

Northumbrian Cambridge Association Newsletter

President: Dr William Telford

Hon. Secretary: Dr. Andrena Telford



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It seems summer is finally upon us, and while July is the time for us to bring you news of Northumbrian Cambridge Association events to come, it also gives us the chance to look back on a variety of interesting excursions that we have enjoyed over the past six months. Following on from last year's visit to the Mining Institute and the Stephenson Engine Works, we returned to the Neville Street/Stephenson Quarter for a tour of the historic and much-loved Newcastle Lit & Phil, followed by an informative tour of the new University Technical College and a splendid lunch generously contributed by Stephenson Quarter developer, David Clouston, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Our Annual Dinner took place in March, once more at the Northern Counties Club, where we were treated to the usual excellent meal and a number of nostalgic speeches and toasts. Our Spring Outing in April was to the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle, a venue familiar to many of our members, but this time with the bonus of guided tours of the ceramics and costumes collections. Our Spring Walk took us north in Northumberland to Chillingham Castle, where we were conducted to view (at a safe distance) the Chillingham Wild Cattle. Two alternative walks followed and some of our members also visited the castle itself. Our summer outing was an enjoyable cruise down the River Tyne, with a commentary on the way downriver and a chance to relax and chat on the way back. We were blessed with fine weather for both of these events and, as they say, an enjoyable time was had by all.

We are in good shape for the coming autumn events, beginning with our annual invitation to young people from the North East going up to Cambridge for the first time to join us for a Freshers Evening in Newcastle, in which they are introduced to each other and to the Association. Our AGM at the end of September is followed by our Annual Lecture, in which we are addressed by a distinguished Cambridge academic. This year our speaker will be Professor Tony Badger, an eminent historian whom some of you will know as a former Newcastle University lecturer and until recently Emeritus Paul Mellon Professor of History at Cambridge and Master of Clare College. A concert at the Sage Gateshead has become a fixture in our calendar, and this year we have booked tickets in November for "The Pitmen Poets", a celebration of the North East's Mining tradition. And of course we will end the year with our Christmas Lunch at the County Hotel and our Festive Afternoon Tea & Film at the Tyneside. Details of these events can be found later in the Newsletter.

It is encouraging to see all of our events so well attended, in some cases warranting a hasty revision when the numbers of attendees exceeded what had been anticipated! Although the membership number remains fairly stable, we are always keen to attract new members, especially younger ones, and we make an effort to stay in touch with current Cambridge undergraduates, not only through the Freshers events (including a reunion get-together at the end of the first term) but by making all those with whom we are in contact Associate Members, including them in the distribution list for the electronic newsletter and inviting them to any and all events. We do encourage you, if you are aware of any Cambridge graduates in your area who may not know of the Association but who might be interested in joining, to let us know and we'd be happy, with their permission, to get in touch.

I should just mention one thing in relation to next year. 2020 marks the 90th anniversary of the founding of what was originally the Northumberland Cambridge Association, and we plan to mark the occasion with a special Annual Dinner and the participation of special guests. The date of Wednesday, March 11, has already been booked at the Northern Counties Club, so please note it in your diary now!

Until we meet in the autumn, I wish everyone a happy and relaxing holiday break.



Warm regards,
Bill Telford

Dr William Telford
Christ's College, 1972-77

REMINDER

Please don't forget your annual **membership subscription**, which was due on March 1. If you have not already done so, you can make your payment of £10.00 by cheque (made out to Northumbrian Cambridge Association, not NCA, please), by standing order (most desirable, since you don't have to remember to renew it every year thereafter), or by bank transfer (HSBC sort code 40 34 18; account number 60618446). Please include identification e.g. SUB/[YOUR SURNAME]). Cheques should be mailed to the Treasurer, Mrs Susan Austin, 116 Queens Road, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3AU. If you normally pay by standing order, may we ask you to alter your standing order so that payment is made on March 1, or inform the Treasurer when she might expect it. Please make sure to keep subscription and excursion payments separate.

WINTER OUTING

33 members and guests attended our winter outing to the Stephenson Quarter in Newcastle (Saturday, February 9), a record number for such an outing! Following coffee and biscuits, we enjoyed a one hour tour of the venerable Lit. & Phil, the largest independent library outside of London, with expert guidance from Ros Stansfield, an NCA regular, and from City Guide, Pat Lowery. We were shown most parts of this venerable building, including the Sir James Knott Room, the gallery, the Music Room, the landing (with its impressive busts and lists of past Presidents) and the Silent Room downstairs. There followed a visit to the University Technical College, where Principal Dan Sydes showed us round this newly opened (November, 2018) state-sponsored building, which already this year has taken in around 140 students aged 14-19 who are studying the UTC's specialist subjects, Health Science and Digital Technologies. After visiting the computer lab and science lab, we saw the sports area on the roof and finished in the large hall constructed out of a former engineering works on the site. We were then treated to a complimentary lunch at the nearby Crowne Plaza Hotel, by owner, entrepreneur and developer of the Stephenson Quarter, David Clouston, who outlined his plans for the future of the site. Members and guests found the day a most exciting and rewarding one. £190 was given as a donation to the Crowne Plaza in compensation for numbers well in excess of our original estimate of attendees.



ANNUAL DINNER

Our annual dinner at the Northern Counties Club in Newcastle is always a special occasion, and this year, on Wednesday, March 13, 26 members and guests came together for this convivial event. After drinks in the Club's elegant foyer, the President welcomed everyone to the dinner in the upstairs dining room specially reserved for us. Following the meal, the Secretary administered the traditional quiz (on 'Familiar Places in Cambridge'), the results were announced over coffee, and prizes were given out to the winning table. Thereafter we had the Toast to the Queen, and our two excellent after-dinner speakers, Committee members, Susan Austin and Colin Dunnighan, gave their interesting reminiscences of Cambridge. Wendy Bond offered the toast to Cambridge University, and Mick Bond that to the Northumbrian Cambridge Association. The President gave farewell announcements, thanking the staff of the Northern Counties Club, as well as the Secretary, and then outlined the programme for the remainder of the year.



SUMMER OUTING

Our summer outing this year, arranged by Peter and Liz Atkins, was a River Tyne cruise and took place on Sunday, June 16. 23 NCA members and guests attended, including Ian Roberts, Cambridge University Alumni Advisory Board member for Scotland. From Newcastle Quayside we sailed under the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, which opened especially for the cruise, before heading downriver as far as the river mouth. En route, we saw the now largely defunct shipyards of Tyneside, the International Ferry Terminals, the Port of Tyne, the Fish Quay at North Shields and beautiful views of the river mouth, including Tynemouth Castle and Priory, the memorial to Admiral Lord Collingwood and the beautiful sandy beaches of South Shields. A commentary en route was given by the entertaining and knowledgeable John Glendinning, and on the return trip it was nice to relax and chat.



SPRING OUTING

Our spring outing this year, on Saturday, April 27, took us to the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. 29 members and guests attended, and the event was ably arranged by NCA committee member, Professor Gilbert Cockton, a Friend of the Bowes Museum. We were welcomed at the start by the Friends of the Bowes Museum, Hon. Treasurer, Jonathan Peacock, Vice-President, Fiona Turnbull, and Chairman, Joanna Tait, and were treated to coffee and biscuits in the impressive Jubilee Room. Two alternating groups toured the special ceramics and fashion collections, and these were conducted by Dr Howard Coutts



and Professor Cockton. Both tours were excellent. After the tours, we reconvened in the Jubilee Room for a sandwich and soup lunch and were in time to watch the silver swan perform at its traditional time of 2.00 pm. People used the remaining time to explore the Museum on their own. Altogether a delightful way to spend a Saturday in springtime.



SPRING WALK

32 NCA members and guests assembled at the Wild Cattle Visitor Centre carpark at Chillingham on Sunday, June 2 at 10 am for our Spring Walk, which was organised by Peter & Liz Atkins. The Chillingham Wild Cattle Association have a 100 strong herd of white cattle on 350 acres of park land here, and the prospect of seeing these centuries old beasts animated everyone. With people sharing cars, we set off in a convoy led by Park Manager, Duncan Ord, to a parking area a short distance from the field in which we found the wild cattle lying. Peter Atkins gave an introductory talk on the concept of 'wildness' and 'rewilding' and Duncan Ord outlined the history of the wild cattle and their current management. After lunch in the Castle Tearoom we split into groups, with 9 setting off for a long walk through Hepburn Woods and across open moorland to Ros Castle, while two groups went for a shorter, hour long guided tour, led by the President and Secretary, round the Formal (Italian) Gardens and to the Lakes and back. A number of members and guests took advantage of their combined Wild Cattle/Castle tickets to tour the Castle itself, home to the Grey (and subsequently Tankerville) family since the thirteenth century, while others had afternoon tea in the Tearoom. A day to remember!



I REMEMBER.....**NCA Treasurer Sue Austin (Churchill 1973-76) looks back on her Cambridge years (Annual Dinner)**

Churchill was founded in 1960 and was a different mix from other colleges with 70% scientists and 30% postgrads. It was the first men's college to admit women, and in fact celebrated the 50th anniversary of this decision on 8 March, coincidentally International Women's Day this year.

So it was still 'new' when I went up and I remember it looking very bare and stark. The rooms were good though, 'modern' back then with en suite washbasins, good heating and large windows with a window seat filling the bay. I liked it enough to spend 3 years in college anyway – especially later after I'd seen some of the student shared houses around town!

I never went to any lecture earlier than 11.00 am. I was intimidated by the University Library but must have managed to negotiate the huge book catalogues as I do remember sitting reading journal articles on uncomfortable chairs in dim light in the stacks, dying for a cup of tea.

I do remember Freshers' Week and the vast array of extra-curricular activities on offer. I plumped for sailing, karate, the Motorcycle Club and the Officer Training Corps (OTC), REME wing, and the Tenpin Bowling club. Sailing didn't last too long: potentially exhilarating but far too cold and wet. Karate lasted longer and I can still remember some of the moves.

The Motorcycle Club was mostly fun, though with a tendency to be cold and wet. My own bike at the time was a bit small for long runs so I usually went pillion on someone's BMW 900 or Kawasaki. I can't remember what we actually did - rode somewhere, stopped for refreshment and rode back again presumably.

I have no idea why I joined the OTC – army discipline really isn't my thing – all that boot polishing and berets at the right angle. I think they were keen to have women (good voices for radio transmission) and I was tempted by the opportunity to drive 3-4 ton lorries and get a Class III HGV licence. It was actually good fun, relatively laid back, and we went on exercises hurtling jeeps around the landscape and pretending we could navigate to grid refs. The lorry driving was great – especially over narrow hump-backed bridges, but unfortunately it wasn't long before the oil crisis hit and within the OTC fuel was rationed and only bona fide recruits and cadets could continue to drive. So no HGV licence but I did learn how to double de-clutch.

The Tenpin Bowling club was probably the best – never cold and wet! We went either to Stevenage (where the machinery tended to drop pins randomly when resetting), or to our preferred venue at Peterborough. Enough people had vehicles – a lime green Cortina, an orange VW van, etc. – to get everybody there for a session. We did play matches too against other university teams, both home and away, and for the most part lost, I recall. My more embarrassing moments were scoring less than the 'blind' score (a nominal score given to notional players when a team was short of people, as the women's team usually was). Still, I can claim to have played for Cambridge!! After a tough afternoon chucking balls around we would repair to the Eros in John Street for a 50p plate of moussaka, rice and cabbage, followed by liquid refreshment somewhere in the vicinity – we had a lot of CAMRA supporters in the group.

And in February 2018, ten of us had a CUTBC mini-reunion for Sunday lunch at the Principal Hotel in York, which is good going after 40 years. As we know of others further afield, and as more of us retire, we're hoping to organise a bigger reunion in the future – if enough of us can still lift a ball! – and post more embarrassing photos on Facebook.

CALENDAR OF FUTURE EVENTS, Autumn 2019**Freshers' Party, Mincoffs Solicitors, Newcastle.**

Monday, September 16, 2019

Again we will be welcoming freshers from the North East just before they go up to Cambridge. As last year, Tim Gray and Mincoffs will be our hosts, and the freshers, as well as having the opportunity to meet fellow undergraduates, will be introduced to the NCA.

AGM and Annual Lecture, Royal Grammar School, Newcastle.

Friday, September 27, 2019

The AGM and Annual Lecture will take place again at the Royal Grammar School, with a buffet supplied by Boldon Farmhouse Pantry, and wines by Michael Jobling. Professor Tony Badger, Emeritus Paul Mellon Professor of History at Cambridge and Master of Clare College, and now holder of a Chair in American History at Northumbria University, will give the lecture ("The Kennedys and the Gores").

Pre-Concert Dinner and Musical Event, Sage, Gateshead.

Sunday, November 24, 2019, 8 pm.

Join us for dinner and an evening of music, song and spoken word, with 'The Pitmen Poets', celebrating the triumphs, tragedy, humour and hard times of North-East England's coal mining tradition.

Christmas Lunch, County Hotel, Newcastle.

Friday, December 6, 2019, 12.00-15.00

Christmas lunch at the County Hotel has become a fixture in our calendar – a testament to the food, the ambience and the efficient and welcoming service. Join us for a delicious meal and good company in the lovely Mozart Suite.

Pre-Christmas Freshers' Reunion, Revolution, Newcastle.

Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 17.00-19.00.

An invitation will be sent out to freshers as usual, along with the offer of free associate membership. This will follow up the contacts made at the Welcome Party in September.

Festive Afternoon Tea & Film, Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle.

Saturday, December 14, 2019

Another tradition which has now established itself is the Festive Afternoon Tea and Film at the Tyneside. We will have the Digital Lounge all to ourselves, a scrumptious afternoon tea and the film of our choice, this year, the classic 1952 drama, *The Holly and the Ivy*, starring Ralph Richardson, Celia Johnson, Margaret Leighton and Denholm Elliott. What better way to spend a winter afternoon in the run-up to Christmas!

OTHER ALUMNI EVENTS

The 29th Cambridge Alumni Festival will be taking place this year from September 27-29, 2019—see <<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/events/alumni-festival-2019>>.

Global Cambridge Events take place throughout the country from April to November, and offer alumni a chance to hear about fascinating Cambridge research and talk about the topics that matter—see <<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/events/global-cambridge-events-in-2019>>. One such Global Cambridge Event will be taking place in Edinburgh at the Scottish National Gallery on November 7, 2019—see <<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/events/global-cambridge-events-in-2019/global-cambridge-in-edinburgh>>.

FROM MALCOLM & DIANA PEARCE

(attending Magdalene May Ball, 19th June, 2019):

The May Ball is alive and well. While some colleges are reaching out to make the experience more accessible Magdalene is maintaining its 'white tie' standard. Little has changed although, clutching our bus passes tightly for identification purposes, we approached the event with some trepidation. We need not have worried and were warmly welcomed, immediately included and handed the first of many glasses of champagne all from bottles opened by a skilfully wielded *sabre à champagne*. Multi-coloured lights, spreading throughout the college and gardens, became more intense as the sun eventually set. The stunning array of ball gowns and their wearers became even more beautiful. The evening and morning flew by. Wine and food were varied and plentiful. Diversions and delights abounded in the five locations designated for entertainment. There was certainly magic in the air, mainly provided by



illusionists and magicians, but ably complemented by high wire dare-devilry. We even enjoyed 'Mabel' (those old enough need to ask their grandchildren). The vast majority made the Survivors' photograph at six in the bright early morning sunshine which showed Cambridge to be as beautiful as ever. Many were persuaded that the tradition of skinny-dipping in the Cam needed reaffirming, while others were content to watch from Magdalene Bridge. Sadly, Rowan Williams, Lord Williams of Oystermouth, told us this was likely to be his last ball as Master. No doubt his successor will be as impressed as we were. Hopefully we will meet at the next ball in 2021 and find out. [Photograph courtesy of Malcolm Pearce.]

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Members may have noticed that your committee do try to include events both north and south of the Tyne. A recorded minute following the summer meeting of 1934 first raises the possibility of widening the membership of the then Northumberland Cambridge Association to southern neighbours!

The summer meeting of the Association was held by the kind invitation of Lord Grey at Howick on Saturday, September 22nd. The weather was unfortunately dull and the number of members was in consequence disappointingly small. The weather however was fine enough to enable the members to walk through the garden.

After tea a short business meeting was held at which it was proposed that membership should not be confined to Northumberland but should be extended to Durham. After some discussion it was thought that the meeting was not fully representative enough to settle the question and it was eventually proposed and carried that the secretary circulate the members.

It was also proposed and carried that the business meeting of the Association in future be held immediately before the annual dinner and that following on this the election of new officers be postponed until then. The business meeting was thus declared closed and Mr Robert Temperley proposed a vote of thanks to the president.

Lord Grey at the request of some of the members then gave a short and interesting description of the various family portraits at Howick.

NEW MEMBER

We are pleased to welcome another new member to the Northumbrian Cambridge Association:

Allan Colver (Magdalene, Natural Sciences, 1967-70)

Allan is Emeritus Professor of Community Child Health at Newcastle University, and was Chief Investigator for the NIHR Funded Research Programme on Transition of Young People with Long Term Health Conditions. His interests are medicine, music, literature and hill walking.

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN SAUNDERS

We are sorry to report the news of the recent death of longstanding NCA member, John Saunders. John died on April 25, 2019, at the age of 81 years. A graduate of St. John's (1958-61), John lived in Hexham and was a regular and enthusiastic member of NCA, supporting a number of our activities, along with his wife, Fay. John was a delight to know, and we were always pleased when he and Fay attended our NCA events, the last of which was the Christmas lunch at the County Hotel in December. John was a devotee of the jazz piano, and we will always remember the impression he made at our Sage concert in November, 2016, when after our dinner in the Bistro, he surprised us all by taking to the piano and playing a selection of jazzy numbers. He will be very much missed. We extend our deepest sympathy to Fay, and his family.

**NCA WEBSITE**

Please remember to consult our NCA website, which can be found at <<http://www.northumbrian-cambridge.co.uk>>. The website describes our association and gives information about its events and activities, along with downloadable booking forms. You can find information on our Committee and its members, copies of our newsletters and AGM Minutes and an Archive of past events and meetings, along with photographs. There is a How to Join section, to which you can direct anyone who wishes to join us. The Website is managed by the President and by Committee member, Gilbert Cockton, who is currently refurbishing it, and any queries or suggestions should be directed to them. A University of Cambridge Alumni group page managed by CUDAR also advertises the Association and our events and activities. Find it at <<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/group/northumbrian-cambridge-association>>.

NOTICES

The next meeting of the Executive Committee is on Wednesday, September 18. If you would like any items added to the agenda for this, please notify the Hon. Secretary, Dr Andrena Telford, beforehand. If you would be willing to serve on the committee, please get in touch with the President before the AGM on September 27. The committee remits can be found on the NCA website.

We would love to have **contributions** to the Newsletter from members, whether photographs, personal reminiscences or current points of view. The next Newsletter will appear in January 2020. If you have a contribution you can offer, please send it to us by December 15. The address for the editors is: Bill & Andrena Telford, Ladywell Cottage, 24 West Road, Ponteland, Northumberland NE20 9SX; Tel.: 01661-825437; Email: aeandwr.telford@btinternet.com.