

Northumbrian Language Society

"Keepin Ahada Wor Tung"



Charity No: 515179

Members' Newsletter No: 44
Autumn 2002



Patrons: Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland

Gaffer's Grumlin's

This eedishon o wor nyoosletta is packed full o bits o nyoos aboot wot wiv been deein an wot wuh ganner dee that Aah hope yuhll aall fin summat ti yor likin. Aah's varry pleased that so much is gannin on, cos it means lots o folks is workin hard for wor tung. It's only be peepul takin time oot o theor bizzy lives ti spend a little bit time on wor tung that wuh ganner ti be ebbel to keep ahada wor tung! Keep up thi gud work! Keep Ahad!

The Gaffer

We are hoping that the Society's website will be updated soon. Why not log on at www.northumbriana.org.uk?

Next Event

Saturday 12th October - 5th Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture

Morpeth Town Hall Ballroom - 1.30pm for a 2pm start

"Geordies past and present: a time capsule of Tyneside speech"
Lecture by Dr Joan Beal of Sheffield University (and NLS member!)

See the back page for more details about all the events taking place in Morpeth Town Hall on Saturday 12th October. If you can, why not make a complete day of it!

Language Society News

Alnwick Fair Day

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This year, for the first time, we also held an evening event on the same day. We put on a "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" session in the new Bailiffgate Museum near the entrance to the castle. We had a full house (about 30 people), and it was standing room only at one point. A team from the Language Society took on a team from Alnwick, and after a hesitant start, a good time was had by all, with plenty of fun, laughter, and some woppin big hoafies telt bi both sides!

For those who haven't yet been to the museum, we can heartily recommend it. There's plenty to see, and the staff are very friendly and helpful. It's well worth a visit.

Local News ...

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Our reporter says it was a nice friendly get-together, with informal recitals from the guests, and the evening ended with a good crack aboot, well, aah naa ye kin ges, Northumbria ind

Northumbrian!

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Fylde Festival Report

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The wes three compytishuns, fa trad sang, trad poem an trad story, so sayd the rules. The winnin trad sang hed been wrote the syame week, soonded varry much like Standad English (oh aye?), aal aboot Liverpool in the 50s; the best poem wes deed gud, in a strang E Yorks twang, aboot sumthin or other thet we cannut mind bi noo, but it wes canny forbye; an we're chuffed tiv anoonce thet Bob banged them aal wi the Sleepin Beauty, his aan rib-kittlin tyale chocka wi words like boody, gliff, gully, dyke an gallowa, an a guest appearance bi yon Wicked Fairy (nuff sayd). Bob wes awarded a fifty pund prize for the best story, so at least he's gotten his petrol munny back!

Northumbrian Dictionary

As you will know, a small group has been working on a short, modern dictionary of Northumbrian, and we're pleased to be able to report that we expect to be able to circulate the first (very)rough draft before the end of the year.

When it's ready, we're hoping that members will add/delete/change entries, so that we can make use of the knowledge and expertise that we know members have about our language.

We're not trying to produce a scholarly dictionary; that will come later. This

dictionary will be quite a short one with about a thousand words in it, but we do hope it will reflect the state of the language as it is now, so that we can get it printed and circulated to as many people as possible. We believe that having an accessible and popular dictionary is an essential part of our long-term strategy to preserve and enhance the Northumbrian language. All of our members have a very important part to play in helping with this project, so please look out for more information in our next Newsletter.

Publications

The Society is now the only supplier of books and recordings of both Robert Allen and the late Fred Reed, two of the Northumbrian Languages's greatest poets.

Robert Allen FNLS, one of our founding members, has very generously given all his publications to the Society. His book "Canny Bit Verse" (£6) with illustrations by the late Henry Brewis, contains the texts of all three of his recordings, but only the third tape is still available, "The Lang Pack" (£5) featuring his narrative poem of the Bellingham legend of the same name, and fifteen other pieces. We hope to be able to release the earlier recordings at a later date.

Iron Press have had warehousing difficulties, leading to their no longer handling a number of titles, including our co-production of Fred Reed's poetry book "The Northumborman" (£7.99), and so all stocks of that have passed to us.

Our newly issued CD recording "Northumbrian Voice" (£10) is a remastered version of Fred Reed's original LP from the 1970's, but with extra tracks recorded recently by his son Raymond Reed - 35 tracks in all.

Our other co-production with Iron Press has also sold out. The book and CD "The Wund an the Wetter", a collaboration between poet Katrina Porteous and piper Chris Ormston, celebrates the fishing communities of Beadnell and Seahouses. We are investigating the possibility of a second edition, but meanwhile there may still be copies in local shops including Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum and Alnwick's new Bailiffgate Museum.

All our books and CDs will be on sale on 12th October at our events in Morpeth Town

Hall, or by mail (plus 10% postage) from Kim Bibby-Wilson at Westgate House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE.

(The following piece has been adapted by Hazel Dickson from an original piece written by Stan Pearson, an NLS member of many years standing, who now lives in Eastbourne in Sussex.)

Winter Tale

Stan Pearson was a pollis in the Horst end o Ashington. 1947 waas the warst winter for mony a lang year. Stan rode eez bike ower coggles and ruts in the frozen slush. Ee jogged up and doon, slippin and slidin aroond.

Yen neet ee hit mebbe a stray cat or a rat alaang Bell's Lonnen in the black dark. Ee cowped eez creels ower the handelbars into the dyke. The front wheel o the bike was aall twisted wi lots o brocken spronks. Ee wasn't ower grand hissell. It tuck a fortnet ti get aall thi proggles frae the hedge oot o eez hint-end.

Nivvor mind, the canny pit folks that bided theor tuck im hyem and med im tea wi stottie breed, ti help in get ower the gliff, an Stan's still alive ti tell thi tale!

Special Event

On Wednesday 20 October, from 12.30 until 1.30 in St George's Church, Morpeth (overlooking the Telford Bridge) the Morpeth District Arts Trust will be holding one of its regular monthly lunchtime concerts.

This time however, there will be no music, only fine Northumbrian speech from our own Raymond Reed. This is the first time the Trust has put on a language recital, and it's a real feather in our caps. Raymond will be reciting his own poetry, plus some of his father's, and telling stories in his own distinctive way.

Please come along to support this event, and to demonstrate that there is an audience for the spoken word. Admission is £3.50 on the door. Tea and coffee will be served, and you are welcome to take along a sandwich.

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