

# NORTHUMBRIAN CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter

President: Prof. Heather Cordell [www.northumbrian-cambridge.co.uk](http://www.northumbrian-cambridge.co.uk) Hon. Secretary: Em.Prof. Gilbert Cockton

### True, for Alan Turing



A twelve foot steel sculpture by Antony Gormley commemorating Alan Turing has been unveiled in the grounds of King's College, where the computer scientist and Second World War code-breaker read mathematics in the 1930s.

Gormley's piece, entitled *True, for Alan Turing*, is made from Corten steel, which contains a tiny amount of copper which means it will oxidise over time to form a red rust surface. "The sculpture's relationship with time and weather is an integral part of its character," said Gormley.

Although Historic England initially objected to its installation, saying the steel sculpture would harm the character of the college, the project was given the go-ahead by Cambridge City Council. Tate Britain director Alex Farquharson, said that it is a highly fitting tribute from one of our leading artists to one of our greatest mathematicians"



### Visit to Thornton Hall and Tees Cottage Pumping Station

Our summer visit this year, on July 3rd, is a 'double bill', taking us to two of the premier attractions in the Darlington area. Thornton Hall, which was built around 1550 by Ralph Tailbois, is one of the oldest buildings in the area. It originally had three distinct walled gardens but these fell into disuse over the centuries and were covered with grass and planted with orchards and trees. When Mike and Sue Manners moved to Thornton Hall in 1989 there were no longer any orchards and the walled gardens had become paddocks grazed by cattle and sheep. Restoration work began in 1995 and years of painstaking (and back-breaking) work followed, clearing the ground, planting beds and borders and cultivating flowers, shrubs and trees. An ornamental pond, stream, rocks and waterfall were added in 1999, a large wildlife pond in 2002 and a vegetable garden in 2009. Described as "one of Britain's finest new gardens with a fascinating old past", Thornton Hall Gardens is planted with an abundance of rare and unusual perennials, interspersed with interesting trees and shrubs, secretive areas with quirky sculptures and a meadow garden.

Tees Cottage Pumping Station was built in 1849 to supply clean water to Darlington, which had previously relied on contaminated ground wells, polluted rivers, and rainwater tubs. A Scheduled Ancient Monument, it has a steam-powered Beam Engine, Lancashire Boilers, and a two-cylinder gas engine, the largest preserved example in Europe. Both engines are still in operation and still pumping water from the River Tees. There is also a Blacksmith's Shop, a miniature railway, and a tearoom.

## Past events

### Freshers' event

#### Literary & Philosophical Society

Thursday 21 September 2023

Five NCA committee members welcomed fifteen freshers, one parent and four returning students to a lively reception at the Lit & Phil. Numbers were slightly down on the previous year, but there were only two 'no-shows'. Some of the young people already knew each other, but for most the event provided an opportunity to meet new people and exchange ideas. Our returning students gave a brief account of their first year experiences in Cambridge.



NCA President Heather Cordell with students

*Please note the new NCA bank account*

Account: **Northumbrian Cambridge Association**

Lloyds Bank Sort code: **30 98 97**

Account number: **87980962**

All future payments for event bookings and your annual subscriptions (due by **1 March** each year) should be made to this account. You can find an updated Standing Order form for paying subscriptions on our website *How to Join* page.

## Annual lecture

### Literary & Philosophical Society

Wednesday 4 October 2023

We were delighted to welcome Brian Ward as this year's speaker at our 2023 Annual Lecture. Currently Professor in American Studies at Northumbria University, Brian started his career in the North East teaching at the Universities of Durham and Newcastle. He went on to hold chairs at the Universities of Florida and Manchester. His ten books include *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (1998 - winner of an American Book Award and the Organisation of American Historians' James A. Rawley Prize for the best book on US Race Relations) and *A&R Pioneers: Architects of American Roots Music on Record* (2018: co-authored with Patrick Huber, which won the Belmont Prize for the best book on country music). He is also author of *Martin Luther King in Newcastle upon Tyne: The African American Freedom Struggle and Race Relations in the North East of England*, praised as "The most detailed historical account of race relations in the North East yet written." Brian is currently completing *She Loves Y'All: The Beatles and the American South* for publication in late 2024 .

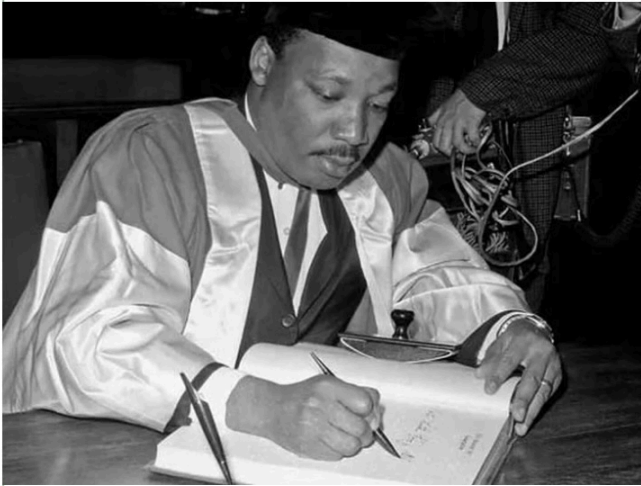


Brian's talk revealed the circumstances surrounding Martin Luther King Jr's remarkable trip to Newcastle upon Tyne in November 1967 – his last trip outside the United States before



his murder in April 1968 and the only time he visited anywhere in the UK outside London. Along the way, we encountered bureaucratic incompetence, mistaken identity, a catering crisis, lost and surviving film footage, the local press, and local security arrangements.

Brian fitted King's visit into a long, largely forgotten history that connects the North East of England to the African American freedom struggle in the US. This included a visit by Mohammed Ali, but more importantly the earlier anti-slavery movement that first provided support for African Americans in the north east of England.



Martin Luther King accepted his honorary degree from Newcastle University in November 1967

## Autumn Concert - Abbamania

Glasshouse International Centre for  
Music (formerly the Sage Gateshead)

Sunday 22 October 2023

Europe's leading Abba tribute act, Abbamania, gave an energetic and uplifting two hour performance at the Sage. A select group of Abba fans met for a drink before the concert and were then treated to the full retinue of Abba



songs, starting with Mama Mia and taking in Waterloo, Dancing Queen, and Chiquitita along the way. By the end of the evening, everyone was on their feet, dancing and swaying in the aisles.

## Christmas events

### Christmas lunch and Festive Tea

Friday 1 December & Saturday 9 December  
2023

The Christmas lunch was held once again in Newcastle's County Hotel, a Grade 2 listed Victorian railway hotel with many of its original features. We met in the bar beforehand then dined in the spacious County Suite, with its splendid stained glass windows. After lunch our brains were tested by some fun Christmas quizzes collated by Sue Austin.

Our Festive Afternoon Tea and Film took place in the Tyneside Cinema's digital lounge, decorated for Christmas. We were served a glass of Prosecco followed by sandwiches, cakes, and tea or coffee on vintage china. After tea, we were treated to a showing of the classic Christmas film *It's a Wonderful Life*.



## Call for committee members/officers

Dear members,

We would welcome expressions of interest from volunteers to join the NCA Executive Committee. Perhaps you are recently retired (or soon to retire) and have a bit of extra time on your hands?! The current committee has been in place for around 4 years now and most committee members are willing to continue for a year or two more. However, if we are unable to find replacements (particularly for the officer roles – President, Secretary, Treasurer) by that time, then the society will sadly need to disband.

We appreciate that a number of our members are reaching the age and stage of life where they no longer have the capacity to serve in this way (indeed many have already served as officers or committee members in the past, for which we offer you our heartfelt thanks). If, however, you have not yet reached that stage of life, we would encourage you to consider stepping up!

Equally, if you have any ideas of ways that we can refresh and increase the membership (and, in particular, attract younger members in order to make the society more sustainable), then please do get in contact.

Heather Cordell

NCA President.

## Ideas wanted

Do you have any ideas for future activities or visits? Do you have news of any recent developments at your college or have you visited Cambridge recently? Or perhaps you would like to share news of personal achievement? If so, please contact the newsletter editor.

You can also share news on our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552545800986>

## In Memoriam

We were sorry to hear of the recent deaths of Steve Lawson, Mick Bond and Christopher Moreland.

Steve (Clement Stephenson) Lawson was head boy and captain of rugby at the RGS, before winning a scholarship to Downing College to study Electrical Engineering. After graduating, he took the family Electrical Fuse business to international prominence opening branches in both India and Malaysia. His company supplied fuses to the National Grid and similar institutions all over the world. A lifelong rugby enthusiast, he was President of Novocastrian RFC during its centenary year

Mick Bond, who died on September 1 2023, read Classics at Jesus College. While at Cambridge, he met his wife Wendy, who was a student at Girton. In 1962 Mick was appointed as a District Commissioner for the British Colonial Service in Northern Rhodesia and Zambia and immediately fell in love with the region and its people. Returning to the UK in 1973, he was appointed Assistant Registrar at Newcastle University, becoming Senior Assistant Registrar eight years later. In 1987, he was appointed Deputy Registrar, a role he held until his retirement in 2002. He served the university with distinction and was very highly regarded by both colleagues and students. He is remembered with great affection by all those who knew and interacted with him.

Christopher Michael Moreland attended Magdalene College between 1956 and 1959. He became a solicitor and was involved with a number of NE charities including Kids Kabin.

## Coming events

*Wednesday 13th March 2024.*

Annual Dinner - Northern Counties Club, Newcastle.

*Saturday 11th May 2024.*

A day at the Races - Hexham racecourse

*Wednesday July 3rd 2024*

Thornton Hall Gardens & Tees Cottage Pumping Station

*Saturday August 31st 2024*

A late summer barbecue

For full details see the NCA website

