

The Northumbrian Language Society

PATRON: His Grace the Duke of Northumberland.

PRESIDENT: Hon. Aldmn. Mrs. E. Mitchell, O.B.E., M.A..

Newsletter 17

JUBILEE GATHERING ADDS STORY-TELLING COMPETITION TO NORTHUMBRIAN LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE.

The 25th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering (24-26 April 1992) celebrates its jubilee by adding a new Story Telling competition to the Gathering Saturday programme.

The Collingwood House (beyond the Clock Tower) session begins at 1.30 with the Fine Northumbrian Speech contest, followed by the Story Telling competition, and then the time-honoured Dialect Recital, in which entrants to the verse and prose writing competitions, previously judged, recite some of their entries.

This Newsletter scarcely gives you time to enter the writing competitions (closing date 4th April), but if you have time do ring Morpeth 513308 for details.

You enter the Fine Speech and Story Telling competitions on the day, 25th April. The rules are these:

C18: FINE NORTHUMBRIAN SPEECH: entry (one only per entrant), a recital of up to four minutes' duration, of all or part of any piece of Northumbrian verse or prose, by any writer; entrant to supply judge with a copy of the text before reciting; judged on understanding of text, oral delivery and quality and consistency of the Northumbrian accents and vocabulary. Entrants are recommended to choose worthy texts, rich in Northumbrian words, expressions and character. District dialects of the language are, of course, accepted, preferably identified for the audience.

C22: STORY TELLING: entry (one per entrant), a story set in Northumberland; the entrant's/another's/traditional; dialect as appropriate; up to 5 minutes; judged on presentation, atmosphere, character and dialect quality.

NOTICE OF 1992 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

TO ALL MEMBERS:

You are cordially invited to the 1992 Annual Meeting, to be held at 7.15 p.m. on Thursday 30th April at the Black Bull Hotel, Bridge Street, Morpeth. There is parking behind the tall steepled church at Morpeth Bridge, and in Back Riggs, where also is the bus station. From there walk south (gently downhill) to Bridge St., and turn left.

AGENDA.

1. President's Welcome.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of 1991 Annual Meeting.
4. Executive's Report for 1991-92.
5. Treasurer's Report for 1991-92.
6. Election of Officers:
 - a) PRESIDENT (1991-92, Mrs. E. Mitchell, O.B.E.).
 - b) VICE-PRESIDENT (Mrs. Janet Brown).
 - c) CHAIRMAN (Mr. R. Bibby).
 - d) VICE-CHAIRMAN (Mr. J. Holland).
 - e) SECRETARY (Mrs. K. Bibby-Wilson).
 - f) TREASURER (Miss H. Dickson).
 - g) BIBLIOGRAPHER (Mr. G. Wallace).
 - h) HON. AUDITOR (Mr. T.H. Horne).
7. Election of Executive Committee (1991-92, Mesdames J. Brown, A. Dickie, V. McLean; Messrs. C. Jackson, B. Robinson).
8. Election (if proposals made) of
 - a) Fellows of the Society;
 - b) Hon. Life Past Presidents;
 - c) Hon. Past Vice-Presidents;
 - d) Hon. Life Members.
9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

THE EIGHTH REED SUPPER.

Again we celebrate the life and work of the late Fred Reed F.N.L.S., poet and advocate of the Northumbrian language during his long life. We do so on his birthday, 30th April, at 8.15 p.m. in the Black Bull, Bridge St., Morpeth, following the Annual Meeting.

PLEASE send your **TICKET APPLICATION** and **PAYMENT** ((£3.50 per person) as soon as possible. It can include family and friends, but there is, of course, a seating limit. **CLOSING DATE:** MONDAY 27TH APRIL. Owing to the Gathering, tickets ordered after the 22nd may have to be held at the door rather than posted out.

THE REED SUPPER PROGRAMME.

- * Peypin in the Muckle Greet Stotty Cyek.
- * Sarrimonyal Forst Hack bi thi Preseedint, an' thi Stotty Cyek Weesh.
- * Tradeeshinal Suppor o' Peys an' Peas, Stotty an' Caffee.
- * Address ti thi Muckle Greet Stotty bi Geoffrey Ridley.
- * Ripley on bihaaf o' thi Stotty bi Mistriss Jane Smailes.
- * Address ti thi Bard, wor ain Fred Reed, bi Bob Bolam.
- * Ripley on hees bihaaf bi A.N. Other.
- * Bits an' Pieces, hwin aal willin is axed ti hoy in bits o' varse, tyales, sangs an' owt else thit entortyains.
- * Fred Reed's Bennydikshin.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.

These were due on April 1st for 1992-93. If you have paid yours already direct or via Newcastle or Hexham Branch, you should have your Membership Card now or soon. If not, you can pay it when ordering your Reed Supper tickets, or if you are attending the Annual Meeting but not the Supper, you can pay the Treasurer at the meeting. If you can get to neither, please post your subscription with the Ticket & Subscription Form.

Branch members must be Society members, subscription £2.00 a year. The fee paid at a Branch meeting is to defray the meeting and other Branch expenses.

The Society Treasurer is Miss Hazel Dickson, 95 Rosalind St., Ashington, NE63 9BW (tel. 811697).

OBITUARY.

We must sadly report the death of Mrs. Janet Reed, widow of the late Fred Reed, and his cheerful and canny companion over many years.

The Society's sympathy goes also to our Committee member, Mrs. Val McLean, whose husband, George, died suddenly a little time ago. George was a man of many interests, not least the art gallery he founded at Alnwick, and the hilarious monologues he presented with an earnest expression and intense humour. Last year he entertained all at the Reed Supper.

Both sadly missed.

"THE CANNIEST PLACE ON EORTH."

At long last you can hear the inimitable voice and words of Robert Allen, the Bard o' Bellinjum", whenever and as often as you like, through the medium of his new audio-cassette, with the engaging title shamelessly borrowed to head this note. Here are the fruits of life-long observation of land and life, seasons and events, in North Tynedale, the whole enlightened by the poet's quizzical eye and Northumbrian tongue. Highly commended to all and sundry and especially members of the N.L. Society, who have already shown their perception by making Robert a Fellow of their assembly.

The cassette can be had from sundry appropriate shops, or from the author at The Glebe House, Bellingham, NE48 2JS (0434-220265), for £6.00; or by post from the Glebe House at £6.50.

"THE MID-NORTHUMBRIAN DIALECT."

The Society's long-held hope to publish Thomas Moody's admirable treatise is renewed. Mr. and Mrs. Graham Binless, who have a word processing business in Leeds, volunteered to provide the "art-work" for offset printing, and are now well forward with the first of the two volumes, while the Chairman plods along behind with the proof-reading.

LANGUAGE SNIPPETS.

Going about talking of the language yields interesting queries about words out of general use but in the books and, now and then, words not in the books. George Mitchell of Alnwick mentioned gormed recently (recognized--Aw gormed him when aw saa him) and that is in Heslop's glossary. Jack Dodds of Embleton asked about an exclamation, "Sarra myedden!" This was a puzzle--myedden could be "maiden", but Heslop had sarra only for "to serve food" which hardly made sense. John Lisle Robinson of Newbiggin knew the saying, but not its meaning. However, Bill Sampson, formerly of Newbiggin, came up with an acceptable interpretation: "Sirrahs and maidens!", a fine antique exclamation. In Morpeth a gadgy is a man; in Border Romany talk it is godgi, in the south gorgio; in Turkey gadjo; in Spanish Andalusia, so Keith McGregor reports, it is gadjes, a non-gipsy man.

Gipsies called Northumberland Boro gueronesky tem, "Big Fellows' Country", and Newcastle Wongareskey gav, "Coal town".

The Northumbrian Language--use it or lose it!

