



“Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung”

Members' Newsletter, Number 92, Spring 2015

Whaat's On

48th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering

10th - 12th April
In Various Venues In
Morpeth Town Centre

The details of the events planned over the weekend can be found in the glossy leaflet available from your local Library, Tourist Information Centre, or in some of your local shops, as well as from the Gathering website www.northumbriana.org.uk

Please make every effort to attend some, or all of the events. Most are free, and the admission charges for the others are very modest.

Of particular interest to NLS Members will be the dialect competitions on the Saturday afternoon, 11th April, beginning at 1.30pm in St Robert's Church Hall.

There will be three dialect competitions - **The Hoafy Trophy, Storytelling, and Northumbrian Speech.** In between the competitions will be the announcement of the results, and presentation of trophies and certificates for a wide range of pre-judged competitions. Prizewinners will be in attendance to recite their work.

Society News

Subscriptions for 2015 are now due.

Please renew promptly as this will help us in our planning of events and other activities. You will find a membership renewal slip included with this Newsletter.

Our AGM and Reed Neet Celebrations will be held on Saturday 25th April in the Masonic Hall, Howard Terrace, Morpeth. The Agenda and Programme for both events are on the reverse of this page.

There is also important information about changes that will be happening soon, and how you can be more actively involved.



“Two Countries”

A book of poetry by Katrina Porteous
Published by Bloodaxe Books at £12

Our President has recently published a book of poetry about the value of place in our lives, about landscape, community, and the shifting relations between them.

The poems are organised in six sections – Wall, Borderers, Castle, Sea Roads, Coal Roads, and Haliwerfolk. Some have been published before (there is the full text of “The Wund an’ the Wetter”) and some are the texts of soundscapes Katrina has created over the years for broadcasting on radio.

The poems are a mixture of Standard English and Northumbrian, and there is a dialect glossary at the end. The rhythm and imagery of the poems remain in your mind long after you’ve finished reading them. They also cry out to be read aloud. Try it!

This is a wonderful collection. The northern settings produce a fine connection between the places described and our feelings about them. They are about us, as well as being about the general human condition. Every Northerner should read this book. The book can be purchased from all good bookshops. Please buy!

Northumbrian Language Society 32nd Annual General Meeting

Saturday 25 April 2015 at 7pm
Morpeth Masonic Hall, Winton House,
Howard Terrace, Morpeth

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 31st AGM and matters arising
3. Report of the Executive Committee
4. Treasurer's Report and consideration of the audited accounts
5. Election of Officers
6. Election of Executive Committee
7. Election of Auditor
8. Any Other Business: the future of the Society
→ Vice-Presidents: constitutional change?
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Northumbrian Language Society 31st Reed Neet

Saturday 25th April 2015 at 8pm
Morpeth Masonic Hall, Winton House,
Howard Terrace, Morpeth

Agenda

1. Thi Peypin In O Thi Greet Stotty Cyek
 2. Thi Sarrimoanyil Forst Hack
 3. Thi Stotty Cyek Weesh, rit bi Roland Bibby
 4. Thi Tradishnal Pie An Peas Supper
 5. Thi Address Ti Thi Muckle Greet Stotty
 6. Thi Ripley On Eets Bihaaf
 7. Thi Address Ti Thi Bard, Wor Ain Fred Reed
 8. Thi Ripley On Ees Bihaaf
 9. Thi Bits An Peeces, hwen aal willin is axed ti hoy in tha bits o varse, tyels, sangs, an owt else thit entortyains aal gud Northumbrians
 10. Thi Bennydikshin, canny an tradishnal, rit bi Fred Reed
- Tickets for this year's Reed Neet are the same as last year – £8 – which includes stotty cake, the traditional pie and peas supper, tea or coffee, and the entertainment!**
- Please order your tickets by filling in the booking form included with this Newsletter, and don't forget to renew your subscription at the same time!**

The Future of the Northumbrian Language Society

(This article is an introduction to Item 8 on the Agenda of the AGM)

Kim Bibby-Wilson, who has been our Secretary for many years, has decided that now is the time for her to step down from that role. We are very grateful for all that Kim has done over the years, because, without her, the Society would not have survived.

Kim is also Chairman of the Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering, and the Gathering, like many other voluntary heritage organisations, is experiencing severe financial pressure as the result of the decline in public funding. Kim feels that her priority at the moment is making sure that the Gathering survives, because it is, after all, the largest community festival in Northumberland.

Kim's decision has also given us the opportunity to debate our own future. At the moment, we are holding our own, but only just. Many of our members are growing older and frailer, and are just not able to be as practically involved as they used to be. At the same time, we are having difficulty recruiting younger members who might be willing to volunteer to take on tasks and to help keep our language alive.

We are lucky in that we are not financially threatened because we do not rely on public funding, and nearly all of our income comes from our own activities. But there is no point having the money, if we don't have the people to make use of it!

The Executive Committee has had a meeting to discuss the issue, and we have come up with some ideas for the future. We have identified seven main areas of activity we are involved in. These are (in no particular order) :-

1. **Publicity** – letting people know we exist!
2. **Events** – Gathering, Reed Neet, Yule Meet, talks
3. **Administration** – meetings, events, queries
4. **Merchandise** – books, CDs, giveaways, T-shirts
5. **Fundraising** – so we can publish books, CDs, etc
6. **Communication** – Newsletter, Website
7. **Research** – ideas for publications, dictionary, etc

We have no fixed ideas about what we should do, but we know we have to change to keep up to date, and we want and need our members to be involved.

Ideally, we are looking for people who are willing and able to volunteer for one or more of the activities listed above. In particular, we need help to understand and make best use of new technology and social media. We also need to engage with and recruit lots of younger people if we are to survive in the years ahead.

There will be an opportunity at the AGM for a discussion of all of these issues, and we will also be looking for someone to volunteer for the important role of Secretary. Please do come along to share your ideas and to take part in the debate about our future.