

Northumbrian Language Society

"Keepin Ahada Wor Tung"



Newsletter 41 - Autumn 2001

Society Patrons: Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland

Next Event

Saturday 8th December - Yule Meet - Chantry Museum, Morpeth at 2pm

Forst Peece

Hoo d'ye like wor new-style nyooosletta? Aah think it's biggar an betta than ivvor, but then Aah wud say that wudn't Aah? Onyroad, it's got lots of nyoos and informashun aboot wot's gannin on in wor Society. Aah wud like to ask speshully if yuh cud look at the bits on this page and the backun which axes if you can help, either with the wark of the Society (this page), or with givven wuh informashun aboot particular people and places (back page). Wuh knaa that lots ov folk've got a lot of knowledge in theor heeds aboot wor tung, and wuh reely need yor help, so giv wuh a bell if yuh can de oot for wuh. An can Aah ax a question? Aboot fifty peepI came te the lecture this year. Where were the rest on yuh? Yuh misst a reel treet! Katrina Porteous gov a reet canny taalk, an theor's a report on page twe aboot wot she sed. Ah weel, gan canny, an hev a good reed.

The Gaffer

Correckshuns

Wu gev yuh sum rang informayshun aboot subscripshuns in the last nyooosletta, so here's wot it shud've been:-

1. Aall subscripshuns are due on the forst ov April, so efter 1.4.02 the rates are:-
2. Individdyells - five pund
3. Married cupple - six pund aaltegether
4. Unwayged adult or bairn - twe pund

Can Yuh Lend A Hand?

The Committee hes deesided te set up sum smaal groups to look in detail at sum o wor activities. There's that many things gannin on

that the Committee buleevs it wud be better aal roond te ax members te git involved.

Wu need help wi things like publicashuns, publicity, munny an membership.

If ye knaa summat aboot ony o these, an ye wud like to help, please get in tuch wiv Kim forst ov aall, either be fone on 01670-513308, or be letta at Westgate House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE. (Mind on aboot hor nyoo postcode!)

Wuh luk forrad to hearin frae yuh.

Language Society News

Morpeth Arts Day - Saturday 1st September

- We had a stall in the Town Hall for this event, and we did quite a lot of business. Kim Bibby-Wilson, Raymond Reed and Terry Common met a lot of people, Terry was able to do some recitation, we sold a bit of merchandise, and gave away information about the Society.

Seahouses Sea Shanty Festival - Saturday 8th September

- Peter Arnold, Brian James and Terry Common braved the wind and the cold to fly the flag at this popular community event. We met quite a lot of interesting people, sold some merchandise, and signed up a new member! Certainly well worth the effort.

Dialect Gathering - Bowes, co Durham - Saturday 8th September

- Hazel Dickson, Meg Burdon and Bob Bolam represented us at this inaugural event, which had been put on partly to meet a linguist from Newfoundland in Canada. He was interested in dialect, so the meeting was of all the dialect and language societies in the north of England. There was a discussion of common concerns, and of plans for the future, and time to swap stories and poems. It was sufficiently successful for those attending to agree to hold events like this every other year, and we hope to be involved.

Dialect Workshop, Morpeth - Saturday 13th October

- We had so many entires for the speaking competitions at this year's Gathering that we didn't have time to hold the usual prize-giving recital afterwards. This event was an attempt to put that right. In the event, it was quite successful. About two dozen people attended, many prize-winners came along and read their entries, and Terry Common and Peter Arnold read the entries of those who couldn't make it.

Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture

This year's lecturer was Katrina Porteous, and the title of her talk was "Nivvor Can Be Telt". Katrina examined the nature of the dialect, and its influence on her as a poet. The audience was treated to a wide-ranging analysis of the precise characteristics of Northumbrian, and how it was ideally suited to the writing of verse.

Three aspects were picked out - the descriptive quality of the words (onomatopoeia), the rhythm of the language, and imagery. Katrina illustrated each of these aspects with readings from her own work, and from the work of other writers like our own Fred Reed.

Katrina's first point was that the meaning of many Northumbrian words can be guessed at by the sound of the words themselves.

Secondly, the rhythms of everyday Northumbrian speech were often used directly in her poems, because they were so musical, and fitted so perfectly in the patterns she was using at the time. She also made the point that the Border ballad structure fits the pattern of Northumbrian speech so well.

Thirdly, as far as imagery was concerned, Katrina said that Northumbrian is a very practical language which doesn't make a lot of use of abstract ideas. Complex thoughts are usually illustrated by reference to everyday objects, and by the things people say and do.

Finally, Katrina expressed the view that she felt that there were more Scandanavian influences on Northumbrian than was generally accepted, certainly as far as the fishing community's language was concerned, and this was a point raised in questions and discussion afterwards.

Why not visit our website - www.northumbriana.org.uk

PRICE LIST Autumn 2001

The Northumborman: book of the poetry of the late Fred Reed, of Ashington, "England's leading dialect poet"; introduced by Melvyn Bragg (NLS/Iron Press)	£7.99
The Wund an the Wetter: CD + book of Northumbrian poetry (Katrina Porteous) and pipes (Chris Ormston) celebrating fishing community (NLS/Iron/Worm Music)	£8
Christmas card: A Northumbrian Carol (incl. words & music)	£1.50
St Oswaldtide Service: full text (incl. hymns) of Northumbrian of church service (send sae for tape details)	75p
Northumbriana magazine: est. 1975; Northumbrian dialect, music, history, nature, etc. (NLS/Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering). Price list available for first 50 issues	prices from
Complete set Northumbriana £40 (p+p + ins. £6.95)	30p £40
Index to Northumbriana (first 50 editions)	£22.50
Meyk an' Moas: book by Roland Bibby translating classic German children's tale into Northumbrian	£2
A Slice of Geordie Heritage: Ray Stephenson's history of vintage NE music hall etc. recordings 1893-1943	£2.99
Robert Allen tapes and books of verse by the Bellingham bard: available shortly: please send sae for details and prices	various
Linking the Chain: Taffy Thomas the storyteller's Millennium book of tales from across the North, incl. Morpeth's Fairy Ointment	£8
The Keel Row: book: words & music of 40 NE songs NEW	£9.95
The Wheat & the Chaff Peter Athey's book of poems/tunes	£5
Born a Sand-Dancer poems and short stories by Bill Bright	£5.99
Charles Dickens in Newcastle poster: two colour facsimile 1852 theatre bill (Soc. of Antiq's Newc./Northumbriana)	£2.50
Morpeth's history: (publ. Morp. Antiquarian Society)	
1. The Medieval Guilds of Morpeth: book by Roland Bibby	£4.95
2. Morpeth's Market: compiled by Janet Brown	£4.95
North East Dialect: 1. Survey and Word List	£7.99
2. The Texts. Bill Griffiths' important new studies of Durham dialect	£7.99
Wyn's Words: book of poems by Wyn Bibby about life, family, local events and Morpeth characters	£2
Postcards: Northumberland, Morpeth, Hexham	10p
Poetry Posters: various by Fred Reed et al.	15p
Wor Nanny's A Mazer: original Tyneside /CD	£12
music hall recordings from the 1920s onwards /tape	£8
Border Directors (Blue Moon): Northumb'n music CD	£12
Out of the Flames (Matt Seattle) Border pipes CD	£12
Border Seasons (M Seattle/McFall's String Quartet) CD	£12
John Grundy's Northumberland sound /double CD	£12.99
profile of the county's history, characters and music /double tape	£8.99
Larn Yersel Geordie & Geordlerama CD	£12
O'ergrown (Spindlestone) NE songs and music NEW CD	£12
More Through The Night (Spindlestone) tape	£5
Geordie Jock (Ernie Gordon) mouth organ CD/tape	£7 / £5
Videos: 1. Morpeth Gathering 2. Will Atkinson	£10
Morpeth Gathering T/sweat-shirts: details on request	various
TO BE RELEASED later this year: Fred Reed poetry CD	£10

MAIL ORDER: Add for p+p10% (minimum 50p) unless otherwise stated. Make out cheques to "Northumbriana", please, and send with your details to Westgate House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, NE61 1RE (tel.01670 513308).

Meetins an Happenins

Barn Dance - Saturday 1st December at 8pm in St Georges's Church Hall, Morpeth - this is the annual fund-raising social event for the Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering. Tickets £6, concessions £4, from the Morpeth Tourist Information Centre, or from Kim Bibby-Wilson. There will be a pie and peas supper included, and a vegetarian option is available. Please make a booking for food when you order your tickets. NB - Ne spiky heels on yor byuts, or yuh'll get hoyed oot!

Yule Meet - Saturday 8th December, 2pm til 4pm in the Chantry Museum, Morpeth - this is the Society's annual pre-Christmas social event. Please bring a little food to share with the assembled throng, and a small prize for the raffle. There will be some of Hazel's wonderful punch to drink (non-alcofrolic version also available!), and those attending are asked to come prepared to hoy in a story, a song, a poem or an ear. There will be our world-famous "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" and we'll finish off the proceedings by singing our Northumbrian Carol.

35th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering - 5-7 April 2002 - the most prestigious cultural event in the north of England that celebrates everything to do with the Northumbrian way of life - crafts, music, language, dance, performance, literature. Hopefully, we'll be able to hold our traditional return of the survivors of the battle of Otterburn; and there will be other processions, street events and concerts. In short, there's something for the whole family, and it's a marvellous weekend of activity. We'd like to see even more entries for the various competitions next year, and members of the Northumbrian Language Society should be preparing their entries now. You are, aren't you? Gan on! You know you're dying to have a go. Information about events and entries will be available early in the New Year, so look out for the details in the next newsletter.

Can Anybody Help?

Can members help with any of these requests for information? If you know of anything, please get in touch with Kim Bibby-Wilson on 01670-513308, or write to her at Westgate House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE

1. We've been asked to find out if there is any Northumbrian language work being carried out in the Allendale area. Does anyone have any information?
2. Ray Stephenson, who produced the "Wor Nanny's a Mazer" CD would like to hear from anyone who knows anything about Thomas Tweedie, the Boy Soprano.
3. At Wallington Hall, one of the many pictures on display is of one of the Trevelyan family with a gun, and it has this

inscription underneath "An aye the tither shot he thumpit". Does anyone know what this means? The closest we can get is "For every other shot he scored a hit" But is that right? Does anyone know?

Donation to the Society

Robert Allen, the well-known poet and writer, has very kindly donated the remaining books and tapes of the "Canny Bit Verse" series to the Society. Robert hasn't been too well recently, and he's decided that now is a good time to hand them on. We're very grateful to him for his generosity. It now means that we have a new set of books and tapes to sell, so please get in touch with Kim if you would like to order some.

NB - on the Christmas Carol card, there's a mistake in the tune. In the 4th bar, the G should be an A.