



# Cumbria Local History Federation

Bulletin 88: Spring 2022



The Yards of Penrith

What do the symbols indicate?

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## Chairman's Chat

Hopefully summer is coming shortly and some fine weather so that the summer outings that are being planned can progress this year. It will be nice to meet up with friends for a day out after the last two years of Covid restrictions. A number of societies have started to hold their meetings in person again and a few have tried joint personal and Zoom meetings. Personally I have enjoyed being able to talk in person to a number of groups rather than via Zoom. Don't forget to send Liz a copy of your programme for our website and to circulate in her newsletters.

The Federation has continued with the preparation for its archive project and those groups who are signed up for the courses will be informed of the final details shortly.

We have recently had a productive meeting with Cumbria Library Services to discuss the future of both the local study libraries in the County and in particular the Jackson Library in Carlisle Central Library. We came away from the meeting happy that Local Studies is still a major part of the Library Services. For those of you are not aware the Jackson Library is a unique collection of books, papers and other ephemera relating to Cumbria.

The 2022 CLHF Convention is progressing well and further details can be found in this Bulletin. I must thank the Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society for offering to help organise the event. Is this something that your Society could help with next year?

There is a short piece in this Bulletin about alterations in the banking system which can affect a number of societies. We have been in correspondence with the Charity commissioners with regards to the problems this can cause small societies and we have heard that they are talking to the banking industry about these problems.

Let's hope we have a fine summer and I look forward to seeing you at the Convention.

Graham Brooks Chair CLHF

## PENRITH'S YARDS OF HISTORY

Although Penrith has well over fifty yards within the town, they are not so well-known or documented as those in Kendal or Cockermouth. Since they were recorded in 1950, many had already disappeared, and many altered since then.

However, there are a large number existing that have been explored recently, inspired by a record produced by Stella Platt in 1997 with beautiful watercolour pictures of some of the yards. The entrance to the yards is by alleyways, some only wide enough for pedestrians, others large enough for carriages or carts. They are probably a heritage of old burgage plots or early crofts, and tofts inhabited when there was a move into towns for families seeking employment and security.

The architecture of the yards is fascinating, with gates or doors that could be barricaded, external staircases to upper floors, stone slab entrances and dwellings flying over the entranceway. The yards contained a mixture of sometimes rough-and-ready buildings many one-up and down, used for residential or commercial purposes, with allotments, orchards, or gardens at the rear where possible.

Large families would share a dwelling, some with as many as eight children, with the parents developing a wide variety of trades from leather and cloth working, blacksmiths, and food-related work to occupations such as coal agents, coachmen and account clerks.

Larger yards are usually attached to an inn or hostelry where horses could be stabled and coach houses. The names of yards reflect the inn next door or often the name of the owner; one or two record the type of occupation in the yard. Unfortunately, some names are missing or others not decipherable; but the yards which have disappeared are generally recorded.

New developments have up-graded many dwellings within the yards where they have been turned into useful small apartments or cottages for people wishing to live in town. The Yards are still serving a purpose in

Penrith, not only as useful living, or storage areas, but as a reminder of social history before rapid change overtook the town.

*Sheila Fletcher and Susan Beachell*

## Question?



This is the stone entrance to Williamson's yard on Middlegate in Penrith.

Can anyone suggest what the symbols indicate?

Suggestions to the Editor please: [ruthlawley@hotmail.com](mailto:ruthlawley@hotmail.com)

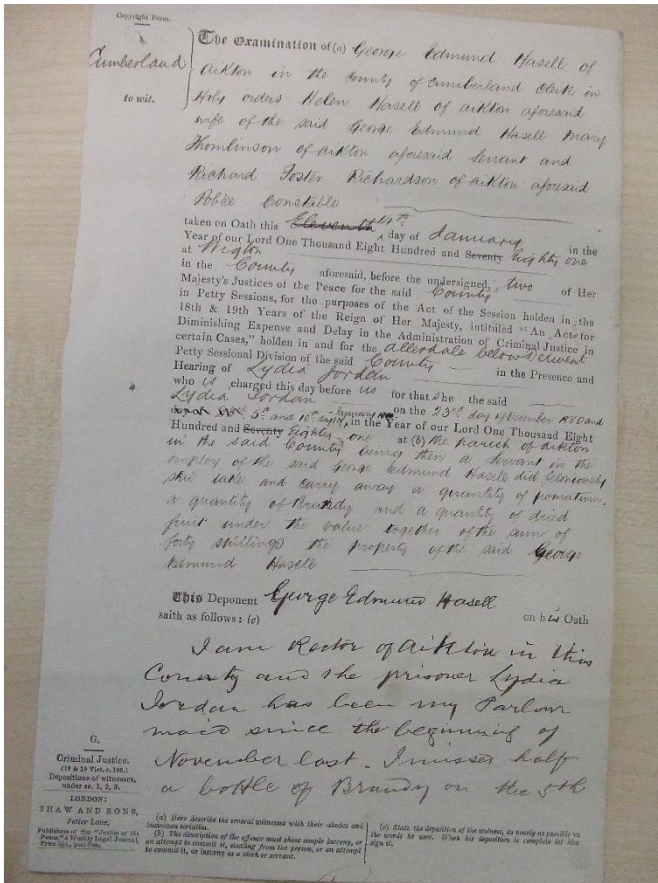
## Gathering Evidence

In *Bulletin 86* (Summer 2021), I wrote about the sequence of petitions addressed to Cumberland's Quarter Sessions, 1686 – 1942. Also to be found at Carlisle Archive Centre amongst the Quarter Sessions records (reference Q/ 11) is a separate sequence of 'examinations' which also throw light on the lives and work of individuals, generally those less fortunate. In a sample folder of 'examinations' taken before Justices of the Peace concerning criminal cases to be considered by the forthcoming Easter 1881 Sessions held at the Crown Court, Carlisle, information is provided which *The Carlisle Journal* did not refer to in its otherwise remarkably detailed reporting of the cases the Justices considered.

William Rearden, an ironworker, of Dearham, recounted that a couple of weeks ago he had taken in a lodger and that together they had returned home from a visit to Maryport at about 10 p.m. 'a little tight'; sleeping together, William rose the next day at 5.30 a.m. to go to work, but on returning from work at 5 p.m. and changing his clothes, he found that the silver watch and chain he had left under his pillow was missing. Separate statements from a pawnbroker's assistant and a hawker at Whitehaven established that the lodger had been advanced £1/10/- for the watch and had then sold the pawn ticket for 6/- to the hawker who in turn then redeemed the watch for £1/10/ with interest. In an era which since the 1850s had witnessed rapid town and industrial development, the overcrowding and poverty which Whitehaven and other towns suffered from may perhaps also be associated with the case of the boarder a moulder at Workington had taken in only to have his cloth coat, valued 15/- [75p] by a pawnbroker, stolen. Other pawnbrokers and a clothes

dealer are also revealed as the presumed unwitting recipients of pairs of boots a Whitehaven shoemaker gave a man to sell on his behalf and of an umbrella sold to the clothes dealer for 3/-.

Martin Hughes, a labourer of Hensingham, recounted that on a Sunday night he had gone to his work, leaving the woman he had engaged as a housekeeper and his two children in the house; and that on returning home at 7.0 a.m. the next morning he found that the woman had gone and so also missing were a shawl and a petticoat.



The Examination of Revd. George E Hasell, 14 January 1881 (Carlisle Archive Centre, Q/11 Easter 1881 Sessions)

In a more affluent household which could afford to employ three live-in servants, the Revd George Hasell, Rector of Aikton, reported the theft of a quantity of pomatum ( a scented ointment or oil applied to the hair), brandy and dried fruit under the value together of 40/-. Lengthy examinations signed by the Rector, his wife and a housemaid, also by a police constable, revealed that though the accused, a parlour maid, had been provided with a good character reference from Lady Mary Dashwood, all was not well. Mrs Hasell noted that she had given the parlour maid a teaspoonful of sal volatile (the chief ingredient in smelling salts) out of a new bottle and that since then half of it had disappeared; in her partial defence, the maid admitted taking some plums and a small quantity of brandy when she was not well and a small quantity of pomatum.

Besides the theft of clothes, the most common other thefts the subject of examinations in this small, perhaps not entirely representative, sample, concerned the stealing by both adults and children of coal (from Parton Hematite Iron Co. at Moresby, Messrs Bain & Co. at Harrington and from Lord Lonsdale at St Bees), with single cases of the theft of cock fowls (one valued at £5), money, postage stamps, and books (from William Gill's shop at Whitehaven).

The Justices of the Peace had to determine what weight to attach to such examinations and any mitigating circumstances in reaching their verdicts and sentences. Nowadays, in the words of Dom David Knowles, the monastic historian, 'the historian is not a judge, still less a hanging judge', the historian's duty being to assess the surviving evidence in its broader context, drawing on such seminal studies as that of John Marshall and John Walton in their *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the mid-twentieth century, a study in regional change* (Manchester University Press, 1981).

*Adrian Allan*

## **Help needed!**

Are you in the North East or South West of the county?

Could you be a sub editor and help collect material for the Bulletin from your local groups?

## Renwick and Kirkoswald History Group



An imaginative and well attended meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> went through the trial of a local man, George Lawrence who was tried for poaching in 1854 at Penrith.

With noted local historian Richard Brockington as the judge, and using the actual trial depositions, members of the audience took the roles of the various witnesses, such as the gamekeeper and the accused. They gave evidence and were then 'cross examined' by defence and prosecuting counsel.

Some descendants of the witnesses were in the audience which made the event even more resonant. Members then became the jury and voted resoundingly 18-0 to acquit. Altogether this was one of the highlights of recent years and, I can say, as defence counsel, a victory for British justice!

*Dick O'Brien*

## Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society

Our Society was approached in February 2021 and asked if we would assist Cartmel Primary School with regard to historical details as they prepared a booklet on the village. The aim was that the ideas of the children would be the basis of its content and it would be put on sale in



aid of school funds. It would identify features of interest to children and adults alike, giving historic details and explanations. The project was known as “The Cartmel Curiosity Trail”.

Pat Rowland, Nigel Mills and I readily offered help and went around the village to identify features which would stimulate the interest of the children. We initially found fifty two: the children then went around themselves and produced a further thirty nine ! We put together brief historical details of all ninety one features.

After a delay caused by the pandemic the School held a “Cartmel Curiosity Week” in mid-January in which Lyn Prescott, Barbara Copeland and I participated. Its aim was to further interest the children and to introduce the various people whose help would be required to ensure a professionally-produced booklet could be put together.

The involvement of the editor, designer and ourselves as historians was outlined to all the children and a series of events took place among which were: -

- A sticky toffee pudding competition: well-supported by the children – and tasty!
- A “Would I Lie to You ?” quiz. Barbara, Lyn and I formed the panel, one of us correctly informing the children why a particular feature in the village was there and the other two giving misleading (and amusing) reasons. The children loved this and really entered into the spirit of the quiz. (It is rumoured that there is a strong belief that giraffes once lived in the village !)
- The display of further photographs of local features. We were asked to explain the historic background of each.
- A tour of the Priory Gatehouse. We arranged for the Gatehouse to be opened especially for the children who went round it in small groups. The guide from The National Trust gave a stimulating and interesting review of the history of the building.



What next ?

The children will decide what is to go into the booklet and we shall be able to assist further, if needed, before publication during the summer.

What a wonderful event in which to participate !

*Stuart Harling, Chairman*

### **Many thanks to Liz Kerry**

for providing the excellent on line 'News Flash' which give such wonderful reminders of upcoming events and facilitate such easy access to booking.

# RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP

## ‘A Fantastic Innkeeper’

### John Fothergill

In her November 2021 presentation to Ravenstonedale Parish History Group (RHPG), Diana Fothergill continued her series of talks on ‘Famous Fothergills’. As with Diana’s previous subjects, her chosen Fothergill can trace his ancestry to the Ravenstonedale area (as with all Fothergills, directly related to George Fothergill, a Norman Baron who was granted land by William the Conqueror) and a locally relevant beginning resulting from a love match, solemnized in Gretna Green.

John Fothergill (1876 – 1957) became widely known in his chosen second career as an hotelier and and author of *An Innkeeper’s Diary*. This second career was a complete contrast to his early life. He was born into a wealthy family (the Lowbridge branch of the Fothergills). Educated- briefly- at St John’s College, Oxford and the Slade School of Fine Art, completing his studies in the early 1900’s, John enjoyed connections and friendships with notable artists and those associated with the art world. These included Augustus John, Jacob Epstein, E.P. Warren, John Marshall, William Rothenstein, R G Collingwood and Oscar Wilde (both before and after his imprisonment).

Although best known for “*An Innkeepers Diary*”, he was a prolific author having published his first book at the age of 25 (*The Slade*, a collection of drawings and some pictures done by past and present students of the London Slade School of Art). For the next 15 years he was founder and curator of a notable art gallery in London, the Carfax Gallery. During this time he was immersed in the world of high art which was both his career and social circle.

In 1922 he declared that 'I must do something', and proceeded to become the proprietor of the Spreadingeagle at Thame. Regular customers included Evelyn Waugh, Sir John Gielgud, J B Priestley amongst many other famous social and cultural elites of the time. The book is widely described as entertaining and amusing. The audience were entertained by Diana's readings from the book to illustrate John Fothergill's more outrageous observations and anecdotes.

John went on to write further books, documenting his continuing career in the hotel world, including running two more establishments and publishing two further volumes of innkeepers memoirs. A gardening book, very much focused on design as might be expected with his artistic and architectural education and a cook book complete his bibliography.

The cook book features many of the recipes John developed, applying the principle that there are three kinds of cooking, food that doesn't taste of what it is or food that doesn't taste of anything (he suggested French cuisine as his example of the first and English cuisine for the second). His third category was described as 'our kitchen, where food is food and food tastes of food'. Many of his catering ideas reflect today's interest in locally sourced food, regional specialities and innovation. An example is his recipe for Mavrodaphne Trifle, featured in *Brideshead Revisited* by Evelyn Waugh. He recommends splitting a sponge sandwich into three, spread each slice with raspberry jam, custard and soak with the Greek dessert wine – Mavrodaphne. The luscious red wine confers a sweet and aromatic taste and he also recommends adding bay and cherries to the custard. The trifle is finished with whipped cream.

Diana's talk ranged across the genealogical history of John Fothergill, to his artistic career and achievements and concluded by bringing the *Innkeepers Diary* to life using readings. A book that represents the second career that built John Fothergill's reputation and ensures his legacy endures.

## RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP

### Parry, thrust and an entertaining delve into the History of Castles



Warkworth Castle, Northumberland

The January Ravenstonedale Parish History Group talk welcomed Pete Brummitt, another local speaker who had volunteered to undertake research and provide entertainment, using professional presentation skills, to entertain the audience of twenty five members and guests at Newbiggin-on Lune Village Hall.

Declaring at the beginning that his talk 'Curiosities of Castle Design' would be from a non-expert perspective, the talk went on to cover the

history of Castle construction, the notable constructors including insight into the current day values of budget and the work of the catering brigade that nourished the Castle residents.

Selecting examples from North Wales, Northumberland and Cumbria, Pete delivered an informed and thorough talk, drawing upon a number of acknowledged published sources. Pete utilised a novel form of pointer to explain the slides. This was a replica broadsword (suitably safe being made of bendy plastic!). Halfway through the talk, the lecture was enlivened with a short quiz.

Thanks to historical recipe research and a busy baking session, Pete and Bev Brummitt provided the audience with home-made medieval biscuits (a recipe based on ingredients used around the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, including saffron, honey, cinnamon and ginger) which perfectly complemented the tea and coffee that traditionally concludes the evening.

An early example of stone construction can be observed in Carlisle. The imposing Carlisle Keep was built in 1092, using stone. The survival today of the Keep exemplifies why construction evolved from wood to stone. Stone construction represented a huge investment in terms of manpower, in one example (Bramber Castle, Sussex) the workforce would be the equivalent today of one hundred persons, working ten hours a day for nine months. In today's value the cost of Conwy Castle would be £40 million.

Edward 1<sup>st</sup> commissioned the building of Conwy Castle in 1283, the building completed in 1287. The architect was Master St James of St George, who had established a reputation as a leading Castle builder who had previously worked on a number of great European castles. Drawing upon photographic and architectural plans, Pete outlined the journey from the early 11<sup>th</sup> Century wooden Motte and Bailey constructions, including the defensive purpose of stockade and ditch, to the later imposing stone constructions.

Garderobes (the Castle latrine system) featured in the explanation of each example. The use of plans explained the position and differences

between the Garderobes that served the needs of Royalty compared to the less regal Castle occupants. Pete explained the role garderobes played in managing the chronic infestation of lice, where clothes were hung overnight in the garderobes so that the naturally occurring ammonia could play a role in purging the clothing.

The spiral staircase, familiar to all who visit castles revealed some interesting design features. Some staircases climb anti-clockwise and others clockwise. This allowed the right and left handed swordsmen to fight the attacking opponents with a free hand to cut down into the advancing enemy. The advancing enemy would also be forced into tripping and falling while ascending, due to the intentional construction of different heights of the occasional stone step.

Photographs brought to life the use of different areas of the kitchens for various meal types, including the long slow cooked stews and barbecued meats. To accompany the food, preferences for liquor were catered for. Large areas were dedicated to the storage of wine and other areas were assigned for the brewing and storage of beer. During this explanation the history of the term 'Butler' was outlined along with the less familiar title of 'Pantler'. The former was responsible for the Butts, or beer barrels and the latter responsible for the baked products, the job title being derived from the French for bread, 'Pain'. The kitchen brigade had many roles and many people employed, because the normal service was continuous, consequently staffing for 24-hours was needed.

In his opening remarks Pete explained that in addition to their evident defensive purpose, Castles were intended to impress the locals. At the close of the talk, the Ravenstonedale parish locals demonstrated that they were impressed with enthusiastic applause.

For more information on future events and for local history enquiries go to [www.ravenstonedalehistory.org.uk](http://www.ravenstonedalehistory.org.uk).

## Duddon Valley Local History Group

Largest ever audience!

Wow!

Our largest ever attendance, with 50 people coming to hear Stan Aspinall's talk on 'Broughton Re-discovered'. This talk replaced the scheduled talk by Colin Robertshaw which will now take place at the June meeting and should not be missed as it sheds a previously unknown light on Branwell Bronte's time in Broughton.

The meeting opened with Dave Hughes giving an update on the training available for the Group's survey of sheep washes in the Duddon Valley.

Stan opened his talk by explaining how he had amassed a wealth of information on Broughton as a result of the interest shown during one of the History Group's Open Days. Many connected with the town had old documents and photographs, which they loaned or donated to Stan. This enabled him to compose a view of how Broughton has changed over the years.

Stan introduced the audience to wonderful stories of the Post Bus service that ran between Broughton to Seathwaite and as far as Cockley Beck and Ulverston on market days. And in particular how the drivers helped out with shopping deliveries on the way. The church tower featured with the mystery of the missing pinnacles being solved.

Stan showed an impressive photo of the petrol pumps in Griffin Street that remained in-situ until the mid 1960s. It came a surprise to learn that the petrol was stored in tanks under the house there!

The introduction of a water supply in the late 1880's removed the need for wells, although the privvies with their wooden seats, some in double and even treble format continued long after. These still had to be cleared and Stan reminded everyone of the cobbled courtyards that gave access for the soil man and his cart. The 'old' vicarage featured prominently. When built, it had eight bedrooms but no inside toilet!



The main topic centred around Viscount Cross of Broughton and in particular the construction of Eccle Riggs. Lord Cross was a director of the Midland Railway. His family owned the Old Hall at Ashton which was situated close to Ashton Station. Stan then jumped back to Eccle Riggs and the pepper pots at the entrance. Old and new photographs showed how one had been moved away from the road and reconstructed using different stone.

why were they there in the first place? Stan reverted back to the Old Hall. The railway was expanding and needed greater warehousing facilities. The Hall site being ideally situated next to the railway, served this purpose and Lord Cross ordered the Hall's demolition. A photo taken shortly before the Hall was felled, showed two towers, each with a 'pepper pot' on top. No doubt as a reminder of the past, Lord Cross rescued the pots, had all the stones numbered and transported them to Eccle Riggs. But

Stan concluded with a reference to Kenneth Burgess' war time Journals, in which Kenneth recorded that an owl was to be seen each year for five years, perched on the same tree, on same branch and in the same position on that branch. Kenneth named the bird 'Patience'. When preparing to leave Havelock Cottage, Kenneth heard a noise coming from a bedroom chimney. On investigation, there was Patience, perched on a chair as if to say 'goodbye'.

A most enlightening, illustrated talk and one much appreciated as was demonstrated by a rapturous round of applause.

*Ken Day*

## Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS

Lorton and Derwent Fells LHS has been preparing for a return to more normal delivery of its talks and no doubt the booster vaccine will give further reassurance.

However, the lockdown has had the unexpected effect of broadening our geographical appeal and quite a large number of new members have

joined who would have been thought well outside our catchment area before covid struck.

To accommodate these and perhaps the members who cannot attend meetings live we are planning to broadcast online as well as reopen in Lorton's Yew Tree Hall. Comments and advice from other societies would be welcome and of course we are happy to share our experience of this very new development.

James Lusher has organised two guided walks for the membership. Both proved very popular, because of their content but also because they provided the opportunity after nearly two years to engage in a communal activity in person. In August Derek Denman led a walk in Lorton which related its early origins and the ways in which the economy had evolved over the centuries.

In September Mark Hatton of CATMHS led a walk round Coppermines Valley, Coniston. This was a notable success with the intrepid walkers who attended. It was not for the fainthearted- James' advice when advertising the walk spoke of six hours exploring hostile mountain terrain. However, Mark's expertise and extensive knowledge made it very worthwhile for those lucky enough to have attended.

Our September talk was a highlight. Dick O'Brien gave a very interesting account of the Pilgrimage of Grace in Cumbria, full of detail and insight into the broader historical context.

**Congratulations to Millom and District Local  
History Society**

**On their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**

## DEVELOPMENTS IN ALSTON

I'm almost ashamed to say that Alston Moor Historical Society has benefited financially from COVID. Because the Society's archives are housed in an office in Alston Town Hall that is classed as commercial premises, the Society was able to apply for the government grant of £10,000, offered to associations likely to suffer from lack of an income. Although the Society was financially secure in its modest way, it was eligible for the grant. This enabled us to benefit the community, and visitors, here by undertaking a project to design and install street name plates around Alston Moor (look out for plates on black with a gold border). We were also able to commission the construction of a new website (soon to be launched), and the fitting out of the 'front shop' in the Archives.



Although fitting out is not complete, for example we will be setting up a semi-soundproof corner behind a screen fitted with acoustic pads for aural records to be heard, the desk surfaces are clear enough now to allow us to begin work on the almost permanent backlog of acquisitions. The cabinets are not of archival quality but it will only be non-vulnerable items or items that can be replaced that will be kept there.

All of this might make you jealous, but you too can do what Alston Moor has done. Find a spare room in a public building, apply to the Parish Council for a precept to pay the rent, membership subs and donations should cover the heating and lighting costs (fingers crossed), and away you go. We always acknowledge the assistance given by the Parish Council, without which none of this would have happened; a few years ago the collection was in danger of becoming homeless.

Speaking of COVID restrictions, our programme this year has been geared up to monthly talks on zoom, with the option of a site visit to follow up each talk. And all being well, a recent decision has been taken to hold a 'live' AGM in April, and, if successful, the re-negotiation with speakers to see if they are prepared to come to Alston, which, it has to be said, can be off-putting to a speaker on a rainy night 20 miles from anywhere.

Well, is there a place in your district for an archive/records office? Are you inspired?

*Alastair Robertson, Chair of Alston Moor Historical Society*

## **Caldbeck & District Local History Society**

Our main activity for many years has been monthly talks in the Parish Hall. We had to cancel our programme for 2020 but carried forward most of the planned events to 2021, switching to Zoom in the early part of the year.

Generally, our supporters found the Zoom technology quite easy (after initial fears) and we had no significant technical problems. Fortunately, we were given free access to a full Zoom account. The talks attracted a wider and slightly different audience. By July we had hoped to revert to talks in the Parish Hall but continued with Zoom for another month because of restrictions.

Another talk scheduled for the Hall had to be cancelled because the Hall was required for flu jabs so in the end we managed only one 'face-to-face' talk. This was by Dr Jim Cox about the history of the Caldbeck Surgery. It was very popular and we had to turn away a few people in order to maintain social distancing. We recorded names so that we would be able to contact everyone if a case of COVID was reported.

We decided to follow a similar pattern for 2022 with four talks on Zoom followed by five talks in the Parish Hall. The first of the Zoom talks (in January) included a condensed AGM for 2021.

As a consequence of using Zoom we now communicate mainly by email. This has created a problem in contacting those who do not use email. Also we were unable to charge for Zoom talks and had to rely mainly on annual membership fees to cover our costs. The process of collecting fees will remain a challenge until we revert to regular meetings in the Hall. However, with free use of Zoom and fewer or lesser claims for fees from speakers, we are not far off breaking even financially over the period and feel that we have played a part in holding together the social fabric of our community in difficult times.

## Levens Local History Group

After abandoning our 2020 programme of meetings, we resumed in 2021 holding them via Zoom. By the end of 2021 we were holding the meetings “in-person” but with social distancing restrictions - doors/windows open, one way system in the hall and no refreshments, but hoping to return to proper meetings in 2022. Omicron scuppered that for our January AGM and we returned to Zoom for that meeting. As most of our membership (and most of those non-members who usually attended our meetings) are old and therefore vulnerable, there has been a significant proportion who are more wary of gatherings than you would expect of a younger demographic.

Though most of us feel that in-person speaker meetings are greatly to be preferred for their sociability, Zoom has kept the society alive, and members attendance held up quite well, though we have not publicised the meetings beyond our membership, whereas we used to circulate other groups and put up posters etc.

After cancelling most of the 2020 meetings we carried forward members' subs and did not collect any in 2021. I dare say that some members didn't pay in either year but we did not try to police that. Normally, with publicity we get a reasonable revenue from visitor's fees, but it was

simpler to not advertise as we don't have a mechanism for collecting these fees other than at the door.

Unless something else unexpected happens, we don't expect a permanent change in our meetings format - except that we are now happy to hold Zoom meetings if that makes it possible to have a particular speaker we want to hear, whom we would not hear otherwise.

Speaker meetings in themselves don't give me any anxiety, but a cause for concern is that peoples' passive experience has diminished their readiness to participate in the society either as a committee member or to be active in any project that it undertakes.

*Allan Steward (for LLHG)*

## SOCIETIES BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

An analysis of the 163,000 voluntary groups in the UK, revealed that 130,000 have incomes below £100,000. Why does this matter? It is the limit set by HSBC for 'free' banking, so any of their accounts below this figure will be charged £5 per month, 40p per cheque paid in, 0.4% on cash deposits. These charges are the same level as a commercial business with a turnover of £2 million!

Many voluntary groups, including some of our society members have tried to change banks or find a new bank or building society to take on their account; most have not yet succeeded. Both Barclays and Nat West imposed restrictions following HSBC, however If one of your existing signatories has an account with either Santander, Nat West, Royal Bank of Scotland or the Ulster Bank, you may be able to open an account with them. Has any society succeeded down this route? Please let us know.

Attempting to obtain electronic banking can be difficult as most accounts require two signatures.

The Federation itself along with a number of other member societies have recently been involved with our banks and the maintenance of their

account. We have closed our account with HSBC as fortunately we have an account with the Cumberland Building Society, who sadly are not accepting any new community accounts at the moment.

In addition, the majority of banks are asking for details of societies transactions, membership etc. in order to cover themselves against money laundering and some of the forms can be onerous to complete. Most of these checks are being carried out in remote offices and any box not ticked or completed, results in the forms being returned. The threat for non-completion is to suspend the account.

Some may find it ironic that the Chief Executive of HSBC writing in the Bank's sustainability report states that 'the Bank's business has an impact on customers and the wider community that they serve. Being sustainable means building strong relationships and taking in to account the issues that matter to our customers'.



Can you find free banking for your society? It is a moving situation and another challenge for your Treasurer! Metro Bank offers free banking if your turnover is below £2 million and allows 200 free transactions and deposits of up to £10,000 per month. Downside is you have to apply within a branch and the nearest branch is Bradford! Virgin Money offers free banking if you have less than 10 transactions per month. Co-op Bank's community directplus account may be attractive if your turnover is less than £1 million and you deposit annually less than £100,000 in cash

and less than 5,000 cheques. It is no surprise that they have been inundated with applications, which are taking time to be processed.

We would like to hear from any society who has had problems with their bank or building society and any that have found solutions to the problem.

*John Poland and Graham Brooks*

## CVBG Programme of Zoom talks for 2022

**Second Mondays. All talks will be on the second Monday of each month at 7.30 pm.**

Access to talks is free. Please ask for a link to be sent to your e mail address, at the beginning of the relevant month. Requests to CVBG secretary, [miketurner4@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:miketurner4@hotmail.co.uk)

**April, Monday 4**

***Peter Messenger, CVBG committee***

***Clay Dabbins, old and new***

*Peter gets to grips with the Cumbrian version of clay structures, both what we can see and what has been lost.*

**May, Monday 9**

**John McDowell, CVBG committee**

***Vernacular Buildings of Ulster Folk Museum***

This is a splendid opportunity to look at building traditions outside of Cumbria, to contrast them with those familiar to us.

**June, Monday 13**

**Dan Elsworth, CVBG committee**

***House at Underbarrow, near Kendal,***

Dan uses his archaeological expertise to analyse the development of the house and record surviving features.

**July, Monday 4**

**Richard Wilson, CVBG committee**

***Living Upstairs: Bastles and bastle derivatives,***



Bastles are unique to the Border region and Cumbria has many examples to see. Richard has made a special study of this building type, which influenced houses in their vicinity.

**August, Monday 1**

**Paul Lewis, Vice Chairman, CVBG**

***Harby Brow Tower, near Wigton.***

The development of a Cumbrian tower house.

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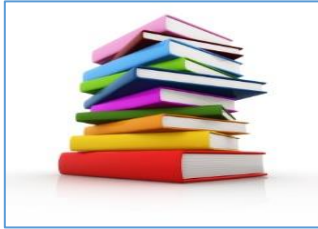
## **2022 CONVENTION AND AGM**

The planning for this year's convention and AGM is starting to come together nicely. Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society have kindly agreed to help with the convention. The date is Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and it will be held in Allithwaite Community Centre which has sufficient free parking.

The topic this year is Agriculture and Angus Winchester has agreed to be our keynote speaker on livestock farming in Cumbria with reference to the medieval period. As a change to the normal format we are this year inviting member groups or individuals to give either a short presentation on an agricultural related topic that they have been researching or to do a poster presentation for people to view during the various breaks.

If you are interested in giving a presentation or poster please contact Sheila Fletcher [Sheila@merciful.plus.com](mailto:Sheila@merciful.plus.com) to discuss it.

## Local history Publications



Please remember that if you have a publications for review, it should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Christine Craghill at 'Touchwood', Hethersgill, CARLISLE, CA6 6EH

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### Cockermouth Heritage Group (Kirkgate Arts & Heritage)

The Heritage Group will be staging a Platinum Jubilee Commemoration display at the Kirkgate Centre, running from Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June inclusive, open each day 10-4. Refreshments will be available in the Egremont Room. We'll be looking back at the Queen's previous Jubilees, and also at the Coronation.

We're asking local people to provide us with as many photos as they can, and preferably a few memories from those occasions - if you can help, please get in touch! An additional part of that display will be the Golden and Diamond Jubilees of Queen Victoria (1887 and 1897), which brought very real benefits to the town of Cockermouth (not least two bridges and the planting of trees all along the main street.

#### CLHF Contacts

To contact the CLHF Committee please see our website

[www.clhf.org.uk](http://www.clhf.org.uk)

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For membership and events listing please e-mail [lizkerrey@gmail.com](mailto:lizkerrey@gmail.com)