

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"

Members' Newsletter, Number 79, Autumn 2011

Wot's On

Saturday 15 October - Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture – Morpeth Town Hall, starting at 2pm, doors open at 1.30. This year's lecture will be given by Karen Lowing from Newcastle University, who will report on a project studying the dialect use of youngsters in the borders. For full details, see page 3 of this newsletter.

Saturday 22 October – English Dialect Day in Louth, Lincolnshire. This event is part of a campaign by several dialect groups to preserve our distinctive English dialects. There will be people from all over the English speaking community there. We will be represented by several members, who will be reporting back, because we are hosting the Dialect Day in 2012! Please support this event if you can.

Saturday 10 December - Yule Meet, our seasonal, pre-Christmas event, starting at 2pm in the Chantry Mueum in Morpeth. There will be contributions from those present, a shared meal with food brought by those attending, and afterwards, our celebrated Northumbrian word game "Whe's Tellin Hoafies?" How can you possibly miss it?

13–15 April 2012 - The 45th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering, taking place during the weekend after Easter, at a variety of indoor and outdoor venues in central Morpeth. This is the largest and best of the several Gatherings in Northumberland, and it celebrates every aspect of our Northumbrian language, history and culture. Please make a note of the dates, and try to be there if you can. Better still, why not make it your New Year Resolution to enter the dialect competitions this time round?

Northumbrian Language Society

Charity Number 515179

President: Katrina Porteous FNLS

Patrons: The Duke & Duchess of Northumberland

Chairman: Peter Arnold
33 Hackwood Glade, Hexham,
Northumberland, NE46 1AL
Phone: 01434-608230
Email: pja13@btinternet.com

Secretary: Kim Bibby-Wilson
Westgate House, Dogger Bank,
Morpeth, Northumberland,
NE61 1RE
Phone: 01670-513308
Email: kim@northumbriana.org.uk

Treasurer: John Davidson
10 Burnhouse Road, Wooler,
Northumberland, NE71 6EE
Phone: 01668-281462
Email: fit40@tiscali.co.uk

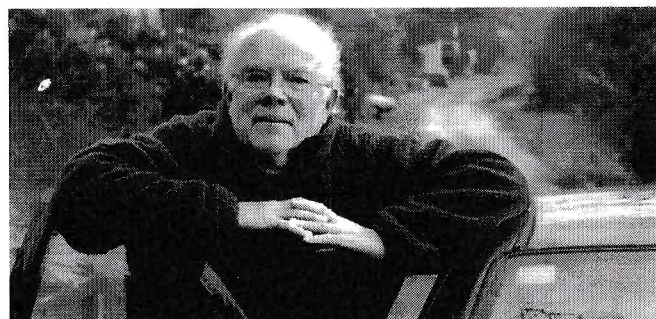
Passionate about dialect

north east
england

Tony Sandford 1932–2011

It is with regret that we record the death of long-standing Northumbrian Language Society member Tony Sandford, (pictured, photo courtesy of The Journal) who died on 6th July.

Tony was born and raised in Harrow in Middlesex. After serving in the RAF for five years, he worked for one of the early independent television companies, Rediffusion, before moving to Newcastle in 1958 to join Tyne Tees Television. He worked for Tyne Tees for nearly forty years, first as a vision mixer, then moving into programme control before becoming an executive producer. He finished his career in international sales.



In 1969, Tony and his family moved to Rothbury, and he became involved in local activities. He is remembered mainly for his role in starting the Rothbury Traditional Music Festival in the late 1970s which is now an established part of the Northumbrian cultural scene.

Our Secretary, Kim Bibby-Wilson writes " Tony was one of the Language Society's first recruited members, and he was always extremely keen on promoting the works of dialect writers. He produced several recordings of poets from the Rothbury area over the years."

Tony represented the people of Rothbury as a Parish and District Councillor for a number of years, in addition to helping in the setting up of the Rothbury & Coquetdale Youth Project.

His wife, Jean, died in 1988, and he is survived by a son and a daughter, and by five grandchildren.

Fry's Planet Word

Confused? No, it's not an advert for a new kind of chocolate! It's the title of a new TV series about language.

The presenter is Stephen Fry, and he's fronting a series of five one-hour-long programmes which aim to explore several aspects of language. The series is broadcast on BBC2 on Sunday evenings at 9pm, but if you have access to a computer and the internet, you can also watch them on iPlayer.

The second programme, broadcast last Sunday, dealt with why some languages survive and others don't. It focused on Irish and Basque as examples of minority languages which have survived partly because of official state support, and partly because of the refusal of local people to let their languages die.

He then told the story of Hebrew, a dead language which was revived to become the official language of Israel after the state was reformed in 1947. The interesting point here is that ancient Hebrew didn't have any modern words, so Hebrew speakers simply use new words from appropriate languages to describe modern things like computers, cars, etc.

This hybrid form of Hebrew may be a model for us to think about when we're using Northumbrian, and trying to decide which word to use to describe modern technology.

The programme then dealt with Occitan, a regional dialect of French, spoken in the south of the country. There, the dialect is dying out because the state actively promotes a single version of French, and does all it can to get rid of regional dialects.

This example is very close to our situation, except that the state here is indifferent to regional dialects, and in terms of language survival, indifference is just as destructive as outright suppression. If we want Northumbrian to survive, we're going to have to work very hard to keep it alive, because no-one else is going to do it for us.

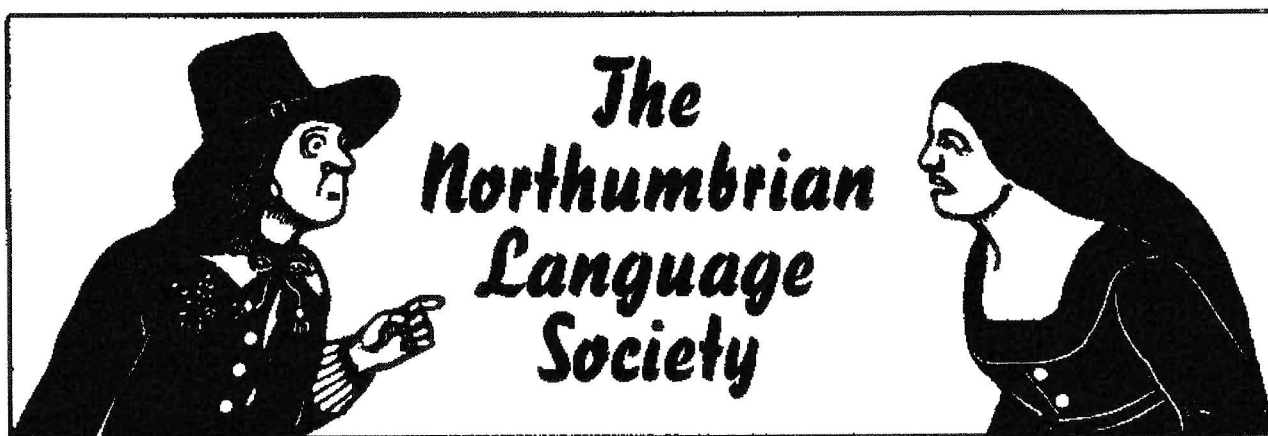
That means we must all speak it and write it more often. We must use it, or lose it! It also means we must campaign more vigorously to remind people of how important our dialect is. After all, the Northumbrian dialect and language is at the heart of our identity and our culture, just as it is with Irish, Basque and Hebrew. The speakers of those minority languages fought for their languages, and won. We must do the same for Northumbrian.

Breaking News We've just received this plea for help from Northumberland Scouts. We were one of the organisations that agreed to support their Lottery bid in principle some months ago. If you have any ideas about how we might be able to help, please contact us first, so we can co-ordinate a response. You might like to raise it with us at the end of the Lecture on Saturday 15 October if you're going.

"Geordie at War

I am a Development Tutor with LookwideUK. We are the development arm of Northumberland Scouts. We are about to start a Heritage Lottery partially funded project looking at the impact of conflict on the people of the north-east. We are working with two school groups at present (Year 9/10) and I am looking for societies who can provide some practical educational instruction to the young people. One of the aims of the project is to look at the impact that conflict has had on the local language and in particular words that have been introduced from military organisations. Would your organisation be interested in assisting us with this project?

David Smith, LookwideUK"



Keepin ahad o wor tung

The 2011 Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture

Saturday 15th October at 2 pm

The Northumbrian Language Society presents

**Ane Instructioun for Bairnis to be
Learnit in Northumbrian and Scottis:**

a study of Northumberland and Scots Language and
Literature within the secondary classroom.

Speaker: Karen Lowing (Newcastle University)

**The Corn Exchange, Morpeth Town Hall,
Market Place, Morpeth, NE61 1LZ**

Free admission. Full disabled access.

Doors open and free drinks 1.30 pm

Further details: Hon. Sec. NLS: Mrs Kim Bibby-Wilson, Westgate House,
Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE. Tel. 01670 513308

Website: www.northumbriana.org.uk