



# NLS NEWS

## National Dialect Festival Success

Seven members of the Society made the 1,000 mile round trip to Cornwall, the venue for this year's event, in October. The weather was awful - remember Storm Ophelia? - well, we were there throughout her visit to the UK.

It didn't stop us competing strongly again in the dialect competitions, however, and Stuart Lawson and Peter Arnold entertained the audience with their performances. Wor Gaffer kept up the tradition of always winning something, and this year he won the Sam Laycock Trophy for reading part of NLS President Katrina Porteous' poem "The Wund an the Wetter".

Stuart and Peter joined with Kim Bibby-Wilson in providing some top quality Northumbrian entertainment in the evening concert, which was won this year by the team from Lincolnshire.

## New Merchandise Available

We have just taken delivery of some of our new NLS T-shirts. They are black with white lettering, and they are available in Small, Medium, Large and Extra Large sizes.

Each T-shirt has a square of our wonderful dialect words on the front, and our name is on the back. The design is by Claire Arnold, one of our members. Thank You, Claire!

They will make a unique Yuletide present, and we anticipate they will be very popular. So, if you would like one, please contact Kim Bibby-Wilson as soon as possible (01670 513308).

## Janet Brown Honoured

One of our members, Vice-President Janet Brown, has won a prestigious award from the British Association for Local History.

As well as being a member of the NLS, Janet is a keen and active member of the Morpeth Antiquarian Society. She has also spent a lot of her time over many years researching, identifying and helping to preserve war memorials across the north-east of England.

Her efforts have been recognised at a national level, and she was presented with a certificate by the BALH President at the Association's annual Local History Day in June this year. Congratulations Janet!

## Speaking a dialect Is Good For Your Brain!

It's official! Researchers in Scotland have discovered that people who speak a local dialect as well as Standard English, and become bi-lingual, are using the same skills as people who learn to speak a foreign language.

There are those who believe that speaking and being fluent in more than one language helps to keep your brain active and healthy. Some even claim that it may help to stave off the onset of brain disorders like dementia and Alzheimer's disease, but that hasn't been proved yet.

The point is, however, that speaking a dialect, like speaking another language, is only really useful if you become fluent in it. The researchers in Scotland have been looking at the local dialect in Dundee, and they have concluded that Dundonian is almost like a foreign language to outsiders because it has maintained its own vocabulary and is widely spoken by local people.

The message for us Northumbrians is clear. If we want to preserve our dialect, we have to speak it fluently, so that it becomes part of our everyday speech and culture. So, haway, whan yuh gan oot, yuh maan taalk proper!

## Land of Three Rivers

This is the title of a new book of poetry about the north-east of England which has just been published by Bloodaxe Books. Our President, Katrina Porteous has many of her poems in the book. So does Fred Reed, and one by member Johnny Handle. And there are many other poems in our wonderful dialect by a range of writers from the north-east.

There are also poems by well-known poets from other parts of the UK who have been inspired by our landscapes, language, history and culture.

Buy this book! You won't regret it.

## What Do YOU Think?

You will see from the diary events listed over the page that the AGM and the Reed Neet are on different dates. Usually, we hold them together. This year, we had to cancel the Reed Neet since so few people booked a place. We have been thinking of what to do in 2018. What do you think? Suggestions include having the Reed Neet during the daytime, the same for the AGM, or do you think we should keep them together? **Please let us know what you think. Contact Peter Arnold with your views (his details are overleaf).**