

Northumbrian Language Society

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"

Newsletter 38 - November 2000

Society patrons: Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland

Next Event:

Yule Meet

Saturday 9th December 2000

2pm - 4pm

in the Chantry Museum, Morpeth

FORST PEECE

Aall reet. Yu cin tell wu noo. Wat did wu dee wrang? Aam taalkin about the "Whe's tellin Hoafies?" event at wor hoos in September. Neebody torned up like, apart frae the hoafies team that is. Was it the wrang neet? Did yu hev summat better ti dee? Cud yu not find the place? Mind, wu had a canny bit crack like. An the wes plenty o bait ti gan at. It wes aall Northumbrian - stotty cyek, breed an cheeses. Luvly grub! Yu missed a reet treat! Wud like ti knaa hooivvor, why neeyan cem along, so wu cin dee bettor next time. Giv us a caal plees.

Society News

This year's Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture was given by Johnny Handle.

It was standing room only in the ballroom at Morpeth Town Hall, as Johnny outlined his work for Newcastle University in discovering and cataloguing all the published collections of dialect songs. So much material has been uncovered, that Johnny's one year project has been extended for a second year, which is good news for the language, because it will mean there will be a comprehensive catalogue of songs and music available for people to consult.

Johnny described how he has split the area up into geographic regions, and he illustrated his lecture by referring to the songs and poems collected by individual publishers from a number of these areas. And the great thing about a Johnny Handle talk is that he's a performer as well, and so we were treated to a number of live illustrations of the material he's been cataloguing, most of which were accompanied on the accordion.

The lecture was an interesting and lively affair, and the time soon passed, and the warm and

enthusiastic applause at the end was a fitting tribute to the time and skill Johnny had devoted to his talk.

We also discovered that the ballroom is a suitable setting for the lecture. Normally, we use the Council chamber at County Hall, but this year they double-booked, and we had to find an alternative venue at short notice. We'd like to know what those of you who attended think. Should we use the Town Hall as the regular venue? Please let us know what you think.

There is an interesting postscript to this year's lecture. The BBC's Radio 4 is planning a series of programmes on small charities, and they contacted us recently to find out what we did. Two journalists from the programme came to the lecture, and recorded most of it, as well as interviewing a number of people. Hopefully, what they recorded will be broadcast in the new year, and we'll let you know the date as soon as we know it.

Publications

As most members know, we make a reasonable sum of money every year from the sale of our publications. Hopefully, in 2001, we'll produce a proper catalogue of all the interesting things we've got. In the meantime,

you might like to know about the following:-

We have two unusual Christmas cards for sale. One is a humorous take on "While shepherds watched..." making use of the Gateshead angel. The other is a traditional card with the words and tune of our own carol "Haway me lad" printed inside. The cards cost £1.50 each, including an envelope.

We also have copies of our Oswaldtide church service held in Ashington in August. This has all the words, prayers, readings and hymns, all in Northumbrian, and it costs just 75p.

Ray Stephenson's book "A Slice of Geordie Heritage" deals with the music hall songs and recordings from the early years of the century, and it is a follow-on from his very successful Roland Bibby Memorial lecture last year. The book costs £2.99.

And then there are our two highly successful books, Fred Reed's "The Northumborman" (£7.99), and Katrina Porteous' poem and CD "The Wund and the Wetter" (£8).

All of these can be had from Kim Bibby-Wilson on 01670-513308. Please add 50p post and packing for Christmas cards, and £1 for all other

items.

STOP PRESS: Kim says we've sold out all the tapes and CDs of "Wor Nanny's a Mazer", but we can get some more if you want them!

We need lots of interesting news and reports for the Newsletter.

Please get in touch with the Editor, Peter Arnold, on 0191-285 7209 if you want to know more.

Longstone Light

Seven lang miles a black wetter wesh
atween
Yon light an me.
See hoo she flashes an fades in the hush
A the dark an the sea.

Aa these night-fishin's lang a the summer
Aahm wonderin why,
Wi sic a smaa thing as yon light in sae
muckle a darkenin
Aah can haad by hor?

Rock, ma boat. Tug at w moorins, wund,
tide,
Aa the black night.
There maun be a fair shoal a ways for a
man t gan wrang i this world
For ivery right.

Katrina Porteous

THINGS TE GAN I' YOR MEETINS BYUK

Saturday 9 December: 2pm - 4pm - Yule Meet, Morpeth Chantry Museum, our annual yuletide celebration, with food and drink, stories, songs and recitations, and our world famous "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" Please bring a small prize for the raffle, a contribution to the food, and be prepared to hoy in your own contribution to the entertainment. We'll finish off by singing our Christmas Carol, "Haway, me lad" written by Hazel Dickson to a tune by Kim Bibby-Wilson.

Friday 20 - Sunday 22 April 2001: 34th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering. There will be the usual competitions, exhibitions and events to celebrate our unique Northumbrian culture and heritage. On the competition side, there are three main categories, Group A: Arts and Crafts; Group B: Writing and composing, including dialect verse and prose; and Group C: Performing. If you're interested in having a go, let Kim Bibby-Wilson know on 01670-513308, and you'll be put on the mailing list for entries, which will come out in the new year.

Saturday 13th October 2001: 2pm - 4th Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture somewhere in Morpeth.

WE NEED YOUR VIEWS - We're planning next year's programme, and it has been suggested that we should split the AGM and the Reed Neet, and hold them on separate nights. It's also been suggested that most of our events should be held at weekends rather than during the week. For example, Fred Reed's birthday is 30th April. If we always hold it on his birthday, the event will be on a different day each year. On the other hand, we could hold the Reed Neet on the Saturday closest to the actual day. We could do the same with most of our other events as well. What do you think?

The Executive Committee will be meeting soon to plan the programme, so if you have any views, please let me know on 0191-285 7209.