

folk life

NEWSLETTER

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THE SOCIETY FOR FOLK LIFE STUDIES

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2013 12th - 15th September

This year's annual conference will take place in the Victorian spa town of Llandrindod Wells, within the portion of Powys that was formerly the historic county of Radnorshire. This area within the Welsh Marches is rich in vernacular buildings and churches with late mediaeval woodwork. The Elan Reservoir and other 'drowned' valleys are within the area. It is therefore appropriate that the themes for this year's conference are water, traditional buildings and borderlands.

As part of the usual engaging program on Saturday morning a paper will be given by the Society's President, Dr. Eddie Cass on the working relationship between George Baker of Wood Stanway,

Gloucestershire and Dr. Carpenter of Harvard College to provide illustrations for the planned book.

The excursion on Friday will comprise a guided tour around the historic centre of Llandrindod Wells, looking at the late 19th and early 20th century architecture of the town. On Saturday we will undertake a coach tour of Radnorshire.

As usual, in addition to an opportunity to learn about this part of Wales, it is hoped to have contributions on the themes from the rest of the British Isles and beyond. Please contact the conference secretary, if you wish offer a paper. (steph.mastoris@museumwales.ac.uk)

The conference sessions will be held in the Metropole Hotel, right in the centre of the town (<http://www.metropole.co.uk/>). This family-run hotel dates from 1896 and combines many original features with a modern and well-equipped conference centre and spa.

If you wish to attend this year's conference, please complete the application form and send it, with a **non-returnable deposit of £75**, to the Conference Secretary (Steph Mastoris) at:
National Waterfront Museum, Oystermouth Road, Maritime Quarter, Swansea, SA1 3RD, Wales.

Due to the wide range of hotels and guest houses available within Llandrindod Wells, the conference fee will comprise three rates:

- The cost of attending the whole conference **WITHOUT accommodation** will be **£150**.
- The cost of attending the whole conference **WITH accommodation** in the *Metropole Hotel* (where the conference sessions will be held) will be **£420** for **single occupancy**, and **£380** per person for **two people sharing** a room.
- **Day rates** for the conference (**with lunch and dinner, but NO accommodation**) are available at **£60 EACH DAY** for the 13th, and 14th and **£40** for the 15th September.

A free student place at the 2013 conference

As usual the Society is offering a free place at its annual conference to a student in full-time education. All fees and the cost of bookable meals will be included, but the person attending will have to pay for his or her own travel. To be considered for this opportunity, a person must not have attended the annual conference before. A short review of the conference will be required from the successful applicant.

Applications for this free place should be made to the Conference Secretary, Steph Mastoris (steph.mastoris@museumwales.ac.uk), by the end of May.

2014 Conference

The 2014 conference will be in Killarney, Ireland and will take place between the 11th and 14th September. Once again our hosts will be Muckcross House and in addition to conference papers it is hoped to explore the Killarney National Park. This comprises 102.89 square km of diverse ecology including the Lakes of Killarney, oak and yew woodlands of international importance, and mountain peaks. It has Ireland's only native herd of red deer and the most extensive covering of native forest remaining in Ireland.

Study Day 2013

An invitation to join the members of the Regional Furniture Society (RFS) has been received. Members of the SFLS are invited to join them at **Rydale Folk Museum, Hutton le Hole on June 15th 2013**.

A few years ago Edward and Richard generously decided that their collection should be made available to the public by displaying it at the Ryedale Folk Museum. An architect was therefore commissioned to design the Harrison Collection building in the museum grounds, and the necessary fund-raising put into action. As a result, the first gallery opened to the public in 2012, further galleries now being planned to house even more of the collection. At the same time a Curator of the Harrison Collection was appointed to manage its research and development, a considerable achievement for an independent museum in the current financial climate.

During the proposed day-visit, there will be the opportunity to explore not only the furniture etc of the museum, but also the riches of the Harrison Collection, which has unique items to excite many disparate interests. It will also provide a unique opportunity to meet Edward and Richard, and share their knowledge and enthusiasm as private collectors.

For those who do not know the area, it is also an excellent reason for discovering the rural delights of nearby Kirbymoorside, Pickering, Helmsley and Malton and the little known dales of the North York Moors.

The outline plan includes a brief talk by one of the museum staff and a tour of the collection led by Peter Brears who is on the Council of the RFS and who knows the brothers. The brothers are keen on the day and will bring other objects from their collection for us to examine. A soup and sandwich lunch would be available at the village pub. There are plenty of B&Bs in the area for those who would like to make a weekend break of the trip.

The Antique Metalware Society have also been invited to share this event & their additional specialist interests promise to make this a fascinating day.
Cost: £32 pp, includes museum entrance, coffee, lunch at the village pub & tea.

For further information or to book a place please email Eddie Cass at eddie.cass@btinternet.com

Conference Review by Student Place winner 2012 Andreas G. Heiss

My first SFLS conference – a very personal report on Folk Like researchers...

In the summer of 2012 I was offered the "student place" for participating in the SFLS Annual Conference in September 2012, which I happily accepted.

Never having been to Manchester before, this very special venue of the conference immediately dragged me into it – a not-so-big city, even in comparison to my home Vienna, but a really vibrant metropolis. Manchester was the main topic of this year's SFLS Conference along with the most crucial phase of its modern history: the industrial revolution, its spread leaving nearly no human society as it

had been before. A change in human life that is only comparable to the Neolithic revolution (which, eventually, hasn't turned out to be quite such a revolution anyway – as it took nearly 5,000 years to happen!).

The presentations given by SFLS members and invited speakers bore an amazing variety of aspects relating to, and influenced by, the industrial revolution. Very personal accounts from autobiographies illustrating family life, poverty, success, inequality, and also emancipation. There were also more general approaches involving whole groups of migrants and minorities, such as the Jewish and the Irish population, each with their very different challenges in these times of change. The most striking to me, however, were the numerous poems and songs in Mancunian and Lancashire dialect, both sung and spoken, not just during the lectures, but also for our entertainment during our last conference evening.

I had had some general idea about the industrial revolution before, as well as Manchester's and Liverpool's roles in it, but the conference opened up so many perspectives on this phenomenon, I simply hadn't expected such richness! Both the excursions to Manchester's industrial "urban landscapes" and to Styal Mill contributed vastly to the total immersion into the topic.

When I first saw the conference programme, I was somewhat disturbed by the context of Manchester-based talks. However, as three other rather "non-Mancunian" papers were on the programme as well, this was a comfort to me. After being given such a warm welcome by the conference organisers and participants, and the (unexpected) amount of positive feedback following my presentation, I feel strongly encouraged to carry on this peculiar interdisciplinary research on bladdernut use, and see if it will be accepted for print in the journal *Folk Life*.

Andreas G. Heiss

explore the garden and grounds. These had been the Greg family's picturesque valley retreat adjoining the mill.

On our way back we once again passed through Styal village, though on the return trip we now knew it had been built by the Greg family to house the mill workers.

Following the trip we had just enough time to go back to our accommodation to freshen up and change for dinner at the People's History Museum. What a treat was in store for us, as before and after an excellent dinner we were entertained by 'One Accord' and Sid & Liz Calderbank who performed some traditional Lancashire songs and poetry. Sid's daughter demonstrated a traditional Lancashire clog dance, which looked incredibly tricky. I'm a born and bred Lancastrian but the language performed by Sid, Liz and 'One Accord' was a real eye-opener to me as there were words I'd never heard before. Such words spoken in that wonderfully warm in-land Lancashire accent, even I listened intently for the translation! May these dialects long continue and mark out our wonderfully diverse language and traditions throughout these isles.

Elaine Edwards

Minutes of the Society's Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 16 September 2012 at The People's History Museum, Manchester

Present: The President (Eddie Cass) and 20 members

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Matthew Richardson, Pat Dawson, Seb Littlewood, Beth Thomas, David Jenkins, E Rumble, Prof. K. Kawashima & Heather Holmes.

Minutes of the last AGM

These had been printed in the Newsletter. They were proposed by David Viner & adopted by the meeting as a correct record. Seconded by Duncan Dornan.

Presidents Report

Eddie Cass began his report by stating much of his time had been taken up organizing the conference!

He had written to the widow of Prof. Sandy Fenton on behalf of the Society to express sympathy.

Study Days. These had been introduced by Catherine Wilson a number of years ago when they had proved very successful, however they are less so now. This year Duncan Dornan had tried to set up a meeting at the Museum of English Rural Life, he had managed to find a contact there but when the contact was transferred over to Eddie it all fell apart. It was decided that we keep trying to run them.

Eddie thanked Steph Mastoris (Conference Secretary) and Duncan (Treasurer) who helped with organising the conference, i.e. taking bookings, dealing with the hotel etc. Eddie remarked on the excellent staff at the People's History Museum (all agreed). He had dropped off a box of chocs. to them by way of thanks.

Treasurer's Report:

The annual financial report was provided by the Treasurer, **Duncan Dornan**, who reported that there is a consistent growth annually. This conference is being subsidized so the balance will probably be lower next year. The cash flow can be disturbed slightly due to delays in banking the cheques. Profits generally come from the conference, so subsidizing it means attendees are getting their money back.

Financial position remains positive, though individual membership subs. are a bit slower this year. Conference 2012 may incur a loss but this was agreed in advance as it was relatively expensive and the surplus owes a lot to conference attendees.

Accounts were approved by Paul Coghlan and seconded by Dafydd Roberts.

Editors' Reports

Linda Ballard, editor of Folk Life, reported she is stepping down as she has secured a new editor Dr Lillis Ó Laoire. He teaches folklore & folklife and has published on several subjects. He has been a great support in the background of the journal for some time and has done reviews for it also.

Vol. 50 Part 1 has been despatched. Part II will be despatched shortly. This volume is being subsidized by the Society in recognition of the 50th anniversary.

There is quite a lot of material in hand for future volumes which will be handed over to the new editor. Several people at this conference have said they are willing to write for the journal.

Maneys are providing statistics e.g. the top 10 downloads etc. Maneys are also offering bundles of journals e.g. 6 journals & we've been included in these, this means the Society is gaining ground again e.g. we've now got Harvard back. 50% of our readership is in the U.K.

Chris Stevens offered a vote of thanks to Linda for all her hard work over many years. Eddie said he was going to give his and the Society's thanks at the end of the AGM but all were in agreement that Linda has done an excellent job and especially as she had introduced peer reviews. It was concluded that Linda probably took over as Editor in the year 2000. John Baldwin also said a special thanks to Linda.

Elaine Edwards, editor of the newsletter.

The Newsletter continues to be the primary way in which the conference is publicised & having sought feedback from some members, does still seem to be of use & interest. It is also of course one of the ways in which the AGM minutes are reported.

Costs: Newsletter £926.20 (2011 = £926.20) for 300, so exactly the same as last year. Postage was £173.61 (2011 = £137.03).

Obviously the advantage of the Newsletter is that it lands on people's doormats, rather than them having to be pro-active & go onto the website.

Elaine reiterated it is most important to get pieces on time so an early despatch can be achieved, hence the deadline of Nov.15th. Photos. too are most welcome as are news snippets, book reviews, ads. for forthcoming conferences & the like.

Eddie thanked Elaine for her work on the newsletter.

Website Officer's Report

Heather Holmes (in absentia) reported that the SFLS website has refreshed the journal page & instructions to authors. There is now a link to the past 50 yrs of articles on the website. Twitter is being used e.g. to advertise the conference and to publicise Folk Life. If anyone has any info. for Twitter or the website please let HH know. Eddie thanked HH for her work.

Secretary's Report

Matthew Richardson was unable to attend this year's AGM due to other commitments, though he had been able to attend most of the conference. Matthew reported that there was little new to report at the present time from the secretary's perspective. Eddie thanked Matthew for his work for the Society.

Membership Secretary's Report

Seb Littlewood sent his apologies, the President read out his report. There are 182 individual members. Institutional numbers are collated by Maneys. There are 58 individual members being invoiced & 50% are still to pay their subs. Reminders will go out to encourage members to pay by Direct Debit. Thanks were given to Seb for his report.

Conference Secretary's report

Steph Mastoris said this year's conference had been a fantastic event and that he was merely the 'handmaiden' of the Society! 'Eddie has put the programme together almost single handedly & it's been a splendid achievement.' The staff at the People's History Museum are very good and they have been particularly supportive & the equipment has worked well. Steph thanked DD & said it's all worked very well. He reminded everyone to complete & return their feedback forms.

The Italian Contribution to Manchester from the 19th Century to the Present Day

Tony Rea

Tony's fascinating and detailed illustrated talk reminded us that immigration is no recent phenomenon: Italians came to Manchester before either the city or even the Italian state ever existed! The Romans set up camp to quell the local Brigantes tribe at what is today Castlefield. Centuries later, this spot was transformed by the arrival of the Bridgewater Canal and the Liverpool to Manchester railway, those transport innovations that led to the city being at the heart of the Industrial Revolution, leading to fresh waves of migration. Italians came from the lake towns of the north, escaping the unrest of the Napoleonic wars; they were skilled artisans and educated crafts folk whose talents were central to Manchester's burgeoning prosperity. Optical and scientific instrument makers from northern Italy were highly valued for their innovations in precision measurement, an essential component of industrialisation. These skilled workers were therefore part of the fabric of the development of the modern city, and were also called upon to provide it with its outward signs of importance – artists from Cremona provided the frescoes for the original town hall.

Tony introduced us to some of the preeminent and colourful figures of the early Italian community of Manchester such as "the Garibaldi of detectives" Jerome Caminada and the tenor Giovanni Raffo.

The unification of Italy in 1861 did not benefit the mainly rural, backward south. So the second post-unification wave of migration to Manchester differed from the first: unskilled and penniless farmers and labourers, in the main, set up home in the developing industrial areas such as Ancoats. Their reception was not as frosty as that reserved for some other migrants – they were fellow Christians, after all. Many of these new arrivals worked as street-sellers, hawking hot chestnuts and the like. Some began to buy cutting ice to make ice cream, sold from hand carts, their mythical "secret recipes" – including Tony's family's own – a means to an end to get out

of poverty. So the era of the Italian ice cream vendor began and continues to this day, although the push-carts have been replaced by vans, cafes and restaurants.

The path to acceptance and integration can be hard, as can the preservation of migrant cultures. Tony highlighted the perverse effects of migration: during the Second World War, some Italian males from the Manchester community were interned as "aliens", whereas others joined the British armed forces and ended up fighting for the Allies in Italy. Today, the Italians of Manchester are still visible through their commercial ventures and religious parades. Tony very effectively showed us how the cultural traditions of diaspora communities have several layers of meaning, and how nothing is ever as black and white as "them" and "us".

Tony's website is well worth a visit:
<http://www.ancoatslittleitaly.com>

Sarah Blowen

Chinese in Manchester 1960-2010

Gerry Yeung

It is always interesting to hear a paper which is both carefully researched from sound historical sources, but also leavened with an element of personal experience. Gerry Yeung's paper on the Chinese community in Manchester had both of these characteristics, and had some interesting points to make. Outside of London, Manchester is the most significant stronghold of the Chinese community in Britain (the decision of the Bank of China to open a branch here, rather than in Liverpool, having tipped the balance against the latter).

The earliest Chinese immigrants to Britain were merchant seamen or laundry men, in the early twentieth century. Postwar, waves of immigrants had come from imperial outposts such as Hong Kong and Singapore, mostly Cantonese speakers. The

paper placed the prevalence of these migrants in catering – ranging from the Chop Suey houses of the 1950s to today's high class establishments like the excellent Yang Sing restaurant in Manchester city centre – into context. The Chinese had entered the catering market by buying up British fish and chip shops, and their willingness to work longer hours than British workers soon made them an economic success story. However by the same token, this had restricted the Chinese politically and socially. Out of commercial necessity, Chinese take-aways and restaurants must be dispersed, meaning that the Chinese themselves lack representation under the British political system. Despite being the third largest immigrant group in Britain, the Chinese have no MPs and few local councillors.

More recently this group had been joined by a newer wave of immigrants from mainland China itself, who were Mandarin speakers. This latter group had largely filled the positions in the catering industry made vacant when the BBCs (British Born Chinese – the sons and daughters of the post war influx) had moved on. The BBCs are, as a group, very high academic achievers. At primary school level they outperform every other ethnic minority. By age 11 they outperform every other cultural group in Britain, including the host population. In the process the BBCs have become so assimilated into their host culture that China is often remote and unfamiliar to them. Gerry's last point was this, that if the BBCs become too assimilated into British culture, in the process losing language and other skills, then Britain as a whole risks losing the advantage that the presence of this vibrant and energetic community represents in terms of future trade links with the economic giant of China. A thought provoking paper.

Matthew Richardson

The Irish in Nineteenth Century Manchester

Mervyn Busted

The account of the Irish in Manchester is brought to life by Mervyn Busted's enthralling paper on the subject. The city had a thriving Irish community before 1845 and its connection can be traced back to at least the early 16th century when Irish linen yarn and wool was imported for the city's textile industries. Later Ireland provided food – butter, cheese and eggs to the inhabitants of the city and by the late 18th century Irish livestock and fish was sold at Smithfield market.

The Irish began to migrate in great numbers and from the 18th century farm labourers began coming over annually to help with the harvest in Britain and soon became an integral part in the British agricultural scene. Under the guidance of a team leader they travelled and worked during the summer months following the hay, potato and grain harvests.

These migrants slept in tents or in temporary huts and the money earned they sent back to Ireland. By the 19th century clear evidence was seen that some migrants were settling down permanently in the industrial towns of Lancashire. The 1841 census for 'Little Ireland' around the 'Oxford' area of Manchester makes interesting reading. Out of a population of 487 it records 150 Irish labourers during the harvest season.

Many of the Irish joined the British armed forces. By 1830 some 42% of the entire British army was Irish born and many of these regiments were based around Manchester and Salford. Others did not restrict themselves to Irish regiments and enlisted in the 47th Regiment of Foot (Lancashire Regiment). In garrison towns soldiers began to marry into local families and took up residency at their last posting.

From the 18th century the Irish population in Manchester steadily increased which invariably led to anti-catholic prejudice. Rumour had it that Manchester was a nest of Catholicism – they were

Irish and Catholic. Facing such hostility in their new environment many turned towards the Church for guidance and comfort as they were from strong rural backgrounds and Gaelic was still the prominent language. Many were in favour of a free Ireland and the Fenians from the 1860s had cells throughout Britain. Ireland had been under British rule since 1603 and the Irish Republican Brotherhood was an organisation dedicated to its ending. The Fenians were preparing an armed uprising but their leaders Thomas Kelly and Timothy Deasy were both arrested and convicted in 1867.

Later both were freed from a horse-drawn police escort by a group of Fenians. In the subsequent battle, Sergeant Charles Brett, was shot and killed by the attackers which later became known as the 'Manchester Outrages'. Neither Kelly nor Deasy were ever recaptured but suspected members of the Brotherhood were rounded up. William Philip Allen, Michael Larkin and Michael O'Brien paid the ultimate price and were hanged in front of a crowd of 8,000 – 10,000 at Salford Gaol – the last multiple public hanging.

The Irish Nationalists saw it as judicial murder and the unfortunate men became known as the Manchester Martyrs and God Save Ireland became a national prayer. Processions in commemoration of the martyrs began straight away both in Manchester and Ireland. Sentiment ran high but many Irish began to prosper in Britain and certain individuals, like Daniel Boyle, did very well, Boyle becoming an Irish Parliamentary politician.

Dylan Jones

The Dragon Wagon

Mark Kennedy



The Dragon Wagon with its current owner Lord Dunleath of Ballywalter

Mark's paper provided a richly illustrated talk on one of the more unusual transport items to be found in Northern Ireland and in the process reflected the eccentricity which so often afflicts human kind.

The Dragon Wagon was discovered accidentally, by way of explanation of the circumstances, Mark started with a few slides of his hobby, classic motor racing. Whilst racing in the grounds of Ballywalter Park, the home of Lord Dunleath, the drivers were offered use of the coachhouse to shelter during their tea stop. As a result Mark was able to examine the family's small collection of wagons, a governess cart, a coffin bearing wagon and the dragon wagon of the title.

Mark showed a range of slides of this dramatically painted wagon. In truth it is little more than a small pony cart, but painted in gaudy colours as though belonging in a fair and with equally unusual carved features adorning it. Lord Dunleath was able to provide some information, that it was collected

around 100 years ago in Sicily, by his great grandmother. It was still complete with a decorated set of harness and that they believed it to be a bullock cart.

Mark's research had provided further insight. The great grandmother in question was Norah Ward, a granddaughter of Viscount Bangor, a very strong character and an early feminist. She managed the household at Ballywalter for many years, commanding the men's smoking room for her own use. She was a keen collector of taxidermy, some now held by Ulster Museum and some remaining in the house.

The cart in question is in fact a good example of decorated wagons produced in Sicily. The artwork reflects local folk stories, for example St. George fighting the dragon and the predominantly yellow colour scheme is a feature of carts from Palermo. These brightly painted carts are a feature of Saints days and other ceremonial occasions and indeed they are such a feature of the local community that Palermo has its own cart museum.

A fascinating presentation, on a cart which has more to tell us.

Duncan Dornan

Manchester Muscle and Baguley Beef John Baldwin

John swept us at speed through 150 years of his family's market gardening, just south of the Mersey, growing produce for Manchester. It was started during the 1860s slump when the price of cotton goods sank, giving low wages and massive unemployment. Selling quick-growing food to the city shops gave cash in hand, unlike the delayed return of grain and meat.

The flood plane, set roughly in the triangle cornered by Timperly, Sale and Oldbury was light alluvial soil, warming quickly, so crops were early. Much of the best farmland, however, was the mosses, stretching 1 mile either side, protected by embankments up

to 25 feet high, so that, in times of flood, the river could be above field level. This area in the 1770s had been heathland filled with wandering brooks, but the sandy soil dried out quickly and there was no irrigation available until the 1930s, when mains water arrived.

Farms varied from 40 acres to small patches of a few acres. Many types of brassica were grown, as well as celery and lettuce, which did best in the wetter areas. The three crops allowed for rotation, though this failed to stop the increase of club root among the cabbages.

Transport by horse and cart was easy and safe. The good produce was for human consumption, and the poorer stuff for the cows and pigs in the city. The return load was used as fertilizer, the dung from the city's horses, cows and humans, as well as brewers' hops.

The Baldwins were scattered through the area, intermarrying with the dealers to keep the business in the family. Farmers with big holdings would rent small parts to sons to enable them to learn the job, and be settled when the oldest son inherited the main farm and when possible extra land was bought.

One of the first crops was holly plants for sale to foresters. When they changed to Royal Sovereign strawberries to avoid the club root, they employed 40 pickers, and sent 6 carts a day to sell to the locals, or the jam factory. In the 1920s, a disease hit the fruit, and they turned to rhubarb. Roots for forcing were grown in greenhouses with tarred glass. The main crop were in the fields.

This land is now going under the urban sprawl that has crossed the river, so the farmers have given up or moved to North Cheshire, putting over 70,000 rhubarb roots up for sale, mainly to north Yorkshire. In 1947, the tramline to the airport went right through John's home, Floats Farm.

Anne Dyer

The Mystery of the Tribulum (threshing sledge)

Patricia Anderson.

Patty, as she is known, is also a first-time attendee at the SFLS Conference and is a microwear specialist in the French Centre for Scientific Research, based in Nice. She introduced us to the *tribulum* or threshing sledge and reminded us she had relied extensively on the research of more than one British scholar, among them Peter Reynolds of Butser Farm and Alexander Fenton, so long a mainstay of the Society. The threshing sledge is literally the first agricultural-machine and its complexity is only now becoming more fully understood. It turns up in archaeological contexts some 8,000 years ago in the Near East, then about 3,000 years later in the Balkans, and is composed of a wooden sledge containing flint blades set with bitumen into the underside which are marked by use-wear patterns – due to the contact with grain plant stems – that are unique and identifiable under a microscope as being associated only with the way the threshing sledge functions. The implement is used on a threshing floor, over deep heaps of harvested sheaves, and pulled by animals. The *tribulum* separates out the grain and the straw, thus specially chopped for animal fodder and as tempering material in mudbrick and pottery. The straw remnants are discernible through the microscopic phytoliths (mineral deposits in plants) that turn up in the archaeological record. The sledge was first mentioned in the 3rd millennium BCE (Before Christina Era) in Mesopotamian cuneiform tablets of the Farmer's "Almanac" and other tablets from Iraq, associated with both inventories and prayers, and the Arslantepe (in modern-day Turkey) drawing on a cylinder seal 1,000 years earlier, portrays what appears to be a ritual threshing event utilising the sledge. Perhaps the most intriguing fact is that the *tribulum* has continued in use right up to the present day, with variations that Patty and her colleagues have been able to trace through their own ethnographic work and which she showed us in a film clip demonstrating the speed and excitement that can be involved in the work, with mules pulling the implement (and a

little girl clinging to her father's leg, while he stands on the sledge driving the animals). "Slow" sledges also exist, pulled by oxen, which quite perplexed present-day Tunisian drivers, who use oxen only for pulling an ard on clayey soil of sloped fields. There, sledging and winnowing the crop is a family affair, although the *tribulum* is most often driven by men today and, among the Druze of Syria, the work is forbidden to women, whereas women commonly drove the implement elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa and even rode it seated on a chair in Spain, Greece and Cyprus. When the flint blades, which are extremely long-wearing, became difficult to obtain in some areas in the last 50 years or so, metal blades made by cutting saws and scythes replaced them and, in some cases, the entire process of making the threshing sledge was modified by simply piercing an unrolled oil barrel so that points would stand out on one side. Patty and her research group have been carrying on experiments since the late 1990s to reproduce and test production of the archaeological form, working with threshing sledges reconstituted from both their detailed ancient attestations in cuneiform tablets and the insert patterns on archaeological sledge blades, as well as ethnographic documents. They recently teamed up with engineers specialized in all the mechanical aspects of rubbing and friction ("tribology") at the Ecole Centrale de Lyon, who attached cameras and sound recording equipment under the sledge. This work has demonstrated that the flow of straw under the body of the implement is indeed a paragon of threshing efficiency. Her presentation dovetailed in a delightfully serendipitous way with Ian Gibson's (also a tribology specialist!) on the "nuts and bolts", the technical aspects of the textile manufacturing machines that propelled the Lancashire area and Manchester into the forefront of the industrial revolution, and made it clear that human ingenuity has been producing "revolutions" in technical matters for a very long time, indeed.

Cozette Griffin-Kremer

The Folklore, History and Archaeology of the Bladdernut

Andreas G. Heiss (University of Natural
Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna)

Andi Heiss comes to us from the "BOKU" University in Vienna and is an archaeobotanist specialising in the identification of seed and wood remains, but deeply interested in the relationships between ritual practices and plants. In his first short paper for the Society, he presented the bladdernut (*Staphylea pinnata*) with a scientific expertise equal to his sense of humour and his talent for making a highly technical subject accessible. He first guided us through the botanical characteristics and geographical distribution in Europe of this shrub with pinnate (feather-like) leaves that usually grows in forest glades. There is nothing in ancient Greek literature on such plants, so the first recorded attestation to the bladdernut is in Pliny the Elder's reference to the *Staphilodendron*. The plant's pollinated flowers produce the "bladder" holding the seeds, which rattle when they are ripe and this characteristic may go far in explaining the uses of the plant implied in archaeological contexts and attested to in ethnographic records. Indeed, the oldest archaeological finds of the seeds date to the Bronze Age, around 2000 BCE, when the bladdernut was clearly in use both as an edible plant and as necklace beads perforated from side to side, so that the "nose" (the seed's conspicuous attachment scar) showed up especially well. The Roman period saw the seed remains spread farther north in Europe, into Germany, Scandinavia and Poland, transported there by humans and turning up in graves as pendants or necklace beads. Rattles were frequently found in Roman graves, most probably for their apotropaic (i.e. designed to avert evil) effects, which has given rise to the hypothesis that the seeds used in pendants were thought to be linked to the underworld and their appearance – like little heads with a hollow cut-off nose similar to that of a skull – certainly squares with some of their common names, such as *nez-coupé* (cut nose) or *tête du mort* (death's head) in French or *Todtenköpfl* (little death's head) in Ger-

man. For the moment, there seems to be no support for the proposed use of the seeds by "Celtic" peoples, and the custom of placing the perforated beads in graves stopped with the end of the Roman Empire. However, medieval Christianity found another use for the seeds – as rosary beads, which were strung lengthwise, that is, perforated from the "nose" to the back of the head, the opposite way from the Roman and pre-Roman period finds. Still, as materials to which apotropaic properties are attributed have frequently been used in rosaries, this seems to continue some aspects of the earlier uses. The isolated strands of bladdernut in France and Germany may thus have been introduced through the network of monasteries especially to produce rosary beads. By the Renaissance, these beads were being replaced by Asian seeds, wooden or stone beads. Ethnographic literature from Slavic languages and German in the 19th and 20th centuries indicates the seeds were associated with rattles, but they are also used in Germany to produce a liqueur that is considered to be an aphrodisiac and the verb *pimpern* associated with the German common name (*Pimpernuss*) means to have sexual intercourse, so we have a plant that may have been valued for a whole range of symbolic associations.

Cozette Griffin-Kremer

Picturing the Cotton Industry Terry Wyke

Some of the earliest images of the cotton industry were published in the *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* by Edward Baines, 1835, and it was, therefore appropriate that Terry Wyke started his survey here. The history was not only the first history of the cotton industry but also the first history of any industry. The book is well illustrated by plates of the exteriors of cotton mills and also of the machinery and the manufacturing process. Several of these plates were used to illustrate Wyke's paper.

One of the most fascinating illustrations for me was the programme for the Lancashire Cotton Pageant of 1932 held at Belle Vue, Manchester. The pageant consisted of twelve tableaux with differing relevance to the cotton industry. One of these tableaux, A Lancashire Market Day of one hundred years ago included several items of interest to folklorists; may-poles and dancers and pace egg songs.

The speaker then dealt with the subject of the history of cotton from the plantation to finished thread. Many of the images demonstrated the extent to which the Lancashire cotton industry depended on slave labour in the plantations.

A portrait of Richard Arkwright led into a discussion of the industrialization of the industry and the growth of factory production. The speaker illustrated part of this section with an image of *The Dinner Hour: Wigan (1874)* by Eyre Crowe, a painting in Manchester City Art Gallery. The painting revealed much of the culture of the women workers shown on their lunch break. 'The picture is the urban counterpart of idealized country scenes of farm labourers enjoying their midday rest'. Nevertheless, some of the reality of the lives of the women can be seen; the delivery of the midday meal, mothers breast feeding babies. Other painters of mill scenes were Lowry and Harry Rutherford who painted Ashton Mill girls. In contrast to the relative 'comfort' of these paintings were the engravings of the effects of the Lancashire cotton famine of the 1860s in the *Illustrated London News*, when the suffering weavers and spinners had to queue for food and coal or had to sell furniture in order to provide for their families in the absence of a working wage.

Wyke pointed out that there were few photographs from the nineteenth century of the inside of mills. There was the occasional posed photograph of teams of spinners and specially taken photographs in decorated factories at the time of family celebrations or on the visits of royal or distinguished visitors. However, there were no British equivalents of the polemical images of Lewis Hind in America which led to the abolition of child labour.

The speaker's survey ended on a discussion of cartoons, few of which appeared outside of the local press. The main source were the cartoons of Sam Fitton in the *Cotton Factory Times*. These could be both humorous and yet, at times, a pointed reminder of the problems of work in the mill and even of the wider political context of the industry as a whole.

This was an insightful introduction to the Saturday morning session on the cotton industry and one which was well, and appropriately, illustrated with a wide range of two dimensional material

Eddie Cass

Turning the Screw – the Nuts & Bolts of Cotton Production

Ian Gibson

John Kay's Flying Shuttle, Richard Arkwright's Water Frame, Samuel Crompton's "Mule": all of these were well-remembered names from history and geography lessons about the textile industry in north-west England, their significance emphasised by teachers keen to convey the importance of these inventions, and their role in the early Industrial Revolution. What was not discussed in any great detail were the challenges facing the inventors and constructors of these machines. Ian Gibson's talk introduced some of these difficulties, focussing initially on the hardware available with which to build them. Effectively, there was no means of interchanging even the most simple components, such as nuts and bolts, until the 1770's; and the standardised Whitworth threading system did not become available until 1841.

This, though, did not deter inventors from successive attempts to improve textile machinery. Ian pointed out that, of the first thousand or so patent applications formally registered, over one hundred were related to cotton spinning or weaving. Not all

of these early machines were immediate successes, either. John Kay soon found that there were problems associated with the "return" of the flying shuttle, which required the provision of wheels beneath the shuttle in order to ensure that it turned into the weave as it returned. Perhaps inevitably, as well, not all of the early inventions and improvements proposed actually worked. Lewis Paul, who devised the roller spinning process, was pointed out as an inventor who "lost the plot" when it came to putting his processes into practice. That was no reflection on the ability of Lewis Paul, who was assisted by John Wyatt – a member of an extended family who contributed to a range of eighteenth and nineteenth century industrial developments across the United Kingdom.

Many of these machines required toothed wheels of various descriptions in order to operate them – cog wheels, spur wheels, gear wheels, and so on. Where could these be obtained, in a period when standardised production of such components was in its infancy? Clock makers had the requisite skills, and it soon became apparent that their contribution and knowledge would be essential if early mass production of cotton spinning and weaving machinery was to succeed. In fact, transference of skills gained in earlier times could also prove useful: Richard Arkwright had spent some time working as a wig maker, so knew how to handle hair. This was most helpful when he began to consider improvements to the process of roving cotton fibres.

Had the work of all of these innovators and inventors been preceded by another, even more well known, inventor? This could well be the case: Ian suggested that Leonardo da Vinci had devised machines which could spin and weave, but that these could not be built at that time.

Dafydd Roberts

Working-class Autobiography and the Lancashire Cotton Industry

Alan Fowler

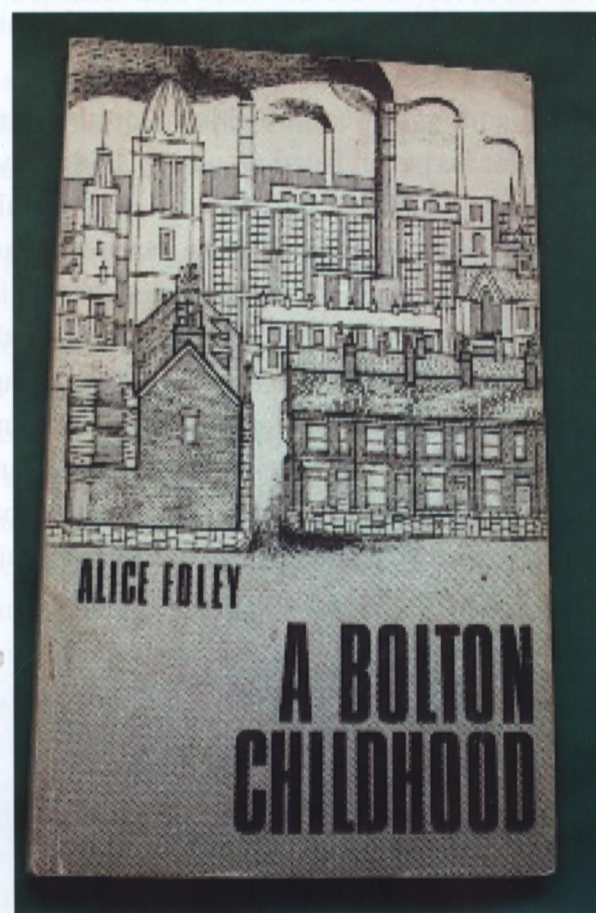
Alan, formerly a lecturer in social and Labour history at Manchester Metropolitan University, gave a lively and engaging presentation, looking at the outstanding tradition in Lancashire, with its history of early industrial development, of producing working class autobiographies. These began in the mid-19th century, with well-known examples such as Samuel Bamford (a weaver and later social reformer, jailed for his part at Peterloo) whose 'Early Days' and 'Passages in the life of a Radical' were popular with his fellow textile workers. The paper examined in particular the work of two trade unionists, Alice Foley and Ernest Thornton, both born before the outbreak of the First World War. The general rule of thumb was that autobiographies tend to come from the class of the 'skilled worker' particularly weavers, whose labour received a higher rate of pay and who were therefore more easily able to acquire literacy and, often, radicalism.



Female cotton workers on strike in 1932

Alice Foley's autobiography, *A Bolton Childhood*, was published by the WEA and MMU in 1973, a year before her death. Details of her early life were quite harrowing given her strict Catholic upbringing, with an illiterate mother and a father who drank and gambled, making even greater (or causing?) her later

achievements as the first female full-time union official in the cotton industry, having also to overcome the very strong anti-female prejudice in the union. What added very much to the story was the interesting detail that was obtained due to the fact that Alice Foley was one of the subjects of Paul Thompson's oral history collecting during the 1970s, which contain items not detailed in the published account.



This was contrasted with the autobiography of Ernest Thornton who rose from being one of a large family of skilled craftsmen in Nelson to being an MP in 1952, serving until 1970, and working as a junior minister in the 1964 Labour Government. This being a work written not for publication, but for his family, does give a more private view, not intended for general public consumption. There was much in this fascinating paper to whet the appetite and make one search for further examples, some to be found in John Burnett's *Destiny Obscure*.

Christine Stevens

Th'Owdham Weaver Brian Hollingworth

This paper had a special resonance for me, as part of my early working life was spent in Saddleworth, that 'rogue province' of Yorkshire stranded on the Lancashire side of the Pennines. As I was to discover, the people of this area though of Yorkshire descent speak with the Lancashire dialect, and as Brian Hollingworth was to tell us, there is probably a greater appreciation of dialect in Lancashire than perhaps any other part of the British Isles, and certainly any part of England. Indeed Saddleworth's own dialect poet, Ammon Wrigley, was one of the few such writers actually to have an appreciation society in his own lifetime. One of the principal characters of Brian's talk was from Saddleworth – 'Jone o' Grinfilt' (Greenfield), a handloom weaver described in a dialect poem, who during times of economic hardship in the Napoleonic Wars resolves to join the army at Oldham, not through patriotism, but simply because he has nothing to eat. As Brian observed, there is a close relationship between the textile industry, its ups and downs, and dialect language in this part of the world. He traced this inter-relationship through a number of subsequent works, such as 'Th' Owdham Weaver', which is stronger in tone than 'Jone o' Grinfilt', and which at some points hovers on the edge of political revolt in its anger and frustration. The cotton famine of the 1860s, when the American Civil War caused a crisis in the Lancashire textile industry, spawned more verse intended both to increase sympathy and indeed raise money for the cotton hands thrown out of work. In particular Brian focussed upon the work of Sam Laycock. Laycock's most famous poem is 'Welcome Bonny Brid', written whilst out of work but waiting for his wife to give birth to another child, which the family can ill afford to feed, but is none the less the apple of its father's eye. Many works are full of technical detail, for example Laycock's 'Th' Shurat Weaver's Song', and were obviously aimed at people in the trade. Others, such as John Trafford Clegg's 'A Weighver's Song' reflect the camaraderie and indeed pride in this sometimes dangerous but undoubtedly highly skilled occupation. Overall this

was a fascinating journey through the linguistic heritage of the Lancashire textile industry, which neatly and cleverly juxtaposed Ian Gibson's equally fascinating survey of the technical history of the industry earlier in the morning.

Matthew Richardson

Trade Union and Political Banners: Folk Art or Mass Production? Nick Mansfield

'Ashover White Lion miners' banner, c.1830, believed to be the oldest miners' banner in existence. People's History Museum.'

One of the most impressive parts of the displays in the People's History Museum is the selection of large, diverse and well-conserved banners. The Museum holds more than 500 of the 3000 which the National Banner Survey in 1989/90 found spread over 800 museums. It was therefore apposite that Nick Mansfield, former Director of the PHM, should survey the variety and historical importance of banners.

In general, banners are gestures of commitment which show some of the cultural values of the people who had them made, and then carried them before, or through, the community, whether they were marking an annual holiday, demonstrating in favour of political reform, or in support of a cause like temperance. Many of them still have emotional force, like the one which was carried at Peterloo and is now in Middleton Public Library, along with the red-and-white plume from a soldier's hat which was picked up on the day.

Little is known about how banners were produced in the period before commercial production by specialists in London began in the 1830s. It is attractive to think that they were made in the community, with different trades and talents contributing what they could. Perhaps men who specialised in coachwork,

and in Edinburgh and London herald painters, sometimes played a part. Nick pointed to one instance, the banner of the Whipman Society in Biggar (Lancashire) which was done by a professional painter, James Howe ('the man whom loved to draw horses') who was born near the village.

The sources and meaning of the things painted on and woven in the banners are often obscure. The Ludlow hammermen's 'standard' (c.1780) shows the coats of arms of London livery companies on each side: why? A trades' procession at Dumfries in 1808 had figures in costume, copying ones in the Lord Mayor's Show in London. In the latter case one can guess that part of the motivation was to show support for the nation's trade by copying a display in the capital. But at Ludlow? In the period before the growth of the trade union movement, banners were probably made for quite small groups of comparatively affluent people, employers rather than the bulk of working people. So perhaps personal taste had something to do with it.

George Tuthill's giant Jacquard loom, which enabled the production of large woven banners, allowed one firm to dominate the market from the East End of London. The market was broader than trade unions and other pressure groups like temperance and suffrage reformers, for there was a demand for the large and spectacular from travelling showmen. The various forms of friendly society, like Free Gardeners, also had their annual walks, and represented their values on banners. The action of wind and rain, and the consequences of hurried packing, meant that the manufacturers could expect repeat orders from the same institutions.

No Chartist banners seem to survive. Is this because there are no Chartist Institutions to preserve them? Surely somewhere in the Co-operative or trade union movements, someone would have taken in one or two out of nostalgia, and a wish to honour the past? Which leaves us with conjecture that perhaps there were not very many Chartist banners; certainly, banner-carrying seems to have been limited in England and Wales around the time of the Reform Act of 1832, when it was widespread in Scotland.

Perhaps the political banner, distinct from the one which celebrated a trade, became popular after the Chartists had faded away.

The simplest point about banners is perhaps the most important, though it is difficult to say it clearly. It is that they showed that the people who carried them and walked behind them valued themselves as a group. In one sense it is clear what was the purpose of the Huddersfield Ten Hours Agitation banner (c.1831), but because we do not know exactly who walked behind it, or which banners were carried in procession with it, and who walked behind these others, it is hard to say what public support meant to the men in the procession or the women, children and men who witnessed it. The pleasure in being part of a group was a step towards political consciousness and the belief in the solidarity of the working classes. At this point, a wave of nostalgia sweeps in.

Note: The firm of Tuthill is still in business, and on its website is a biography of the founder by Roger Logan, with a preface by Nick Mansfield: <http://www.flags-tutill.co.uk/pdf/George-Tutill-Monograph.pdf>. It includes a photograph of the interior of Tuthill's factory, with a smallish floor area and a very high ceiling, to accommodate his largest products.

John Burnett

Peoples' History Museum Katy Archer

Katy has been Director of the People's History Museum for two years and gave the final conference presentation on Sunday morning, 'introducing' the museum and its collections. Perverse timetabling it might seem, as by then we'd all no doubt fitted in a quick wander off-piste to get a flavour of the galleries and exhibits.

But this strategy worked well, answering lots of the questions we'd each gathered along the way, and

nicely setting up a guided tour in Katy's capable hands. She also appropriately followed on from the presentation made by her predecessor in post, Nick Mansfield.

The museum has had a fascinating history all of its own as an independent institution which to me felt still to have lots of vigour yet for the future in its role as 'the national centre for the collection, conservation, interpretation and study of material relating to the history of working people in Britain'.

Its origins lie in the National Museum of Labour History (its title until 2001) which began with the collections gathered and displayed in London by the Trade Union, Labour and Co-operative History Society at Limehouse Town Hall between 1975 and 1986, albeit as usual with the bulk of its collections in storage.

A move to Manchester allowed re-opening in 1990 at the Grade II* listed former Mechanics' Institute at 103 Princess Street (still retained as an 'off-site' store today). In 1994, the museum opened the Pump House People's History Museum containing a public gallery at the present site on Bridge Street. The two sites were both rebranded as the People's History Museum in 2001.

A £12.5m redevelopment between October 2007 and February 2010 included the refurbishment of the existing Pump House and the construction of a four storey extension alongside it, linked with a glass walkway between the two buildings. This is the present museum, attracting c.80,000 visitors annually so far. It includes a dedicated Archive & Study Centre.

Katy stressed the strap-line which matters now as 'the national museum of democracy', reflecting the museum's wider remit in the community. It also reflects the widening appeal of the collections, some 124,000 objects in total, summarised on (and progressively being added to) the museum's very useful website at www.phm.org.uk. The Labour Party archive, for example, represents the most complete set of records of any political party in

Britain. Individual politician's archives, such as those of Michael Foot, are another important component.

Nick had spoken about the National Banner Survey around the UK; the museum's own banner holdings number around 500 examples, a significant commitment. Some sense of that is gained for visitors via the large glazed screen in the galleries looking directly into the Textile Conservation Studio, with work in progress.

The galleries themselves are object rich, chronologically as well as thematically presented, colour-coded (red for revolution, obvious, isn't it?) and visually striking. Date range runs from 1819 onwards - Peterloo, of course. Their tour absorbed the group with as much time as was available.

Katy concluded with a summary of future priorities, including continuing profile-raising, increasing museum numbers to 100,000, and surviving the anticipated loss in 2015 of some 15% of its current budget which comes from the Dept. of Culture, Media & Sport, part-recognition of the museum collection's Designated status.

Katy had expressed the view that her museum had long punched above its weight on many fronts and would continue to do so. Having enjoyed its warm hospitality throughout our conference, members certainly gave the museum their support in challenges ahead and recognised the special nature of the place and its fine collections.

David Viner

Excursions

Canals and Cotton – a City Walking tour



Ancoats Mill Warehouse
Photo by David Viner

The Friday afternoon of conference usually includes a visit or walking tour, a chance to get to grips with one of the main topics so far discussed. This tour

was led by Terry Wyke of Manchester Metropolitan University, whose enthusiasm for his subject was quickly apparent.

Terry gave us a tour of nearer three hours than the scheduled two, and held his audience pretty much together throughout. It proved to be a challenging exercise in the heart of the city, so dominant in scale are the buildings and warehouses, and so intriguing the hidden world at subterranean level of much of the Rochdale Canal as it passes between. In places it wouldn't be a walk one might sensibly venture upon alone out of hours, as our guide cheerfully reminded us.

From the Peoples' History Museum alongside the Irwell, the Victoria & Albert warehouse group of c.1838 set the scene, now converted to the Marriott Hotel, 'adaptive re-use' being an underlying theme throughout the walk. From there, past the bulk of the now deserted Granada TV studios (gone to Media City) we were soon admiring the range of historically-significant buildings which today make up the Manchester Museum of Science & Industry (or MO-SI if you are in the know).

The long facade of the Liverpool Road station seemed eerily quiet of traffic and people, its museum activity hidden behind. But there's no doubting its place in the scheme of things, as the first purpose-built passenger station in the world (1830). The museum visit remained for another day.

Close by is the Castlefield basin, focus of a determined regeneration scheme in the 1980s. Terry gave us a good profile here alongside the slightly odd amphitheatre space at the wharf, whilst all the while trains and trams rumbled across one of the enormous viaducts above our heads – a special moment for anybody with railways in his or her DNA.

Superlatives, we were assured, would come thick and fast, especially of the 'world's first' variety, Castlefield being the first such purpose-built canal basin, for the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal. It became (naturally) the hub of Britain's first urban heritage park.

After all that, a mile or so of towpath tramping along the Rochdale Canal moved us eastwards with stops to gaze upwards (always upwards) at warehouses alongside the cut, including their modern replacements built to similar if not greater scale and bulk. This canal, opened in 1804 as the first trans-Pennine route, created over 33 miles the all-important link from west to east, enabling movement of goods from one coast to another (Hull to Liverpool got several mentions).

At the canal basin of the Rochdale off Dale Street, we returned relieved into the sunshine, to admire a fine stone warehouse built a few years later and now quite rightly 2* graded. The basin has suffered greatly from clearance without renewal, but that merely served to bring into even sharper focus what survived around the corner.

The run of brick-built steam-driven cotton mills alongside the canal, and known collectively as the Ancoats Mills, blow the mind for anybody aware of the sheer luck by which they have survived to the present day, as a 'nationally-important concentration of cotton mills.' Their regeneration continues, inevitably as warehouse 'lofts' or flats, and various bodies are to be congratulated on the way in which the entire canal-side facade holds together without obvious modern intrusion.

Here are some of Manchester's earliest cotton mills; Old Mill dates from 1798 and Murray's Mills from 1798-1804. Alongside are McConnel & Kennedy mills of 1818 onwards, these of fire-proof construction; beyond, Royal Mill of 1912.

A fine point on which to finish the walk, rejoin the city hustle and make our way back to base, but not before appreciating two significant city centre warehouses, that for S & J Watts, a textile warehouse and showroom of 1854, spectacularly in the 'Italianate palace' style and now a hotel. Finally, back to base in our own conference hotel, built c.1870 as the Pickles Building, at the corner of Portland and Princess Streets, also long-converted and a most suitable re-use.

Thanks to Terry Wyke for giving his time, expending his energy and sharing his obvious fascination for the city, warts and all.

David Viner

Trip to Styal Mill

The second of this year's excursions took us to the 18th century **Quarry Bank Mill & Country Park** in the Cheshire village of Styal.

We set off from our city centre hotel, headed south of Manchester and in a short time were soon in Styal. Being quite a large group we were divided into two sub-groups and set off with our respective guides for an informative tour of the cotton mill, remarkable as

it is powered by Europe's most powerful working waterwheel. Our enjoyment and understanding was greatly enhanced by the presentations we'd already heard from our expert lecturers. I, for one, got so much more out of the visit because of these.

Styal mill reminded me very much of the water-driven mill of New Lanark that some of our members may remember from their visit to Scotland about 11 years ago now: built along similar lines though employee accommodation was provided within the enclosure of the New Lanark village.

Delicious refreshments were provided which we enthusiastically devoured - it would have been impolite to refuse after all. Once again we were blessed with sunshine for our excursion (and after the summer we'd had that was quite something!) the only downside being we had little or no time to



explore the garden and grounds. These had been the Greg family's picturesque valley retreat adjoining the mill.

On our way back we once again passed through Styal village, though on the return trip we now knew it had been built by the Greg family to house the mill workers.

Following the trip we had just enough time to go back to our accommodation to freshen up and change for dinner at the People's History Museum. What a treat was in store for us, as before and after an excellent dinner we were entertained by 'One Accord' and Sid & Liz Calderbank who performed some traditional Lancashire songs and poetry. Sid's daughter demonstrated a traditional Lancashire clog dance, which looked incredibly tricky. I'm a born and bred Lancastrian but the language performed by Sid, Liz and 'One Accord' was a real eye-opener to me as there were words I'd never heard before. Such words spoken in that wonderfully warm in-land Lancashire accent, even I listened intently for the translation! May these dialects long continue and mark out our wonderfully diverse language and traditions throughout these isles.

Elaine Edwards

Minutes of the Society's Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 16 September 2012 at The People's History Museum, Manchester

Present: The President (Eddie Cass) and 20 members

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Matthew Richardson, Pat Dawson, Seb Littlewood, Beth Thomas, David Jenkins, E Rumble, Prof. K. Kawashima & Heather Holmes.

Minutes of the last AGM

These had been printed in the Newsletter. They were proposed by David Viner & adopted by the meeting as a correct record. Seconded by Duncan Dornan.

Presidents Report

Eddie Cass began his report by stating much of his time had been taken up organizing the conference!

He had written to the widow of Prof. Sandy Fenton on behalf of the Society to express sympathy.

Study Days. These had been introduced by Catherine Wilson a number of years ago when they had proved very successful, however they are less so now. This year Duncan Dornan had tried to set up a meeting at the Museum of English Rural Life, he had managed to find a contact there but when the contact was transferred over to Eddie it all fell apart. It was decided that we keep trying to run them.

Eddie thanked Steph Mastoris (Conference Secretary) and Duncan (Treasurer) who helped with organising the conference, i.e. taking bookings, dealing with the hotel etc. Eddie remarked on the excellent staff at the People's History Museum (all agreed). He had dropped off a box of chocs. to them by way of thanks.

Treasurer's Report:

The annual financial report was provided by the Treasurer, **Duncan Dornan**, who reported that there is a consistent growth annually. This conference is being subsidized so the balance will probably be lower next year. The cash flow can be disturbed slightly due to delays in banking the cheques. Profits generally come from the conference, so subsidizing it means attendees are getting their money back.

Financial position remains positive, though individual membership subs. are a bit slower this year. Conference 2012 may incur a loss but this was agreed in advance as it was relatively expensive and the surplus owes a lot to conference attendees.

Accounts were approved by Paul Coghlan and seconded by Dafydd Roberts.

Editors' Reports

Linda Ballard, editor of Folk Life, reported she is stepping down as she has secured a new editor Dr Lillis Ó Laoire. He teaches folklore & folklife and has published on several subjects. He has been a great support in the background of the journal for some time and has done reviews for it also.

Vol. 50 Part 1 has been despatched. Part II will be despatched shortly. This volume is being subsidized by the Society in recognition of the 50th anniversary.

There is quite a lot of material in hand for future volumes which will be handed over to the new editor. Several people at this conference have said they are willing to write for the journal.

Maneys are providing statistics e.g. the top 10 downloads etc. Maneys are also offering bundles of journals e.g. 6 journals & we've been included in these, this means the Society is gaining ground again e.g. we've now got Harvard back. 50% of our readership is in the U.K.

Chris Stevens offered a vote of thanks to Linda for all her hard work over many years. Eddie said he was going to give his and the Society's thanks at the end of the AGM but all were in agreement that Linda has done an excellent job and especially as she had introduced peer reviews. It was concluded that Linda probably took over as Editor in the year 2000. John Baldwin also said a special thanks to Linda.

Elaine Edwards, editor of the newsletter.

The Newsletter continues to be the primary way in which the conference is publicised & having sought feedback from some members, does still seem to be of use & interest. It is also of course one of the ways in which the AGM minutes are reported.

Costs: Newsletter £926.20 (2011 = £926.20) for 300, so exactly the same as last year. Postage was £173.61 (2011 = £137.03).

Obviously the advantage of the Newsletter is that it lands on people's doormats, rather than them having to be pro-active & go onto the website.

Elaine reiterated it is most important to get pieces on time so an early despatch can be achieved, hence the deadline of Nov.15th. Photos. too are most welcome as are news snippets, book reviews, ads. for forthcoming conferences & the like.

Eddie thanked Elaine for her work on the newsletter.

Website Officer's Report

Heather Holmes (in absentia) reported that the SFLS website has refreshed the journal page & instructions to authors. There is now a link to the past 50 yrs of articles on the website. Twitter is being used e.g. to advertise the conference and to publicise Folk Life. If anyone has any info. for Twitter or the website please let HH know. Eddie thanked HH for her work.

Secretary's Report

Matthew Richardson was unable to attend this year's AGM due to other commitments, though he had been able to attend most of the conference. Matthew reported that there was little new to report at the present time from the secretary's perspective. Eddie thanked Matthew for his work for the Society.

Membership Secretary's Report

Seb Littlewood sent his apologies, the President read out his report. There are 182 individual members. Institutional numbers are collated by Maneys. There are 58 individual members being invoiced & 50% are still to pay their subs. Reminders will go out to encourage members to pay by Direct Debit. Thanks were given to Seb for his report.

Conference Secretary's report

Steph Mastoris said this year's conference had been a fantastic event and that he was merely the 'handmaiden' of the Society! 'Eddie has put the programme together almost single handedly & it's been a splendid achievement.' The staff at the People's History Museum are very good and they have been particularly supportive & the equipment has worked well. Steph thanked DD & said it's all worked very well. He reminded everyone to complete & return their feedback forms.

Looking ahead:

2013, Sept. 12th – 15th Llandrindod Wells, Mid Wales. Possible themes, forestry, vernacular architecture, water. Steph, David Jenkins & Dafydd will put together a programme.

2014 possibly Killarney

2015 the Black Country Museum has invited us, David Eveleigh.

2016 Dublin (anniv. of the Easter Rising).

2017 Scotland

Eddie thanked Steph for his valuable contribution.

Election of Officers

Existing panel of officers remain except for Journal Editor. Standing down from Council are: Dylan Jones, John Williams Davies, Cozette Griffin Kremer & Liam Campbell. New on Council are: Claudia Kinmonth, Paul Coghlan & Michael Larkin

Any Other Business

Cozette asked if the 50th anniversary article could be translated into other languages.

Christine Stevens reported that two long-standing members of the Society have died, Dr. I. Anthony & Dr. E. Scourfield.

The President called the meeting to a close.

End Notes

Recent Publications

Deeds of Heroes

The Story of the Distinguished Conduct Medal 1854-1993

by Matthew Richardson

Imprint: Pen & Sword Military

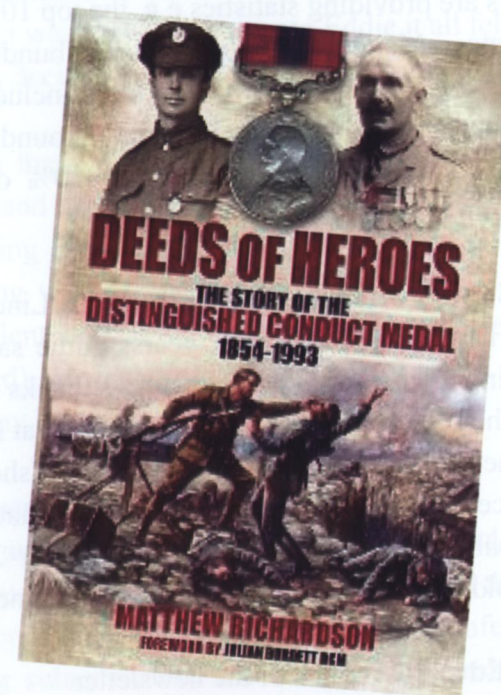
Found in: British History Books

Hardback

224 pages

ISBN: 9781848843745

Published: 5 March 2012



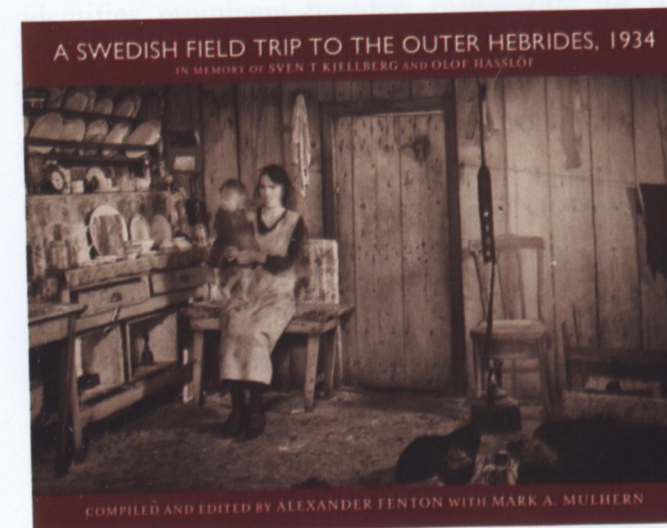
Distinguished Conduct Medal – the DCM – was the second highest medal that could be awarded for gallantry to the other ranks of the British army and in some cases also the RAF and Royal Navy, yet the holders of this major award have rarely been given the recognition they deserve. And while the heroic exploits of recipients of the Victoria Cross have been the subject of repeated accounts, DCM holders have largely been ignored in print.

But now in this graphic narrative history Matthew Richardson sets the record straight by describing the

conspicuous courage of men who have been awarded the DCM in the Crimean and the colonial wars, in the two world wars, and during recent conflicts in the Falklands and the Gulf. Told often in their own words, their extraordinary acts of bravery and self-sacrifice are the central focus of his book. Characters such as Frank Bourne, who received the award for his conduct at Rorke's Drift, are celebrated here, as is John Brown who received his DCM for work inside a German prisoner of war camp in the Second World War, John Meredith who was awarded his DCM for leadership while a prisoner of the Japanese on the Burma railway, and Peter Ratcliffe who was given the DCM for an SAS mission in the Gulf. But alongside these famous names are the many, many other DCM holders of equal gallantry whom history has overlooked.

Profusely illustrated with photographs from the author's collection including DCM holders from the Boer War, Gallipoli, the Western Front, and the battlefields of the Second World War, Matthew Richardson's book will appeal to everyone who is interested in British military history.

A Swedish Field Trip to the Outer Hebrides, 1934



In memory of Sven T Kjellberg and Olof Hasslof
Compiled and edited by Alexander Fenton and Mark Mulhern

Published May 2012 by the European Ethnological Research Centre in association with NMS Enterprises Limited – Publishing (National Museum of Scotland)

ISBN: 978 1 905267 65 1 £25.00

In 1934, Sven Kjellberg, Director Goteborgs Museum in Sweden, and his assistant, Olof Hasslof, travelled the length of the Outer Hebrides mostly on bicycles. Their diary and notes, translated here, say much about island life eighty years ago.

'... Along with a fascinating photo-record of island life, they made sketches and plans of everything from peat spades to pothooks, from barns to box beds It bespeaks their unquestioning respect for the way of life they found; a respect it's hard not to share as we peer through this window on to a vanished age.' Scotsman

Professor Fenton, who died just before the publication of his last book, was the general editor of the Flashbacks series of oral histories published by NMS Enterprises Limited – Publishing and sponsored by the European Ethnological Research Centre, Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh. The titles in the series are:

From Kelso to Kalamazoo: The Life and Times of George Taylor 1803-1891

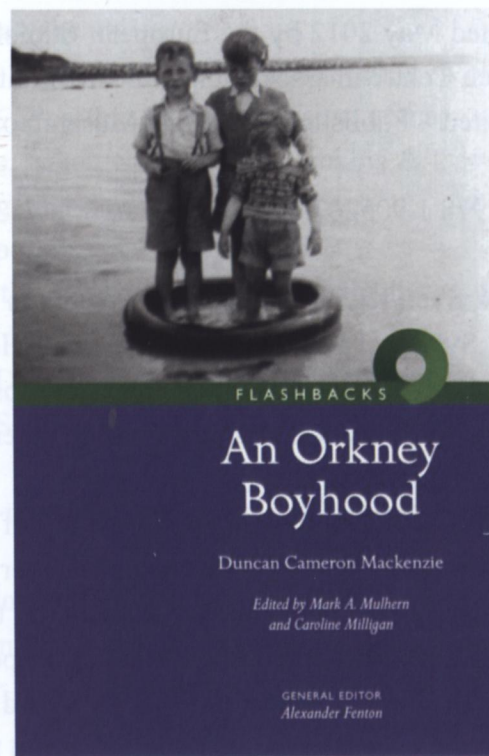
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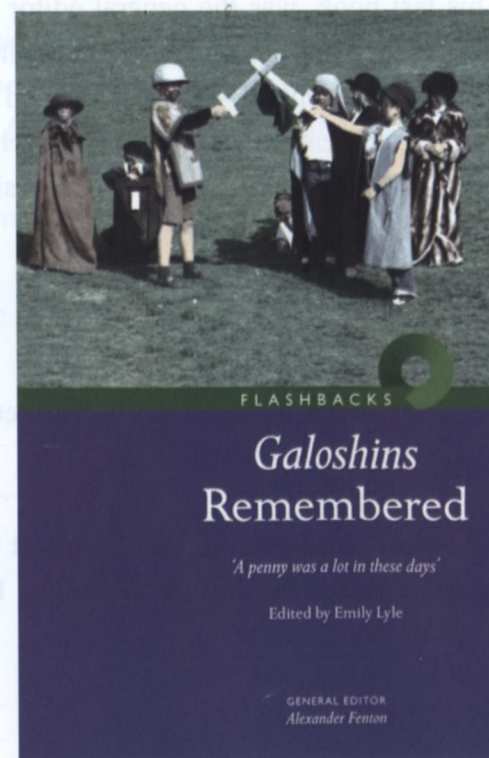
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An Orkney Boyhood

Duncan C Mackenzie edited Mark A Mulhern and Caroline Milligan

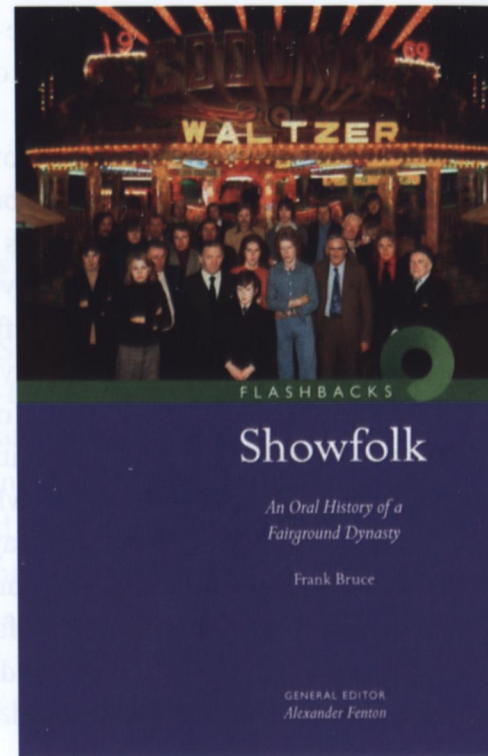
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Edited by Emily Lyle

978 1 905267 56 9 £10.99



Showfolk: an Oral History of a Fairground Dynasty

Frank Bruce

978 1 905267 45 3 £10.99

Forthcoming spring 13:

From Land to Rail: the Life of Andrew Ramage 1854-1917

978 1 905267 69 9

See www.nms.ac.uk/books or contact Kate Blackadder, k.blackadder@nms.ac.uk, 0131 247 4083 for further information.

'Voice from the workhouse'

Peter Higginbotham.

Published by 'The History Press, Stoud. Glos. 2012.

ISBN 978 0 7524 6749 8

218 Pages, illustrated with 57 B & W photos & illustrations. £12.99

'Tells the story of the workhouse – in the words of those who experienced the institution at first hand, including pauper inmates themselves, workhouse staff, administrators, official inspectors, journalists & social explorers.

Book Reviews

Lincolnshire Farm Animals, A Brief History,

by Catherine Wilson OBE, with Sue and Alan Stennett.

ISBN 978 0 903582 46 9. £8.95

This publication runs to 60 pages, with 73 illustrations, giving a keen flavour of the stock in discussion. The book aims to provide an accessible summary of the history of all of the Lincolnshire breeds and does this admirably, tracing each breed from its origins through to the present day.

The book starts with a review of the earliest evidence of domesticated livestock in Britain moving swiftly on to the oldest visual representations of domesticated livestock. The author also identifies the origins of the livestock improvement of the 18th century, facilitated by the Agricultural revolution. The development of agriculture generally in the county of Lincolnshire is placed in context to support the explanation of the fate of individual breeds.

Detailed reviews are provided of 5 significant breeds related to the county; the Lincoln Longwool Sheep, Lincoln Red Cattle, Lincolnshire Curly Coat Pigs, Lincolnshire Buff Poultry and finally the Shire Horse, which can be traced to the Lincolnshire Black Horse. In each case the author traces their origins, identifies prominent breeders responsible for the success of the stock and connects this clearly to the character of the farmland in Lincolnshire. Each chapter concludes with an explanation of the current status of each breed, ranging from the sad demise of the Lincolnshire Curly Coats in 1975 to the renewed commercial success of Lincoln Red Cattle in modern agriculture.

This volume is recommended reading for those interested in the development of farm livestock in the UK.

Duncan Dornan

Forthcoming conferences/Meetings



Conference title: Whose history is it anyway? 'Public' history in perspective

Date: 5-6 September 2013

Location: University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK

Keynote address: Hilda Kean

This is a multi-disciplinary conference aimed at a wide range of history and heritage practitioners making no distinction between professionals and non-professionals. Papers will be given by academic historians, those working or volunteering in the museum, heritage and archives sectors, those working in the media, film makers, funding bodies, policy makers, publishers, along with family, local and community historians.

For further information please contact publichistory@uclan.ac.uk

43rd International Ballad Conference - Stellenbosch, South Africa

The South African Society for Cultural History, in collaboration with the University Museum, Stellenbosch University invites submissions for the 43rd International Ballad Conference of the Kommission für Volksdichtung.

The 43rd International Ballad Conference will be held in Stellenbosch, South Africa, 13-19 October 2013, on the theme of social issues in ballads and folk songs: status, social customs, singing and social class, service, slavery, spirituality, sacrifice, sexuality. We also welcome papers on any other social issues, the music and performance of ballads and songs, and other topics on folk song in general.

Papers will be accepted in any of the official languages of the Kommission für Volksdichtung: German, French and English. Abstracts will be peer-reviewed.

The full call for papers will be posted on www.KfVweb.org.

OBITUARIES

Death of long time Folk Life member Iild E Anthony MA PhD FSA

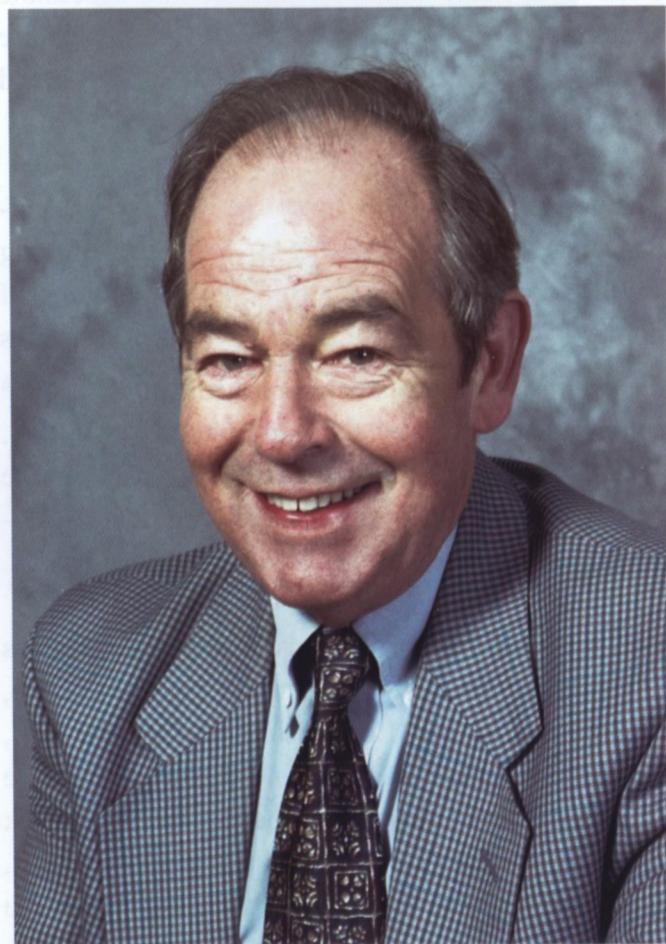


Dr Anthony died last year on January 19th aged 86; she had been a member of the Society for over 40 years, and would be known to most members for her time at St Fagans as assistant keeper of the costume collection until her retirement in 1986. She established the first dedicated costume gallery and also the first costume and textile store during the 1970s. However, her first love was always archaeology and she was well known in St Albans for many years, as Curator of the Verulamium Roman Museum, and

many of her publications and articles are based there, though her publications on Welsh smocks and quilts still pop up on Amazon, along with Costumes of the Welsh People.

Christine Stevens

Elfyn Scourfield MA, PhD, FSA (1942-2012)



Elfyn Scourfield joined the staff of the then Welsh Folk Museum in 1965 as a Research Assistant in the Department of Material Culture, working under our late President, Dr J Geraint Jenkins. In those days such a title encompassed a wide range of responsibilities and he could find himself assisting with the dismantling of building one day and accessing costume and textiles the next.

Elfyn's primary interest, however, was farming and that is where he made his greatest contribution. He published extensively on the subject and had a particular interest in Welsh agricultural machinery manufacturers. Indeed, his interest in Jones Balers bordered on the obsessive and his greatest professional regret was that he never managed to

acquire a Jones Cruiser Combine for the collection! His outstanding contribution to St Fagans, however, was the creation of the Agricultural Gallery, which was truly ground-breaking in its day, and much copied in other museums.

He himself came from a farming background in West Wales and he remained a true countryman throughout his life. The Welsh word *gwerinwr* for which there is no adequate English equivalent in this context, sums him up to a tee. He set out to be a teacher, but his interest in the folk life of his native area, which was the subject of his MA, eventually led him to St Fagans.

By the time of his retirement in 1999 from his post as Keeper of Social & Cultural History he was responsible for all curatorial work at the Museum. He did not wear his learning on his sleeve, but the breadth and depth of his knowledge of Welsh folk life was unrivalled. I had the pleasure of working under and alongside him for almost thirty years and one could not have had a better mentor. His singular sense of humour and 'archaic' Welsh vocabulary, which he could use to superb effect linger long in the memory of everyone who was privileged to know him.

John Williams Davies

Prof. Alexander Fenton

Sandy Fenton died in May 2012 at the age of eighty-two. He was raised on an Aberdeenshire croft, and while a student at Aberdeen University, he cycled twenty-five miles home every Friday night. He remained close to the land all his life, and he worked long hours and was hugely productive of books and papers. He was an astonishing linguist, starting with French and German at school and university, and expanding over the rest of the continent. I once asked him which European languages he could not read. 'Polish,' he said, and there was a characteristic pause. 'Basque.' And then a small, mischievous smile, 'But my Faroese is quite good.'

He spent most of his professional life in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, latterly as Director. He set up the Country Life Section, and started to develop Scottish ethnology on the Scandinavian model, initiating the intensive collecting of objects relating to farming which form the core of the material at the National Museum of Rural Life at Wester Kitchside, and starting to assemble the Scottish Life Archive.

After his retirement from the Museum, he was appointed to the Chair of Scottish Ethnology in the School of Scottish Studies at Edinburgh University, where he taught for four years, and in retrospect one regrets that he did not go there some ten years earlier when he had created momentum in the Museum, and would have been able to teach far more students.



His most-read book is the classic *Scottish Country Life* (1976), and his largest feat of research *The Northern Isles* (1978), which examines farming and fishing in Shetland and Orkney, and which benefits from his command of Norn. He conceived and acted as general editor of the fourteen volumes of *Scottish Life and Society: A Compendium of Scottish Ethnology* (2003-14), one of which, on food (2007), was

his final masterpiece. Another of his creations, the European Ethnological Research Centre, remains dynamically active. His friends remember his human insight and advice, delivered in a few plain words.

John Burnett

New Arrival

The editor would like to welcome a potential new member albeit of the future



James Reilly Harden Allan

Born to Morgana (our student place winner 2011) & her husband Duncan.

James arrived on 25/8/2012 (so Morgana couldn't make the 2012 conference!) & weighed in at 8lbs 6.5 oz. Gorgeous James was born at 3.06am and Morgana tells me he still gets up at the same time every night.

Many congratulations to you both.

Take a look at your Society's website
www.folklifestudies.org.uk

The contents of all issues of *Folk Life* are listed as well as core information about the Society, including a membership form along with notices of Society meetings and conferences and the text of the *Newsletter*. The site is also available for members to post relevant information. Please send text as e-mail attachments to the website officer
Heather.Holmes@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Have you, or are you about to change your address?

If so, please can you let our Membership Secretary know by emailing him at seblittlewood@beamish.org.uk or dropping him a line to the North of England Open Air Museum, Beamish, Stanley. Co. Durham DH9 0RG

Contributions/comments should be forwarded to the newsletter editor Elaine Edwards at e.edwards@nms.ac.uk

Printed & published by the Society for Folk Life Studies, spring 2013. All opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not represent -the policies or views of the Society.

BOOKING FORM

THE SOCIETY FOR FOLK LIFE STUDIES

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Llandrindod Wells, Powys, Wales: 12th to 15th September 2013

I/We wish to attend the 2013 annual conference:

Name/s:

Address:

.....

.....

Telephone: E-mail:

I/We understand that the total cost of the conference will be:

WITH ACCOMMODATION: £420 for single occupancy,
£380 per person for two people sharing a room.

WITHOUT ACCOMMODATION: £150 per person

DAY RATES (with lunch and dinner, but NO accommodation) are available at £60 per day for the 13th, and 14th September, and £40 for the 15th September.

Please book place/s and for me/us with / without accommodation and I/we enclose a non-returnable deposit of £75 per person.

I understand that the remainder of the conference fee will be due for payment by 5th August 2013

Dietary requirements:

Mobility requirements:

Please return this form with payment to:

Steph Mastoris

National Waterfront Museum,

Oystermouth Road, Maritime Quarter, Swansea SA1 3RD

(steph.mastoris@museumwales.ac.uk)

Please make cheques payable to *The Society for Folk Life Studies*