

Northumbrian Language Society

"Keepin Ahada Wor Tung"

Charity No:515179

Members' Newsletter No: 43

Summer 2002

Patrons: Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland

Next Event

Monday 1st July - Alnwick Medieval Fair

The Society will be having its usual stall in the Marketplace between 10am and 5pm. In the evening, there will be a "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" event in the new Alnwick Bailliffgate Museum, when a team from Alnwick will battle it out with a team from the Society. This event will start at 7.30pm, entrance is free, but there will be a collection to help defray costs. Sounds like a good day out to me, so why not come along, support the Society, and have some fun at the same time? We hope to see you there!

Gaffer's Grumlings

Whey man, but it wes a close-run thing at wor AGM! Forst, tha wudn't let wuh inti the room until thi startin teym o 7.00, an wen wu got theor, theor wesn't fifty seats fer aal them whe tord up fer thi meetin. Nivvor mind, wu got started eventually like, and hed a reet good crack about wot we're gonna dee ower thi next twelve months. Lots o folks hoyed in theor points o view, and wu got sum reet good ideas fer thi future.

Thi Reed Neet wes a success an aal, despite ti fact that wu diddent hev wor tradishonal pie an pees suppor. Theor wes a mix-up ower thi food, but a local shop saved thi day bi puttin togithor a reet canny buffet at varry short notice. Wor thanks gans to them for bein se helpful like. Theor wes plenty o folks hoyin in theor bit vases and such like as weel this year, so wu hed a varry pleshorable neet aal roond. Mind, we're hoppin ti hev wor tradishonal pie an pees suppor next year, cos that's wot folks sed thu wanted.

Finally, ye'll see theor's plenty gannin on at thi minnit if yu reed thi nyoosletta carefully like. Aah hope yu'll be ebbel ti torn up an support wu at thi varrius events gannin on aal ower the playce, cos it gets reet lonely if yor th'ownly yin whe tords up. Gan canny.

The Gaffer

Society News

AGM - Saturday 4th May

A well-attended meeting had a very valuable discussion on future activities and plans. There wasn't enough time for a full debate because the meeting had started late. This was because the doors to the venue were not opened until the last minute, and the buffet for the Reed Neet arrived very promptly.

The buffet had in fact saved the day because it had been provided at very short notice after the traditional pie and peas supper was scuppered through a misunderstanding! Despite all the logistical problems with the venue and the catering, it was felt by many of those present that the evening was a great success.

During the AGM proper, the usual reports from the Executive and the Treasurer were received and approved. The Officers of the Society were all re-elected, and it was agreed to ask for a subscription of £20 from other societies and groups wanting to join our Society.

Along with Grahame and Barbara Binless (valiant typists of the Moody Book text), George Davison was elected as an Honorary Member for his long-standing membership, for his constant promotion of NLS activities, for upholding the highest standards, and for playing an important part in the inaugural church service. George has also just celebrated his 80th birthday, so congratulations all round!

We also launched the Fred & Raymond Reed CD (a snip at £10, plus £1 p&xp if ordering by post). This contains the full

contents of the original Fred Reed LP issued many years ago, plus some extra poems read by Raymond, and including three pieces written and read by Raymond. Copies can be ordered directly from Kim Bibby-Wilson on 01670-513308.

Thi Reed Neet

Wu hed the Peypin in o the Muckle Greet Stotty Cyek bi Mistruss Anne Sessoms; thi Sarrimoanyil Forst Hack meyd bi thi Vice-Preseedint, Mistruss Janet Brown; an thi Stotty Cyek Weesh spokken bi thi Chairman, Maistor Peter Arnold. Wu then hed the Tradeeshnal Suppor (well, varnigh tradeeshnal!) follad bi a piece o stotty.

Thi Address ti thi Muckle Greet Stotty wes given bi Maistor Adrian Ions frae Alnwick (whe spent a canny bit o tyem on hoo ye hoy a stotty - varry sportin an aa!). Thi Reply on eets bihaaf wes med bi Maistor Brian James, also frae Alnwick, whe gov wuh a varitable feest o varse). Thi Address ti thi Bard, wor ain Fred Reed wes med bi Mistruss Diana Heslop frae Ellingham, whe regayled wu wi a sparited rendition o thi wark o that ither bard, Wullie Sheykspeeor, but in hor varry best Northumbrian. An the Ripley on hees bihaaf wes med bi Maistor Raymond Reed frae Stakeford, whe tellt wu a few hyem trooths about his dad, an varry entorteynin it wes tee.

Eftor that, wu hed teym forra few bits an peeces hoyed in bi thassembled thrang, but theor wes nee teym for Maistor Nick Short, newly elevated Bard o Northumberland (fer winnin thi Oppen Varse at thi Gathrin) whe hed to gan hyem wi Maistor Glenn Simpson frae Prudhoe whe hed the wheels that neet.

Collaboration with the University of Newcastle

As mentioned at the AGM, we're working with Newcastle University to try and get the Moody Book published. Peter Arnold and Kim Bibby-Wilson have had several meetings with Dr Karen Corrigan in the Department of English, and we've reached the stage of making an application to the Cookson Foundation for a grant to get the book published, and to carry out some language research.

The Moody Book was hand-written and illustrated by Thomas Moody in the 1930s and 1940s when he was working as a school teacher in the north east. It is a unique record of the Northumbrian language at that time, and it also contains a selection of children's games which Moody recorded at the back of the book.

Because of the way in which the book was prepared at the time, it isn't possible to produce a facsimile version without destroying the original, so we've had it word-processed to make it possible to publish it at all. We're hoping however that we can get some of the original illustrations included, and we think it will make a very beautiful and valuable book.

A selling price hasn't been fixed yet, but we think it will be about £20. In fact, trying to find the money to get it printed has been something of a nightmare, hence the link with Newcastle University. One idea that has been suggested is to open a subscription list of people who will promise to buy the book when it is published. If you would be willing to do this, please get in touch with our Chairman, Peter Arnold, on 0191 285-7209 who will send you more details.

Sausages from Holland

A few months ago we received a letter from Holland. The writer had heard Peter Arnold on a Radio 4 programme talking about the Northumbrian language with local poet and performer Peter Athey. This prompted him to send us a label from a product called "North Humbrian Sausages".

Apparently, in the Netherlands these sausages are quite popular, and the label (in Dutch!) says that these delicacies come from North Humbria, "the English province close beneath Edinburgh in Scotland"! Remember, you read it here first folks! Unfortunately, the label doesn't state where the sausages are made, but if you're ever in Holland, keep your eyes peeled for these culinary delights.

Alnwick Medieval Fair

We are running a stall at Alnwick's annual medieval fair in the Market Place between 10 am and 5pm on Monday 1st July. Please ring Kim on 01670-513308 if you are able to help at any time during the day.

Afterwards, we've arranged to use the town's splendid new Bailiffgate Museum to host an open evening for the public, starting at 7.30pm. The highlight will be "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" our world-famous version of "Call My Bluff". We're hoping that Alnwick will provide a team to meet our own stalwarts in this hilarious language game. Entry is free, but there will be a collection to help defray the costs of the event. Doors open at 7.15pm

Constitution

A small team of officers of the Society has been reviewing the Constitution. The original document was drawn up in 1984, and we have discovered that there are very few changes to make because the first version was so carefully done. We will be reporting on our final recommendations to you soon.

Membership

Another small team has been reviewing our membership records.

We have 104 active members of the Society, but we also have another 36 who are behind with their subscriptions. Are YOU one of these? If you are, there is a reminder included with this newsletter. If we do not hear from you soon, we will assume you are no longer interested, and we'll remove your name from our records.

For those of you who are fully-paid-up members, have you recruited anyone recently? We need more members if we're going to be able to do all the work that is necessary to keep ahead of the work. Please try and persuade people you know are interested in our work to join the Society.

Let Peter Arnold (0191 285-7209) or Kim Bibby-Wilson (01670-513308) know of any likely candidates, and we'll get in touch with them.

Advance Notice

Saturday 12th October 2002
5th Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture
1.30 for a 2pm start
Morpeth Town Hall Ballroom

Joan Beal will be this year's lecturer,
and the title of her talk is:-

**"Geordies past and present: a time-
capsule of Tyneside speech."**

Links with Other Societies

The Lancashire Dialect Society is throwing down the gauntlet with a National Traditional Challenge at the Fylde Folk Festival on Sunday 1st September at 2pm at the Steamer Hotel, Fleetwood, Lancashire.

There are competitions for Traditional Dialect Poem, Traditional Story and Traditional Song, each with prizes of a trophy and £50. Each dialect society is allowed only one entrant per class (three entrants in all). We're trying to clarify exactly what is meant by "traditional".

Kim is planning to be there anyway, as her husband's rapper team is performing, but anyone interested should contact her for details on 01670-513308.

Society chairman Peter Arnold was the guest speaker at the **Allendale WI AGM** at the end of May.

There were about 60 people in the audience, and Peter gave them a potted history of the language, and tried out some hoafies. He finished off with some readings from Robert Allen and Fred Reed, and he even managed to sell some of our merchandise!

Do you know of any local groups who might be interested in learning more about wor tung? If you do, please let the Society Secretary know. Get in touch with Kim Bibby-Wilson on 01670-513308.

Rothbury Festival, Saturday 13 July
Contact Mary Bathgate on 01669-620718 for details of competitions and events.