



# County Durham History & Heritage Forum

## News from the Forum, Issue 10, Spring/Summer 2011

Here is the tenth issue of the Forum newsletter. We have a selection of articles and information relating to both past and forthcoming events in which the Forum and its members have been involved. The newsletter is an opportunity to share news and advertise your events. It is circulated electronically, or by post to members of the Forum. We also hope to get this out to a wider audience around the historic county.

**Date for your diary** – CDHH Forum AGM will be held on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2011. Venue tbc.

### **Yesterday Belongs to You**

Members of the Forum committee attended this year's Yesterday Belongs to You local and family history fair at Locomotion, NRM Shildon. On our stand we had information about forthcoming events that the Forum will be hosting but also a selection of leaflets from member groups who were unable to attend on the day. This meant that groups were able to promote their events even though they couldn't make it to the museum...just one of the roles of the CDHFF!

We don't have any figures of the attendance for the event or how many exhibitors there were but we did notice that a number of the usual attendees of this event were missing. Hopefully this was due to a glitch in the booking arrangements rather than lack of interest in this long standing event. If you have any comments or thoughts on this event or the future of Yesterday Belongs to You please share them with us.



Committee Member Gillian Wetherell manning the stall for the Forum at Yesterday Belongs to You on 14 May 2011.

Hon. President: Mr John Grundy.

Hon. Chair: Dr Winifred Stokes

## **BALH Local History Day discussion 'Saving History : Self help in an age of austerity'**

**A report from Win Stokes chair of the Forum who was one of the speakers and chaired the subsequent discussion.**

The main presentation was by Sue Clayton of Nottinghamshire Local History Association. In some ways the Nottinghamshire experience had paralleled our own with the loss of the University of Nottingham's Certificate in Local History in 2008 and the WEA providing few local history courses. Without the benefit of a Community Heritage Project behind them the county wide Local History Association took matters into its own hands and in 2009 sent out a questionnaire to 57 local history societies to see what exactly the situation was. The same pattern emerged: ageing membership; competition from U3A; failure to engage younger members etc. The societies that were doing well had a high profile in the community, a good website, regular newsletters and plenty of activities. The styles varied, some were mainly social, others educational, there was some research but little attempt at publication. Sound familiar?

What was interesting was the planning for 2011 which included: making the most of your collections - a 3 session course in partnership with the WEA , and further similar short courses on working towards publication, setting up an exhibition, how to apply for funding , setting up a group for individual researchers, possible intergenerational projects, using websites . One point that was stressed was the need to have plans in place for the future even if they cannot be realised at present so that when a funding opportunity becomes available the plan is there.

My own contribution was largely a 'compare and contrast'. Clearly the Community Heritage Project and until the more recent upheavals a generally heritage conscious County Council had given us a good start, but the problem with finite funding for specific projects is what comes next and who knows what the National Lottery Fund's new strategy will be or how far revised criteria will favour or disadvantage local history societies. What the discussion from the floor revealed was that although many problems were common to all there were widely differing circumstances in the various localities, many of them the product of just that local history that we are all committed to studying.

However on a lighter note I think there are a number of local historians south of Watford who now know where County Durham is and it was a great pleasure to see David Butler being given his research and publication award for his article in the Durham County Local History Society Journal no 75 on the building of Durham Town Hall .....

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The Secretary of Durham County Local History Society has received a request for help with some research. Can you help?

I am seeking information about the "Town Arms" for Stanhope as used on souvenir wares in the early 1900s. The design used to represent the Town was three swords. They are somewhat like the seaxes used for Essex.

I hope you and your colleagues will know why swords were used to represent Stanhope? An illustration is given below of a small item made by the Goss China Company, Stoke-on-Trent. In about 1910 this Factory's agent in the Town was – J. Henderson, Post Office. I am working through the c6,500 designs used by this Factory - this one has beaten me! I have done a paper search and an Internet search – no luck'



Please get in touch if you can help with this enquiry.

# History

## Awareness Day

### SUNDAY 26 JUNE 2011

## HARDWICK PARK

### Sedgefield

### 11.30 am to 4.00 pm



In association with  
Hardwick Park

Come and share our interest in the history and heritage of County Durham in a family oriented event at Hardwick Park.

Walk round the historic landscape and lake recreated by Durham County Council to show what the area was like 250 years ago.

Encourage your children to draw pictures of historical subjects at the visitor centre.

Find out about some of the work of the Forum and its member societies by viewing displays at the Temple of Minerva.

HARDWICK PARK is a free facility open to all

#### Please note:

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Forum please contact:

The Membership Secretary c/o 22 Oaklea Mews, Aycliffe Village, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 6JP or visit the website at:

[www.durhamweb.org.uk/historyforum](http://www.durhamweb.org.uk/historyforum)

If you have articles or news for the next newsletter please send the by email (preferably) to [cdhhforum@googlemail.com](mailto:cdhhforum@googlemail.com) or by post to: Glebe House, 19 Aldin Grange Hall, Bearpark, Durham, DH7 7AR

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## Report from two member groups...

**Durham County Local History Society** got Local History Month off to a good start with a visit to Auckland Castle on Sunday 1 May and by holding its AGM on Saturday 7 May at County Hall. The AGM was followed by a talk from Dr Anne Orde on John Buddle and Lord Londonderry. Dr Orde is planning a Surtees Society publication of selected letters from Buddle to Londonderry. The original letters are held by Durham County Record Office as part of the Londonderry Papers.

The Auckland Castle visit was originally arranged to show concern for the future of the castle and its Zurbaran paintings depicting Jacob and his twelve sons. However, the visit's purpose changed with the announcements at the end of March that the Church Commissioners had "secured in perpetuity the Zurbarans at Auckland castle" following a £15 million donation from Jonathan Ruffer and that Durham County Council and the National Trust were in talks about the future development of the castle as a heritage attraction. May Day was on the first weekend of the season for visiting the castle and the glorious weather showed the site off to its best. The castle is open on Sundays and Mondays 2.00 to 5.00 pm from Easter Monday until the last Sunday in September with addition opening hours on Mondays and Tuesdays in July and August of 11.00 am to 5.00 pm.

**Tudhoe & Spennymoor Local History Society's** Local History Month visit to Witton Castle on 23 May was not blessed with good weather after a day of gale force winds. However, members were able to shelter in the cellar bar after an interesting walk round the building that demonstrated that many of the features shown on the prints of 200 years ago are still there. The Society's July talk features local Spennymoor Historian – Bob Abley – who will be showing members – *Spennymoor in film*. This will take place at 7.30 pm on Monday 25 July at St. David's Church Hall, Tudhoe Lane - £1.50 entrance for non-members.

## St Farmin's Well

The Bowes Local History Group has submitted a proposal for consideration by the Heart of Teesdale initiative to restore St Farmin's Well, a forgotten holy well in the parish.

The restoration will include the redirection of the water supply. The aim of the project is also to promote and explore the history of the two parishes and activities of their people.

The image shown is from an exploratory dig in 1998 and the following description is taken from a paper written by Cliff Brown:

' It consists of a semi-circular dry-stone cistern about 12" deep, bottomed with a single flat stone slab, complete with cast-iron overflow pipe and some further stonework out in front'.

The Group is carrying out further research on the well and would welcome information on its history. If you would like to know more about the project contact Cliff Brown at:

[BBROWNCAR@aol.com](mailto:BBROWNCAR@aol.com)



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Wheatley Hill History Club's annual local history day.

**Local Family History Day - 24 September 2011**  
**Wheatley Hill Workingmen's Club**  
**9.30am - 1.30pm**

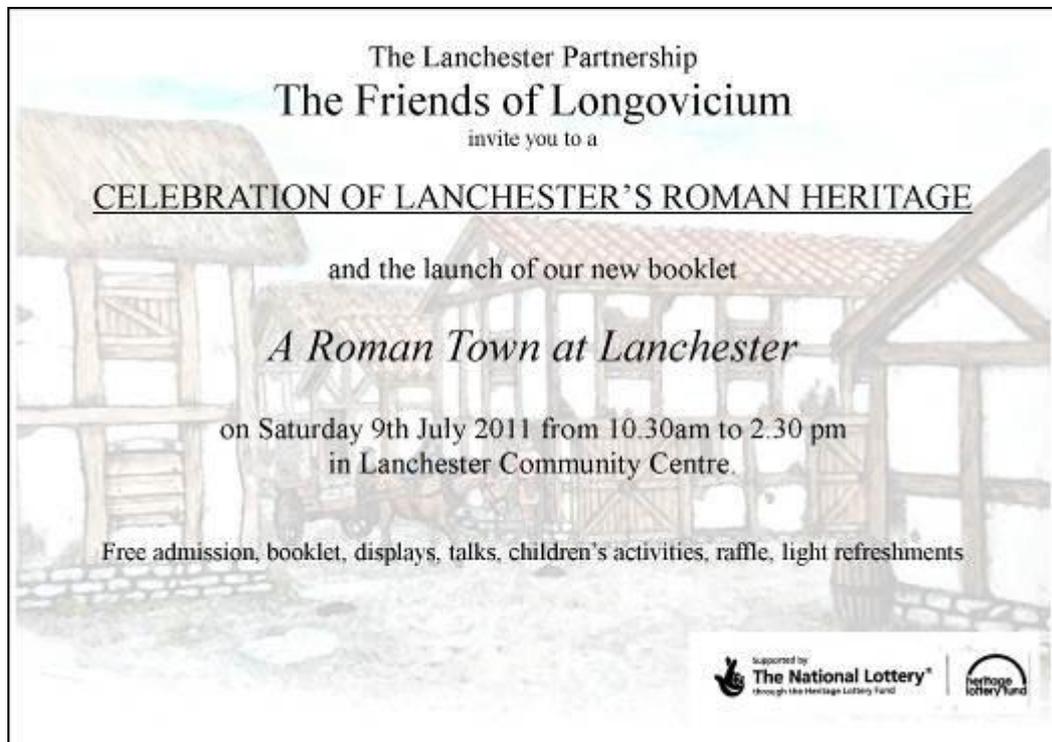
An appeal for family historians researching families in the  
Thornley, Ludworth and Wheatley Hill areas.

Our history event this year is focusing on local family history and we should like family historians with a research interest in this area to showcase/share their work at the event, for which a FREE table will be provided. A display of photos, family memorabilia etc - anything would be useful.

The two major local history organisations will be there - Cleveland Family History Society and Northumberland and Durham together with the North East War Memorials Project, Durham Mining Museum, Clayport Library and Durham Records Online. We are also hoping that Queen Victoria and Mr Brown may put in appearance to have tea with us.

There will be lots of material available that has not previously been in the public domain and we would hope to be able to do ancestry and find my past searches.

If anyone is interested in displaying their family history they can contact the history club at [history.club2@btinternet.com](mailto:history.club2@btinternet.com).



The Lanchester Partnership  
**The Friends of Longovicium**  
invite you to a

**CELEBRATION OF LANCHESTER'S ROMAN HERITAGE**

and the launch of our new booklet

*A Roman Town at Lanchester*

on Saturday 9th July 2011 from 10.30am to 2.30 pm  
in Lanchester Community Centre.

Free admission, booklet, displays, talks, children's activities, raffle, light refreshments

supported by  
**The National Lottery**  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



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