

# Northumbrian Language Society

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"



Charity No: 515179

**Members' Newsletter No. 48**  
**December 2003**



Patrons: Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland

## Next Happnin

### Yule Meet

Saturday 13 December at 2pm in the Chantry Bagpipe Museum, Morpeth

Our traditional pre-Christmas get together, with food and drink, raffle, members' contributions, our world-famous "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" and the singing of our own Yuletide Carol. How can you possibly stay away?

## Gaffer's Grumlin's

Deor Reedor Hinny

Whey man, Aah jist blinked, an it's thi end o thi yeor agen! Hoo time flees! Wu've hed a reet busy yeor, wot wi meetins an happins aal ower thi playce. Wor Secretary, Kim, hes spent a geet lang time on thi discussions wi them university peepel about thi Heritage Lottery bid mentioned later on in thi Newsletter. An wu've had te dee a lot mair than wu thowt wud be needed on gettin thi Moody Byeuk reddy for printin, but wu've jest about managed ti dee it. Wu hope to hev it reddy for yu seun. Finally, as it's thi festive seesun, wu aal hope yu hev a reet jolly time, an thet 2004 is a gud yeor fer ivryone.

The Gaffer

# Society News

**Moody Book:** We had hoped to get the book printed before Christmas, but this has not proved possible. A number of last-minute difficulties have slowed the programme down, but hopefully these have all been sorted out, and we hope to have the book ready by the end of January. It's taken us twenty years to get to this point, so we hope you won't mind waiting a few more weeks. It will be well worth the wait!

**Heritage Lottery Bid :** Those with long memories will remember that our collaboration with Newcastle University was for a fairly modest research project costing about £35,000. This was going to be spent investigating how knowledge of the Northumbrian language had changed over the last thirty years or so. We were going to see how much of the language modern teenagers knew compared with their parents and grandparents. The Heritage Lottery people told us that we had to join up with the University of Northumbria where a similar project had been submitted for funding as well. We have spent quite a lot of time over the last year working on this joint bid, which has now gone into the Heritage Lottery Board for consideration. If it is approved, it will mean a much bigger research project, lasting several years, and worth more than £900,000 would you believe! The trouble is that you have to try and guess, before you start a project, how much everything is going to cost, and try and decide everything you might want to do, no matter how small, because the process doesn't allow you to add anything else once the bid is approved. All we have to do now is wait for the Lottery people to make a decision, and that process will take several months. We'll keep you informed of progress.

**EBLUL:** This is the European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages which is a European organisation, linked to the European Union, which looks after the interests of those people who speak one of the many minority languages that are still to be found all over the continent. In the British Isles, this includes languages such as Manx, Welsh, Cornish, Scots, Ulster Scots, Gaelic and Irish. We have spoken to them about adding Northumbrian to the list, and they have awarded us associate status because there is a lot more work to do before a decision is made as to whether or not we can be regarded as a language like the others. Keep your fingers crossed!

**Dialect Gathering - Saturday 6 September, Boldron Village Hall, North Yorkshire:** This event is held every other year, and it's an opportunity for all of the dialects and languages in the north of England to be celebrated and shared with like minded people. This year there was a lecture on the status of the various dialects to be found throughout the area, and after refreshments, and a chance to look at what everyone else's stall had to offer, there were readings from all seven of the societies and groups represented. As well as ourselves, there were people from Durham, Teesside, Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria. The event moves around the area, and the next one will be in 2005, somewhere in the north-east, because we volunteered to host it! So, if anyone knows of a suitable venue that will seat about 150 people, with space for display tables, and somewhere for refreshments, and convenient car parking, then please get in touch. We will need volunteers for this event, so if you would like to be involved, please get in



touch with wor Gaffer, Peter Arnold, at 14 Dilston Terrace, South Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1XX, telephone 0191 285-7209, email: pja@beeb.net

**Glendale Festival event, Friday 19 September, Wooler:** We were the star turn at this event, which was a fundraiser for the Glendale Festival. Several of us went up to give readings, tell stories, spread the word, and have a round of "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" There weren't a lot of folks there, but we all enjoyed the evening, and helped the organisers raise some money for their Festival.

**Memorial Lecture Report, Saturday 11 October, Morpeth Town Hall:** This year's lecture was different. We decided to launch the Moody Book, and celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Northumbrian Language Society at the same time. A good-sized audience was entertained by members of the Society reading extracts from the book, and the original books were on display, along with photographs and articles of Moody himself, and mock-ups of what the finished book will look like. We took a number of extra orders for the book, and we were delighted that some members of the Moody family were able to join us for the event. To mark the Society's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, we had a special cake made, which was covered with icing and decorated with words from the Language. We were also very pleased that the Chairman of Northumberland County Council and the Mayor of Castle Morpeth Borough Council were able to join us, with their wives. We very much appreciate the help both organisations have given us over the years.

**Alnwick Gathering, Saturday 8 November, Alnwick Playhouse:** we had our usual stall at this event, which wasn't as busy as normal because there had been a clash of dates with another event organised by FolkWorks in Gateshead. However, we met quite a few people, and managed to sell a bit of our merchandise.

## *Merchandise*

"Northumbrian Voice": CD of the poetry of the late Fred Reed (digitally remastered) + extra tracks by Fred's son, Raymond Reed. £10

"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 the fishing community of north Morthumberland (NLS/Iron/Worm Music) - reprint £10

"St Oswaldtide Service": full text (including hymns) in Northumbrian of church service held in Ashington in 2000. 75p

"Meyk an Moas": book by Roland Bibby, translating the classic German tale into Northumbrian. £2

"Lang Pack": ancient Bellingham legend retold in Northumbrian verse, and other poems by Robert Allen. Tape £5

"Canny Bit Verse": book of the verse of Robert Allen. £6

"The Mid-Northumbrian Dialect" by Thomas Moody. Amble-born author's 700 page dictionary of local words 1901-1950. To be published soon. Book £25; CD-rom £12

All of these items of NLS merchandise will be available at the Yule Meet, or, alternatively, send cheques made payable to "Northumbrian Language Society" for the total amount, plus £1 for postage and packing, to Kim Bibby-Wilson, Westgate House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE. Queries by phone to 01670-513308.

## *Meetins an Happynins*

**Saturday 13 December - Yule Meet, Morpeth:** 2pm in the Chantry Bagpipe Museum - see the entry on the first page of this newsletter for details. If you intend to come along, please bring a small food contribution for the refreshments at half-time.

**Tuesday 3 February - NLS Executive Committee meeting, Morpeth, 2pm**

**Tuesday 23 March - NLS Executive Committee meeting, Morpeth, 2pm**

**Friday to Sunday 16-18 April - Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering:** please put this weekend in your diaries today! This is one of the most important dates in the Society's calendar. The Gathering celebrates everything to do with Northumbrian history, culture and heritage, and we are responsible for the dialect and language competitions in the event. It's a great weekend for all the family, and why not make a New Year's resolution now to enter one of the language competition categories. We need lots of entries from new writers (poems, prose, stories) and speakers (storytelling, Fine Northumbrian Speech).

**NB: All of the following dates are provisional only. The exact dates and details will be confirmed nearer the time in future editions of the Newsletter. You might like to put the dates in your diaries however, to remind you that as a keen Northumbrian Language Society member you really should attend these events!**

**Saturday 1 May - NLS AGM and Reed Neet, Morpeth**

**Saturday 22 May - Tyne Valley Local History Fair, Prudhoe**

**Late June/Early July - Alnwick Fair event, Bailiffgate Museum**

**Saturday 11 September - Great North Fair, Gateshead Stadium**

**Thursday 14 October - National Poetry Day, aal ower thi playce**

**Saturday 16 October - Arts Coffee Morning & Memorial Lecture, Morpeth**

**Saturday 13 November - Alnwick Gathering, Playhouse**

**Saturday 11 December - Yule Meet, Morpeth**