

**Members'**  
**Newsletter No 96**  
**Autumn 2016**

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"

## Next Happnin

Saturday 8th October at 2pm

### **Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture**

**"Northumbrian Speech -  
Is It Extinct in Common Use?"**  
**Lecture given by Johnny Handle**

Morpeth Town Hall, in the Corn Exchange

Doors open at 1.30pm

Light refreshments available

Free Event - Donations welcome

## NLS Contacts

If you want to get in touch with us about any of the items in this Newsletter, or about a dialect query, or to volunteer to help, contact:-

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[www.northumbriana.org.uk](http://www.northumbriana.org.uk)

## Dates For The Diary

### **Thursday 6th October - National Poetry Day.**

Events and venues to be confirmed.

### **Saturday 8th October - Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture**

at 2pm in Morpeth Town Hall.

See the poster attached to this Newsletter for more details.

### **21st-23rd October - National Dialect Festival.**

This year's event will be in Yorkshire. See the details on another page of this Newsletter, and book the date now!

### **Saturday 3rd December - Yule Meet**

in Morpeth's Chantry Museum, starting at 2pm. Bring something for the shared meal, and join us for our pre-Yuletide celebration.

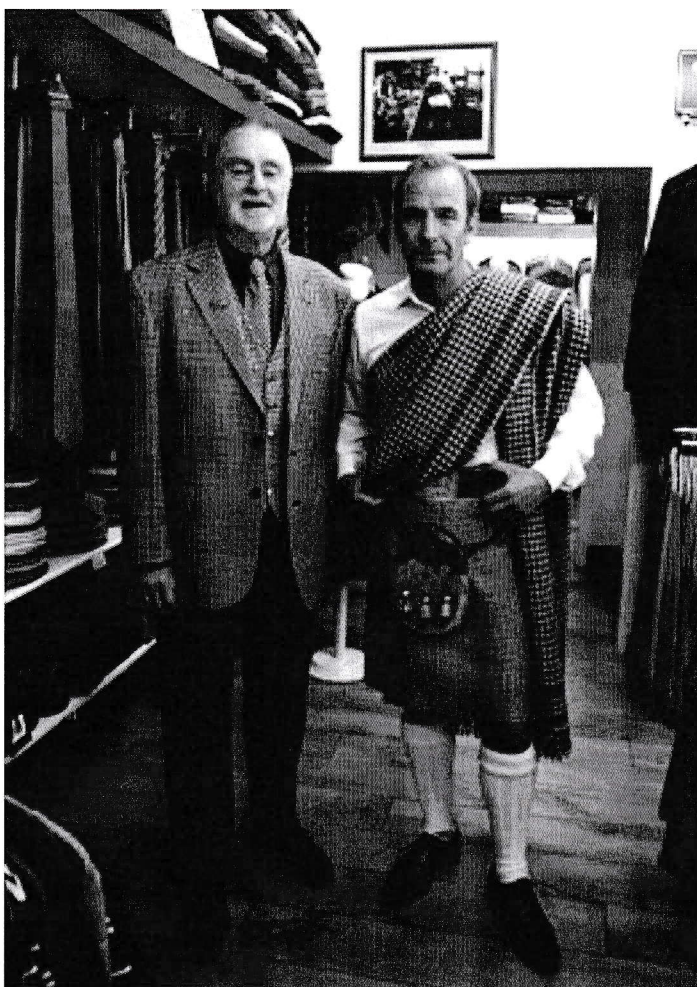
## Dialect Dilemma

Does anyone know the origin of the dialect word "flight"?

Gordon Hartill from Bedlington has asked if anyone knows this word. He has heard it's to do with hedge-cutting in late July after the fledglings have quit the nest. By sheer coincidence, Monty Don on BBC TV's "Gardeners' World" recently referred to hedge cutting only in late July or August after the nests are empty. Could be true!

Any ideas, folks?





*Robson Green and Wor Gaffor, Peter Arnold, taking a break from filming an interview about the Northumbrian tartan which featured in programme five of Robson's "Further Tales From Northumberland", broadcast by ITV on 28 March.*

## Whaat's Gannin On?

Ti judge bi thi lyuks on thi fyeces a these two, somebody's sed summat ti someone, an it hasna gon doon ower weel.

Wor gaffa's lyukin kinda smug like. But whaat about Robson Green? Ee dissent lyuk ower pleased wi summat. Whaat can it be?

Bye, but, the lyuk reet bonny, divvent the? The gaffor allus lyuks weel torned oot whan ee has ees proper duds on. An as for Robson, ee lyuks reet smart an aall. Yon plaid says it aall. A prood Northumbrian wearin ees nashnal kostume.

Aah heerd tell, but, bi someone whe waas theor, that wor gaffor sed summat about nee Northumbrian fella waad be seen deed in a kilt. Waad yuh beleev it?

That waas bad eenyuf, but di yuh mind on, whan Robson axed him on thi telly programme whaat ee thowt ov ees kilt an thi sporrان, wor gaffor sed ee thowt thi sporrان waas varry ... prominent!

Whey, wor lass sed "Yuh nivvor sed that, did yuh? Yuh canna say yon!" she sayd. "Whaativvor will yuh say next?" Div ony a yous knaa whaat she ment? cos Aah divvent.

## 49th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering 2016 - **COMPETITION RESULTS**

### **DIALECT AND STANDARD ENGLISH WRITING**

**B3a Novice Northumbrian Verse:** 1, "Aad Jock's Wind" James Tait (Rothbury)

**B3b Open Northumbrian Verse:** 1, "The Dancin Haal " Don Clegg; 2, "Aad Jock's Wind" James Tait; 3, "Moorland Hike Sights" Nick Short (Hexham); HC, "Gandaft, the Great Geordie Wizard" Colin Bradford

**B4a Junior Northumbrian Verse:** 1, "Waakin' " Ava Davidson (Thropton Village First School); 2, "The Sky" Joseph Stanton (Rothbury First School); 3, "Rivers" Chloe Scott (Thropton Village); HC, "Winter" Enya Marczak (Netherton North Side First)

**B5 Northumbrian Prose:** 1, "The Kersey Redd Oot" Nick Short

**B6 Stage Sketch:** Comm., "The Extra Prince" Adrian McRobb (Cramlington).

**B8 Short Story:** 1, "The Revellers of Moorcock House" Ian Ashbridge (Cramlington); 2, "Border Dyke Destruction" Nick Short

**B9 Essay:** 1, "Curlew Calling" Nick Short

**B13 Junior Short Story:** 1, "The Forest" Thomas Thompson (Rothbury); 2, "The Little Singing Bird" Hannah Ridley (Thropton Village); 3, "The Derg in the Stew" Talitha Sharrocks (Thropton Village); HC, "The Northumbrian Newt" Ben Cuthbertson (Rothbury) and "The Bonny Buttefrfly" Erin Brown (Thropton Village); Comm., "Alnwick Castle" Thomas Charlesworth (Thropton Village)

**B15 Junior Northumbrian Prose:** 1, "Autumn" Ollie Smith (Netherton North Side); 2, "The Derg in the Snaa" Eleanor Taylor (Thropton Village); 3, "Biddlestone" Dexter MacDonald; Comm. "My House" Maddison James & "Netherton" Edward Graham (both of Netherton North Side), "Northumberland" Bailey Morris (Rothbury)

**B16 English Verse:** 1, "The Bottby Conundrum" Colin Bradford; 2, " Blyth Bandstand" Adrian McRobb (Cramlington); 3, "Arcot Hall Lake" Adrian McRobb; HC "Easter Prayer" Daisy Greaves (Morpeth).

### **SPEAKING**

**C18 Northumbrian Speech:** 1, Raymond Reed (Stakeford); 2, Syd Johnson (Blyth); 3, James Tait

**C22 Story-Telling:** 1, Don Clegg

**C26 Hoafy Trophy:** 1, Steven Common (Whitley Bay); 2, Peter Arnold (Hexham)

Recited at the 2016 Reed Neet on Saturday 30th April  
Bi Maistor Stuart Lawson frae Pegswood

## The One Ton Stotty Cyek

Aal of Morpeth waas hord tu say  
What's this yu expect us tu myek  
Wu've nivva hord of such a beast  
As a one ton stotty cyek.

Of this huge task the' wor severely daunted  
So the' roped in ivveryone the' cud wish  
To clean the owld swimmin' pool oot  
An' use it as a greet big mixin' dish.

Mair people wa browt in  
To kneed the moontains of dough  
An' the poonded and poonded  
Until the greet grey soggy lump was just so.

Otha people wer'asked tu get coal for the fire  
An' the' stripped the Lynemooth coast clean  
The fire the' built was the size of the smelter worrks  
An' the flames cud be seen in Windsa by the Queen.

Noo the needed a greet big pan  
So the' sliced the Blyth dredger in two lengthwise, on the spot  
Then haalled the bottom bit on tu the fire  
An' pretty soon it waas glowin' reed hot.

The' hoyed in the dough strite away  
'Cos the worn't ower sure how lang it wad tyek  
But afta about a day an' a haalf, it waas ready an' pipin' hot  
An' bye-the-bye, that's why wu taalk about pipin' in the stotty cyek.

Fred Reed, nee doot, wadda come up with a betta poem than this  
But it's tu his memory yon greet one ton stotty cyek is here  
So raise ya glass and lets hear ye greet  
The Spirit of the Bard of Northumborland  
Whee just happens tu be near.



# Northumbrian Language Society

## Annual General Meeting 2016 - Executive Committee Report

**Meetings** - The Executive Committee meets every other month to deal with the Society's business. Most of the matters dealt with have to do with the planning of our regular programme of events, plus any other events that appear from time to time. We also look at how successful events have been, and discuss how to improve them.

**Charity Commission** - The Society is a registered charity, and we file information with them on a regular basis. All of this information is publicly available so that other people can see that we are running our affairs properly. This last year has thrown up some problems which we have not encountered before. Even though we filed our financial report with them last July, their official record shows that we have not done so. We have been in touch with them over the issue, and hope to have it resolved soon.

**Events** - These continue to be the main way we invite the public to join us to celebrate our dialect. The Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering, the Reed Neet, the Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture and the Yule Meet are the principal events in our annual calendar. We also take part in the National Dialect Festival, and in other events which are organised by others from time to time. We also continue to speak to local community groups who invite us to share our dialect with them. In all of these ways we aim to keep our activities in the public eye, so that people know who we are and what we do.

**Publicity** - This past year has seen an increase in the amount of publicity we have attracted. We are the national dialect champions for the fourth year in a row. We have taken part in ITV's third series of Robson Green's "Further Tales From Northumberland". And we recently appeared on Radio Newcastle talking about dialect as an introduction to a British Academy event which was held in Newcastle, and which we were asked to chair.

**Publications** - The past twelve months have not seen any new publications being produced, but we are planning to draw up a programme of what we think we will need in the future. This includes the dictionary, which is an on-going piece of work; and we are discussing which publications we already have which need to be printed again because we have almost sold out.

**Challenges** - Like all small charities, we struggle to recruit new members. There are so many calls on people's time these days, and preserving our dialect has to compete with a large number of more attractive alternatives. Whenever we hold events, or give talks to community groups, we always ask them to join us, but very few do. They are always delighted to see us, and they enjoy what we have to tell them, but they are reluctant to become members and to get involved. We hope to discuss this issue in more detail over the next twelve months, so please let us know of any ideas you have on this issue.

**Thanks** - Because we are a small charity, everyone who helps on the Executive Committee, or at events, is a volunteer, and without them, we can do nothing. So, once again, we would like to thank everyone who has helped to keep our dialect alive, either by attending events, or by taking part, or by being a member of the Executive Committee. Your support and your time and your efforts are very much appreciated. Despite all the difficulties, we know that the Northumbrian Language Society will survive, because, together, we want it to.

# NATIONAL DIALECT FESTIVAL 2016



This is to be held at the  
**Brown Cow, Selby Road,  
Whitkirk, Leeds, LS15  
7AY**



Friday October 21st to  
Sunday October 23rd 2016

Hosted by the Yorkshire  
Dialect Society

It is not too early to secure your place!

You will need to SEND booking fee of £15 to the Hon Treasurer, Dr. Barrie Rhodes, 19 Prospect Close, Swinefleet, East Riding of Yorkshire, DN14 8FB, together with your name, address, telephone number and email address. Please make cheques (or P.O.— not PayPal) payable to 'Yorkshire Dialect Society' and write your name and address on the back,

**AND ....**

Book your accommodation for Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd nights at the Premier Inn, Selby Road, Whitkirk, Leeds, LS15 7AY, which is next door to the Brown Cow. Telephone 0871 527 8586. The Premier Inn have advised us that their best rates are on their website, so **click here to book your room at Premier Inn Leeds East**

(All meals will be available in the restaurant at the Brown Cow and paid for as taken.)

If you prefer local bed and breakfast or another hotel there are lots of possibilities on the web. Programme details will follow once they have been finalised. Finally, why not extend your stay in this very interesting part of the country and perhaps visit the city of York, or one of the many seaside areas accessible from Leeds? Tourist information leaflets will be available for you.



**This year's Reed Neet was actually held on the Bard's birthday, 30th April, and this is the Toast Ti Thi Bard, given this year by Wor Gaffor, Peter Arnold .....**

Us is gathord heor ti celebrate thi borthday a Fred Reed, wor ain Northumbrian Bard. Noo, why is ee wor Bard? Whaat has ee dyun ti disarve that nyem?

Forst off, ee's tellt wuh whey wuh is. Us is Northumbrians, an wuh aall taalk proper:-

*When a Northumbrian speaks t'ye, ye see,  
He's taalkin in the tung o history.  
He disn't wave wi wild gesticulations;  
Ye'll knaa jist whaat he means bi intonations.*

An Fred tells wuh i thi next poem why that is:-

*Northumborland!  
Aw, aye, it is a wild majestic word!  
Me hairt aye fills wi fondness when it's hord  
Amang dull scenes that thwart aall beauty's  
    blandin.  
Then Aa wad roam in gowlden mornins wheor  
The lairks are arly wi the dawn ascendin,  
An blackie's raptures thrill the dew-fresh air,  
Or wheor the velvet hush of sum treed vale  
Creeps doon t' give the perfumed neet's dew-kiss,  
An lost peewits'll soond thor haantin wail  
Abuv the moonbeamed silvor'd haants of bliss.  
Wi warm n lusty intonations say  
That grand aad word lood in wor dialect  
Tiv aall wor folks noo waandored far away --  
Watch thor eyes gleam! Hoo prood they'll stand erect!*

Aye. Us is prood Northumbrians. But theor's mair ti life than that. Not ivvorthin is whaat it seems. Theor's summat else an aall:-

*Aa've fund agyen that clouds daydream,  
That larks can porch on air,  
But wheor this aad sheeptrack'll lead,  
Ti jorney's end or shepherd's steed,  
Wey, Aa jist divvn't care.  
"Ower the hills n far away"  
Frum the wildorness of toons.*

"Frum the wildorness of toons." That's whaat Fred says. Toons is wildorness, dangerous plyeces. Wuh need ti be oot i thi oppen air mair often ti gerraway frae thi boredom o modern livvin:-

*Yo're bored? Wey, clim a tree;  
Waalk barefooted ower a lea;  
Plodge aboot doon in the sea;  
Clim a green hill. Ye'll seun see.*

But not ivvoryone can dee that, like this Aad Wife ee wrote aboot, whe says:-

*Ee, but Aa's feelin queer! Aa'm not just bad;  
It's such a funny kind of bein caad.  
It's warse nor bein trubled wi me pains --  
Jist like caad wettor runnin through me veins.  
If this had been the morn Aa'd had me pay.  
Mebbies Aa shud hev eaten mair the day.  
Aa mind when we war bairns we'd aall gan fuzzy  
Spinnin roond t mek worsels gan dizzy.  
Aa hev that whorlin feelin jist the same.  
But Aa'm not yung an this is not a game.  
So heor Aa'll stop. Aa've got to keep me seat;  
Wi stannin up wi duzziness Aa'm beat.  
Wi them few coals the fire shud be on.  
Aa've kept them for a welcome for young John,  
Me dowter's bairn. The morn's morn he'll be here  
An draa me pension. Aw, Aa de feel queer!  
Theor's such a funny drummin in me heed.  
Aa think Aa'll jist craal ower t me bed.*

This poem's not pokin fun at wor elders. Wor Bard knaas aall aboot thi loneliness ov owld age, aboot thi reality fer many folks livin bi thorsels, wi hardlys anyone ti care aboot them, aboot thi feor ov whaat's ti cum.

So, them's sum o thi reasons why Fred Reed is wor Bard. Ee writes aboot thi hyel o life, whaat it's like ti be human, an livvin in this plyec whaat wuh've created. Theor's a lot to be prood on, an thankful for, but theor's loneliness, an feor, an illness, an poverty as weel, an ee writes aboot it aall.

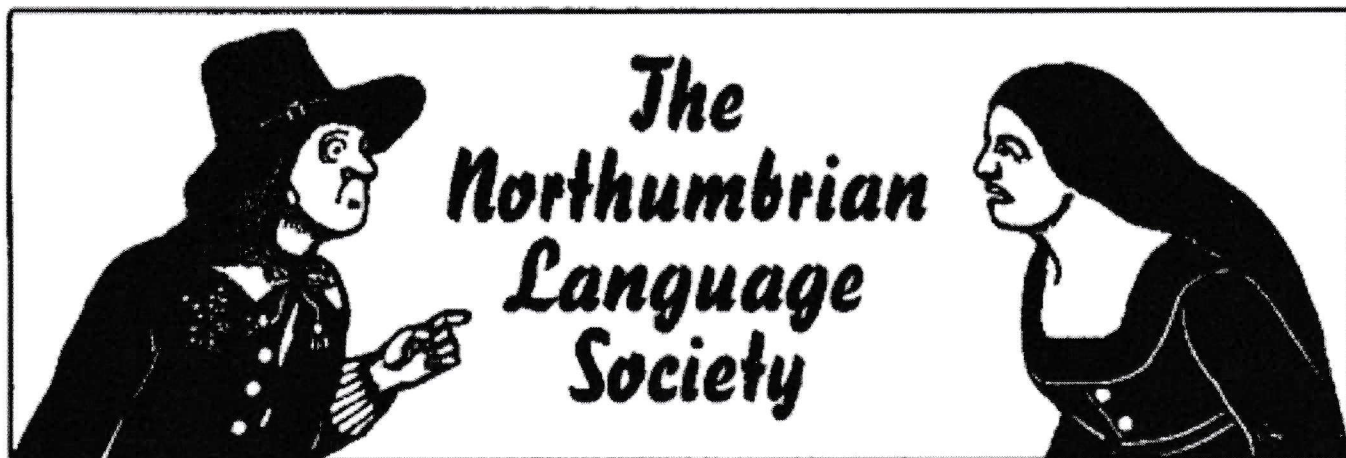
But, an wuh maan nivvor forgit this, theor's a softer side tiv im an aall, like when ee's in luv:-

*Aw lass! Yo're keel an shy as owt cud be.  
Are ye afeored? Luv, rest yorsel in me.  
Ee, but Aa luv ye, luv ye, Betty Jane!  
Me need for ye's a throbbin, honeyed pain,  
An Aa'm a lowpin fish tossed on the beach,  
Tormentin surflets jist abeun me reach.  
An yo're the sea of boondless joy for me,  
An Aa cud droon me sowl's dumb pains in ye.  
Howay, we'll rest heor on the daisied floor.  
Ye'll feel me hairt's luv thumpin on yor door.  
Though sun n moon n stars shud aall tyek flight,  
Ye'll sigh n knaa wiv us aall things are right.*

Noo, mind on, Fred erlwis had a twinkle in ees glimmers, so it's reet an proper ti finish wiv a smile:-

*An ower-fat lad of Monkseaton  
Once proposed tiv a thin lass at Heaton.  
She says, "Wheor's the harm?  
Aa canna keep warm,  
Ye'll de fine for t'put me caad feet on."*

So, be upstandin, an toast Fred Reed, thi Bard o Northumbria, on ees borthday!



Keepin ahad o wor tung

**The 2016 Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture  
Saturday 8th October at 2pm**

The Northumbrian Language Society presents

**Johnny Handle**

on

**"Northumbrian Speech:  
Is it Extinct in Common Use?"**

**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: Mrs Kim Bibby-Wilson, Westgate House, Dogger Bank,  
Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RE. Tel. 01670 513308

Website: [www.northumbriana.org.uk](http://www.northumbriana.org.uk)



# **“The Dancin Haal” bi Maistor Don Clegg**

Winner of the Open Verse Competition at this year's Gathering

Can ye mind the Friday dances, held in ivvery village haal?  
Bellinjum, Ottorborn, Elsdon, aye! an Roe-chestor anaal.  
In Woodborn, Borness, Keildor, Wark, aal guaranteed a laugh  
But the best of aal was in yon haal, up the Coquet, at Windyhaugh.

One neet Aa set mesell ti gan. It was ower far to hike.  
So Aa decide Aa wad hev to ride on me trusty motor-bike.  
Whey 'motor-bike' was a bit of a boast, it wasn't made for thrills.  
It hed an engine, thor's nee doot, but ye pedalled up the hills!

Aa set off orly, afore six, breestin ivvery brae,  
With blue streak streamin oot ahint, Aa hortled on me way.  
Oot ower the Borma Road Aa sped, ower bogs an borns an sikes,  
Fleedin sideyways roond the tightest torns, mekkin Blackies loup the dikes.

The road was lang, the night got dark, but tho me lights was poor,  
Aa crossed the range an come at last, frozen stiff, to the dance haal door.  
Outside the haal, a millin crowd, folk stannin aal around.  
Nee sign of joy or jollity, of music not a sound.

“What's up?” Aa axed a gey liesh lad. His face was aaful glum.  
“There's been a phone caal, just the nuw, the band, the canna cum.  
The've gitten stuck, the fella says, on the backside of the Cartor.  
Thor minibus hes brokken doon, the driver canna start hor.”

“Haad on but” says another voice, “The'll be with us in a bit.  
So, in the meantime, divvent fash, we'll aal just hev to sit.”  
The folk retired inside the haal, not in the best of fettles,  
When up jumped big Bill Rogerson, heord lad at the Nettles.

“Aa'll not be stuck! Aa've come to dance” says Bill, “not watchin clocks.  
Wattie! Git yor fiddle oot! Aa'll gan an git me box.”  
In nee time flat, the music struck an roond the dancers flew,  
Sweaty faces, smilin wide, ties off, an jackets too.

Jigs, waltzes, rants an hornpipes, two steps an eightsome reels,  
Even the few that couldn't dance kept time wi toes an heels.  
The fiddler played like a man possessed, the box player in a trance,  
The folk on the floor yelled oot for more. By! What a helluva a dance!

About midnight, the Radio Band tord up, an Watt an Bill giv ower.  
“The Band” says the MC, “regrets the delay, so the're gannin to play till fower!”  
Then with a cheer an a swig o beer, the dancers was aal ready,  
An once again the band struck up, just waltzes, nice an steady.

The temperature soon rose high again, the tempo even faster.  
The sound of the beat an the stampin feet could be hord, Aa sweer, in Crastor!  
The owld haal rocked as the music swelled an the lassies were swung off thor feet  
In the Lancers, Gay Gordons, an Highland Schottishe, that made the dance programme complete.

In nee time, it seemed, the last waltz was called, the whole crowd reduced tiv a lathor.  
“The best night” they said, “that a body could wish, whereivver us hill-folk gathor.”  
The haal slowly emptied, the steam wafted oot an the caretaker put oot the lights.  
The folk drifted homewards, aal linked arm-in-arm, as the last leavers said their “Goodnights.”

Me? Aa struggled to straddle me aad pedal bike an chugged me way ower the moors,  
An thowt o the music, the friendship an fun Aa'd hed in the last twelve hoors.  
But nee time for sleep as the hoose Aa reached, but strite int'me workin things.  
Aa'd to fothor the bease, an look to the sheep, an dream of what next Friday brings.