to produce one or two e-books along these lines over the summer, so we'll see how I get on.

2) The World-Wide Web

The internet was designed as a means of communication, but the world-wide web was designed as a means of sharing information in easily retrievable form, and thanks to the development of search engines like Google and Bing, its potential is being realised in astonishing fashion.

The big challenge of the internet for a small group like a local history society is the near-inevitability of losing a little bit of money each year. It is, of course, possible to create "paywalls" for websites, so that would-be users have to pay before they can see your wonderful online products (as with ancestry.com and other genealogy services). The catch is, to make it worthwhile paying for the paywall, you have to be working on a large scale. Cumbria Archives managed to get a small quid pro quo for paywall material by requesting access for their offices in return for documents provided to such a website for scanning. Local societies probably don't have that sort of clout, so the question must be asked, "to what extent are we providing a public service?"

If the answer is that the society's services are for members of the society, or the local community, then a website should be used for promotional purposes only. If, on the other hand, it is decided that the society's aim is to promote the study of the local community's history, then free sharing of information online, at a small cost to the society, may reap great dividends in the form of information shared in return by people with access to relevant resources in, for example, the Library of Congress in America.

Having mentioned a cost for putting information onto a website- this can be zero, but only if you're prepared to meet the conditions imposed by the provider of the web facility you use. Read the small print very carefully.

In general, it looks more professional if you acquire your own domain name, so that your website effectively advertises itself. There are issues to be considered here, particularly if your society has a very long name. Including the whole name in the address of your website will mean that when it appears in old-fashioned print, people will have to do a lot of typing to find you. If you use an abbreviation, you may be confused with another organisation of the same name. The CLHF has cheated slightly by using two domain names for the same website, one long and one abbreviated.

An Awful Warning about domain names. If you have a domain name, you have to re-register it every so often (for a fee). You will be sent reminders, and if you ignore them you will be sent more reminders, and if you ignore them all there will come a moment in time when the domain name becomes available for somebody else to use. There are people out there with computers set to keep track of such domain name abandonment, and to register it for themselves the second it becomes available. That means people who have been accustomed to using your website will suddenly find themselves looking at somebody else's website, and you will get the blame if that other website is not to everybody's taste!

PS: The alternative to all the above

A generation after A.S. Buxton, in the 1950s and 1960s, there was another man whose encyclopaedic knowledge of local history used to draw substantial audiences to his talks. He is fondly remembered by the older generation as "Mr Mansfield". But he didn't produce books, and his notes didn't get into a safe in the local library or museum. What he knew is at best half-remembered, at worst, lost forever.

David Bradbury

Random news! 1: Epic Epiacum

Epic Epiacum Ltd has received a £49,200 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a project on the Northumberland border, just outside Alston, Cumbria. Led by a steering group of enthusiastic volunteers, the 18 month long project will focus on increasing access and understanding of this well preserved "hidden gem of the North Pennines". The project started on 1 April 2012 and will run until January 2014.

The aims of the project include training local volunteers to guide visitors around the site, with interpretation, increasing access and participation for all ages, including school children and life long learners. Also, we aim to establish the site as a training base for heritage skills, such as dry stone walling.

Epic Epiacum Ltd was set up to raise local and regional knowledge and understanding of the Epiacum Roman fort, which is the highest stone build fort in the UK. Situated on Castle Nook Farm, Alston, the site is managed by English Heritage, whose recent "farmer miner landscape study" included extensive landscape and geophysical research on the site. Findings concluded that Epiacum is "one of the most prominent earthwork monuments in the region". It is for this reason that the directors of Epic Epiacum believe that the site needs to be more widely promoted and understood. The opportunities for involving the local community are rich and varied and include archaeology, heritage skills training, interpretation and education.

Commenting on the award, Elaine Edgar (director) said "We are absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to deliver this exciting project in the local area, together with HLF. We believe the benefits will be significant to the local community and it is pleasing to have such a strong base of highly enthusiastic and creative volunteers who are keen to work with us"

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East, said: "Epiacum Roman fort holds hidden clues as to the way our ancestors lived and how the local community developed all those years ago."

2: Dry Stone Walling Grand Prix

The Cumbria Dry Stone Walling Grand Prix involves the following 4 events:

Saturday 5th May: Shacklabank Farm, Firbank, Sedburgh

Saturday 28th July: Penrith Agricultural Show

Thursday 16th August: Brough Agricultural Show

Saturday 25th August: Dentdale Show

Competitors can enter either 1 or more of the events but to compete for a place in the Grand Prix you must participate in at least 3 events. Competitions will start at 9.00am, walling to be completed by 4.00 pm.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL COMPETITORS WHO ENTER BEFORE THE DAY



CLASS 1 - Professional / Master Craftsmen

CLASS 2 - Amateur / Open

CLASS 3 - Novice

CLASS 4 - Junior / Young Farmers

CLASS 5 - Veteran Class (age 60+)

PRIZES: Will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions in each class.

There will be an overall Grand Prix trophy winner and it is also hoped to award additional prizes for the Best Footings, Best Cams and other special prizes. All competitors who satisfactorily complete their section of wall will be entitled to a £10 fee to cover expenses.

Entry forms are available from: Friends of the Lake District, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal, LA9 7SS. Tel: 01539 720788.

Book Review

Sellafield Stories (ed. Hunter Davies)

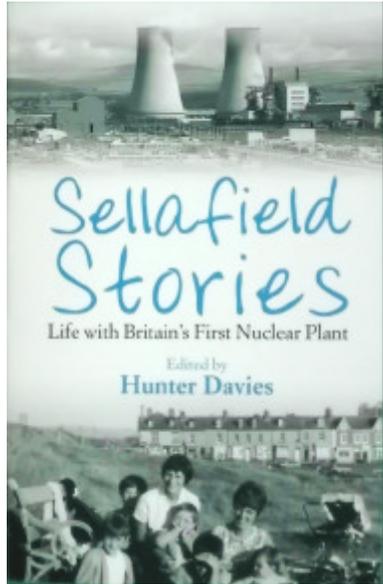
Constable, 2012, paperback, 368pp
ISBN 978-1-78033-299-4, £9.99

Here is a book which needed to be produced. The nuclear factory which dominates western Cumbria has been a source of rumour and unease for over half a century, and the interviews presented here confirm what some of us had long suspected: Sellafield staff are just the same as the rest of us, warts and all.

Hunter Davies has selected material from 36 of over 100 interviews conducted with people who have known Sellafield, one way or another, over its lifetime. I was slightly surprised to see how many names I knew from other contexts, but all the selections are justified. Most have worked at Sellafield, but there are also valuable contributions from others affected by the plant's local omnipresence.

Because this is a book of stories, we get a good look at some individual episodes, from more than one viewpoint. Because this is a book of *individual* stories, we also learn a great deal about the culture, and the tensions which made some of the more notorious incidents possible (particularly the mismatch between security and proper monitoring).

Though marred by poor reproduction of the portraits of interviewees, this is a fascinating and important book.



PS: In the last Bulletin we reviewed a book called "Surveying the High Ground", based on a preview copy. The book is now (belatedly) published, with a completely different title: *Cairns, Fields and Cultivation: Archaeological Landscapes of the Lake District Uplands*. ISBN 978-1-907686-07-8, £25

WE STILL LACK A SECRETARY

Which is the main reason why this Bulletin is over a month late. All we needed was somebody to co-ordinate our last committee meeting!

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