

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

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Hello Members.

This will be my last Newsletter Report as Chairman as I retired from the position at the AGM on 10th April. I will, however, be continuing on the Executive and as Chairman of the Events and Promotions Group.

I am pleased to hand over to Ian Dods who is from a well-known, old Berwick family and is a past Chairman of the Chamber of Trade and President of the St. Andrew's Club.

There is reason to feel optimistic about developments in Berwick with the Coastal Communities Team and their projects, the Berwick Regeneration Commission and the Berwick Welcome Visitor Project - it is to be hoped that these will all progress well. The Barracks Project has recently received additional funding and, through the Berwick Regeneration Commission, it is hoped that major investment for the Town can be secured through the Borderlands Growth Initiative and the new North of Tyne arrangements.

Personally, I hope that the natural and built assets of Berwick, which

really appeal to visitors, are not spoiled. My own favourites are The Walls and the aspect of Spittal Point and across the Estuary. Also, the sight on a late summer's evening of a group of swans followed by ducks moving majestically up a tranquil river. For nature lovers we also have the thriving otter colony and dolphins playing on the coast.

The Berwick High street continues to cause concern with more shop closures. Stephen Scott, Secretary of the Chamber of Trade, gave an excellent talk to the Society on the subject of Town Centres in January. Again, writing personally, perhaps the idea of the High Street becoming more residential with a few independent high quality retail outlets and a thriving market is the way forward - moving away from the old idea of town centres being centres of mass retail units and more thinking in terms of being places where people live and meet. Unlike some towns, Berwick has superb architecture.

On 30th January, I presented The Civic Society Award to Berwick Academy Student, Anna Young who is a Year 13 student and is aiming to study Primary Education at Durham University. Her outstanding work for the outside

community includes raising funds for The Sick Children's Trust, Bloodwise, Macmillan Cancer Support, the Berwick Foodbank and the BBC Children in Need.



Zoreen presents Anna with the award

Last year we gave a donation to the Tweed 1000 Tapestry Project and last summer this was followed by the Tapestry being worked in The Main Guard in August and September by Anne Wadey and Jo Hart. On 25th March, I was invited to the unveiling ceremony performed by The Duke of Northumberland and The Earl of Home, which took place in the new Visitor Centre in Walkergate - a very enjoyable occasion.

Michael Gallico has done an excellent job in forming a really strong Planning and Development Sub-Committee which meets regularly and gives an official response and opinion on behalf of the Society. We continue to have representation on CAAG.

On Events and Promotions we have had interesting speakers on a variety of subjects and have been well supported with prominent speakers from NCC. The reports on these meetings are included in this Newsletter with different writers this time who were appropriate for the subject.

Following last year's very successful Heritage Open Days, the same, very small team are organising it this year with more interesting sites and tours. Co-operating with the three other Autumn Festivals; Food and Beer, The Film Festival and the Literary Festival has proved to be very valuable and productive. This year is the Twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the restored, Main Guard which was achieved by a great deal of hard work and generosity from members of The Civic Society and other organisations and private donors. I remember the derelict small building standing in Palace Street which has now become a focal point in Berwick's Heritage sites and is, of course, our own Headquarters.

This year we plan to have two new, exciting Exhibitions - Robert the Bruce / The Outlaw King in the Officers Room and a child-friendly exhibition centred on famous

Berwick landmarks, illustrated by, internationally-acclaimed, Tania Willis. We are very grateful to Ian and Sandra Dods, Louise Dryden, John Webster and Madeleine Ferrar for all the initiative and work they have put in.

Cara Lockhart Smith who painted the Elizabethan Map for last year's Exhibition has very kindly given it on permanent loan to the Society and it will be on display on occasions.

Finally, I must thank all those who have supported me as Chairman in all aspects of the Society's work for the last four years. As already mentioned Michael Gallico is Honorary Treasurer and Chairman of the P&D Committee and has done a tremendous job. Also, Vice Chairman, John Webster who operates the Membermojo online membership system, the website and compiles the Newsletter, has done a sterling job.

I hope you all have a lovely summer and I look forward to seeing many of you at The Main Guard Preview Party and other meetings.

EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS

On Friday, 9th November we held our Remembrance Service at The Main Guard, where the 651 crosses had been laid out by the Scouts and the Cubs to commemorate the dead from Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal in the First World War. Many thanks to Paul Marshall and Anne Forbes who supervised the group.

This was the 100th anniversary of the ending of the war and the service was conducted by Canon Christopher Smith and the Rev, John Vilaseca with an address by Peter Walton, Secretary of the KOSB Association. The pipes were played by Andrew Smith and the Last Post and Reveille was played on the cornet by Longridge Towers pupil, William Allis. It was good to see the pupils of Longridge Junior School back this year.



Remembrance Service Day Group

On 7th December we held our Christmas Party in The Parish Centre. The number attending was rather fewer than past years but it was, nevertheless, very enjoyable with a delicious dinner catered by Moira Kay.

The invitation to The Main Guard Preview Party and the calendar of events for the next season is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Zoreen Hill

CIVIC SOCIETY NEWS

ZOREEN'S RETIRAL FROM C.S. CHAIR

The AGM on 10th April saw the retiral of Zoreen from the chair of the Civic Society and her handover to Ian Dods. The vice-chairman, John Webster, spoke of the work done by Zoreen during four years as chairman.

Zoreen gave up a lot of her time over the past four years to the Society by organising speakers for meetings, chairing the executive committee, taking part in various sub-committees, representing the Society on other bodies, and presenting the awards made by the Society over the years.

As if that were not enough Zoreen was very active on the social side organising the Xmas dinner, the Main Guard spring party and other activities. She was not averse to helping out in other ways such as making sandwiches and was always one of the last to leave after clearing up.

It is no exaggeration to say that were it not for people with the dedication of Zoreen, organisations like the Civic Society would cease to exist.

He then presented Zoreen with flowers and wine from the members as a token of appreciation for the commitment shown by her over the past four years as chairman and many other years as a member of the society.



Ian Dods (Chairman), Zoreen, and John Webster (vice-chairman)

HILARY MARGARET WILSHAW

We were very sorry to learn of the death of Hilary Margaret Wilshaw on 26th January this year, aged eighty. She had been ill for some years and passed away peacefully at The Berwick Care Home. She was an Honorary Member of the Society and a former member of the Executive.

Hilary was born in the south of England, daughter of the Rev. Alban Dennington. She attended Kings College, London where she obtained a degree in Theology. This led to many teaching positions and, at one time, she taught in Kenya.

Even as a child she showed a keen intellect and had a great interest in Latin and Greek and Literature with a special liking for Proust.

She came to Berwick in the early 1990's with her husband John, who had formerly served in the Navy. He died in 1996, and thereafter Hilary got really immersed in community life.

She showed a great commitment to the Society and worked really hard in the running of The Main Guard and helping with Events and Promotions.

She donated copies of a book to the Society for which she had assured

got into print; "Discovering Shakespeare; a Handbook for Heretics", written by her great friend; Edward Holmes and which supported the theory that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford was actually the author of Shakespeare's plays. These were distributed at our meetings and were for sale in The Main Guard.

Hilary was an extremely kind and generous person - a true Christian, intellectual, eccentric and dear friend. She will be greatly missed.

Zoreen Hill

UPDATE ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

You may be forgiven in wondering what has become of the neighbourhood plan given that it now three years since the public meetings were held to gather the views of residents on how they would see Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal develop.

A lot of effort has gone in from volunteers working in a number of subject areas including Built Environment, Natural Environment, Housing, Employment, Sustainable Transport and Tourism.

NEW ONLINE MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

Last year saw some delays due to changes of government policy in a number of planning issues, which meant that some of the reports had to be reworked to take account of these changes.

Last year also saw the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group merged with the Town Council Planning Committee to ensure the plan had buy-in from councillors and to take on board their views.

It was also necessary to consult with interested parties (I hate to use the word 'stakeholders') on some issues and this is now complete.

The good news is that a consultant has been employed to pull all the documents together into a final report, which should be ready by the second half of 2019. It will then go to the Town Council for approval then to public consultation so please keep an eye open and respond as appropriate.

The Neighbourhood Plan will stand alongside the Local Area Plan and must be used by developers at the planning stage to ensure that they come up with ideas that meet the aspiration of residents as regards appearance and land use.

John Webster

This is to advise in advance that the Civic Society has started using a new online membership database called 'membermojo' that I have configured in recent months and to let you know what it does for us.

The benefits to the Society include the following:

- (1) We now have a single centralised database holding membership details rather than struggling with multiple spreadsheets.
- (2) Emails can be sent out very easily to all members as you will have noticed in recent months.
- (3) It handles payment processing in an automated way, so simplifying the work of the treasurer.
- (4) You, as a member, can check and amend your membership details at any time (see below)

I will write in the autumn newsletter about how renewals will work from now on.

John Webster

CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP RECORD

You can now view your membership details at any time by going to

<https://membermojo.co.uk/berwickcs>

It would be worthwhile adding this address to your favourites on your computer.

You just need to enter your email address and a link will be sent to you by email.

You can then check that contact details, such as address, phone number etc. are up to date and correct if not.

Remember that if you change your email address then you can log in at any time before the change to add the new one to ensure continuity.

Please give it a try

John Webster

ARE YOU GETTING SOCIETY EMAILS?

If you are not receiving occasional emails from the Civic Society reminding you of forthcoming meetings or changes to the programme then it is probably because we have no email address on record for you.

There are about twenty members on the new membership list with no email address in addition to a few others that we know do not use email.

If you are not receiving emails, have an email address, and would like to be included then simply send me an email saying that you want to be added to the mailing list.

Send your email to:

john.webster.balerno@btinternet.com

Thanks

John Webster

RECENT TALKS

THE RAILWAYS OF BERWICK - PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE



The holiday season at Berwick in the 1900s, with a train of East Coast Joint Stock carriages under the overall roof, and trolley-loads of luggage. *John Alsept*

Berwick Station - c 1905

There was an excellent turnout for the talk on 14 November when **Paul Tetlaw** delivered a well-illustrated talk about the railways of Berwick. The talk started with mention of two leading engineers in the early days of rail, George Stephenson and his son Robert who contributed so much to the construction of the early network, including the magnificent Royal Border Bridge. Prior to its construction trains came north to Tweedmouth or south to Berwick when passengers had to transfer to horse and carriage for the trip across the old road bridge to continue their journey. The opening of the Royal Border Bridge allowed a non-stop journey from London to Edinburgh, which led to

the infamous Railway Races to the north when the east and west coast companies competed to achieve the fastest time, often taking considerable risks in the process.

Paul showed interesting slides of what we have lost since the 1900s in terms of connectivity with the disappearance of the local lines that ran, for example, from Berwick up the Tweed to Norham, Coldstream, Kelso and beyond. Or the line that ran from Berwick to Coldstream then turned south to many stations including Wooler, Alnwick then onto Alnmouth. Paul also spoke of the line that served Tweedmouth Docks and showed an interesting early photograph of the railway sidings that used to run along the river side at Eyemouth, along with photos of typical NBR locomotives of the period.

Also of interest was a timetable for the Edinburgh to Berwick train leaving at 8 am and stopping at 19 stations on the way to Berwick including Inveresk, East Linton, Reston, Ayton and Burnmouth. Mind you, the train did not arrive at Berwick until 10.35 but this would have been wonderful in the age of the horse and carriage. Another fascinating slide showed Berwick

Station in the early 1900s, with a much larger covered station. The scene is a hive of activity with masses of baggage waiting to be loaded on the train by many porters and a crowd waiting to board the train. Halcyon days indeed!

Paul then moved on to mention Nigel Gresley and his development of the A4 Pacifics which more closely resemble locomotives as we know them today with streamlined noses and capable of speeds in excess of 100 mph. We now arrive at the glamorous era of mass tourism and the railway companies fought for business using the iconic posters that are still popular to this day, employing first-class artists to paint locations along the route or depicting seaside fun or sophisticated living. It was in the inter-war years that dining cars became commonplace with fine menus served up in restaurant cars, with waiter service, quality wines and excellent food cooked on board. An interesting publication of this era lists hotels in Berwick including the "Avenue Hotel" and the "Rum Punch Restaurant".

The talk then came up to date with an overview of the infamous Beeching report on "The Reshaping of British Railways", which led to the demise of hundreds of miles of local railways in the belief that the future lay with the automobile. British Rail fought

back with the introduction of the Inter-City 125 services, which were probably among the best in Europe in the post-war period, and the transition from steam to diesel then electric. The privatisation over the period 1994-1997 has actually been followed by massive growth in patronage and equally massive investment in infrastructure by the government, more than would ever have been given to the state run company. Investment in stations like Kings Cross and St Pancras has delivered world-class facilities. Finally, Paul mentioned the new services that will serve Berwick in the near future by ScotRail and Trans-Pennine Express and the arrival of faster trains next year with the introduction of the Azuma Fleet by LNER.

The talk was followed by a lively questions and answer session which had to be drawn to a close otherwise it might have gone on all night. John Webster, Vice-Chairman of the Civic Society thanked Paul for a really interesting and entertaining talk.



The Coronation at the Border

CIVIC SOCIETY HEARS IDEAS FOR THE HIGH STREET



On the 23rd January, **Stephen Scott**, Secretary of the Chamber of Trade led a discussion on ideas to regenerate Berwick High Street at a, very well-attended, meeting of the Berwick-upon-Tweed High Street. It was a particularly opportune time to discuss this with recent media coverage about the problems of town centres across the country and the Government's High Street funding initiative.

Tony Kirsop, Community Regeneration at NCC was also present and explained that the local authority was only able to put forward a bid for one place in Northumberland for this funding and, incredibly, shop occupancy rates in Berwick and elsewhere in Northumberland are higher than in many other places which was good

news in one sense but may put us at a disadvantage against other places in the country we would be competing against for this funding. Tony Kirsop also emphasised that the government are looking at ideas that are not focused on retail to regenerate town centres given the changing ways we shop with pressures from out of town retail parks and the internet.

Stephen Scott led a very interesting and lively discussion with a good input from members of the audience.

There was agreement that absentee landlords are a problem and questions were asked about whether the local authority had powers to apply a premium to business rates when properties are empty for a prolonged period of time. It was pointed out that any plans for the Town Centre need to take into account that average wages in Berwick are very low.

Other ideas raised included; A 'Centre/Museum of Light' to utilise empty retail space and at the same time create something unique; use of space to help promote and celebrate the regions food heritage; a shuttle bus service to bring visitors from the out of centre retail parks; an indoor/all weather market, removing the 'modern' unit

currently occupied by Sports Direct & Santander to open up the square between there and the Malting; creating a Gallery in the Town Centre to promote local artisans, to create a workshop for local artisans work and an area where group sessions involving the public could be held; the Tourist Information Centre to be returned to the Town Centre; Pedestrianise Marygate (a show of hands was called and approx 50% of the audience was happy to consider the idea of pedestrianisation of part of the Town Centre); closing Marygate to traffic when special events are held; providing regular Street Entertainment; a 5 star restaurant in the Town Centre, a Park & ride to alleviate parking problems in the Town Centre and an Indoor food market using shared space/costs (the butter market under the Town Hall was suggested as an ideal location for this.

The issue of the shortage of accommodation in the town, especially at certain times of the year and when big events are on was raised although it was acknowledged that the new Premier Inn would help alleviate this. Also mentioned were the problems of Traffic flow from north and around the entrance

to Castlegate car park creating a "bottleneck".

Stephen Scott also spoke of the need to get more urgency and drive behind the Heritage Hub idea for the Barracks to create a major attraction for the Town.

Georgina Hill

QUESTION TIME ON TOWN REGENERATION

Berwick-upon-Tweed Civic Society's meeting on the 13th February hosted two speakers; **Ken Dunbar**, the Managing Director of Advance Northumberland (Northumberland County Council's new Regeneration Company) and **Tony Kirsop**, Community Regeneration Manager who works closely with the Berwick Regeneration Commission and local groups such as the Coastal Community Team. The theme of the evening was; "Berwick and how to regenerate a Town".

Ken Dunbar started off by setting out what he considered to be the meaning of Regeneration; which he said, using the R's, was about -

Renew, Revitalise, Reform, Rebirth, Reshape and Reconnect but too often it is about Remorse.

In terms of the decline of Town Centres, Ken Dunbar assessed this as being a result of years of neglect by successive governments since the 1970's, the emergence of out of town shopping caused by a weak urban planning system, the failure to address systematic collapse in a world that had moved on from local to global and a tendency to design places around the motor vehicle. He highlighted the "emerging death knell" of the rise of internet and online shopping.

Ken Dunbar then discussed how to start the path to regeneration, bringing out key points such as the need to really know the place and the people who live in it, regular and high quality research including in relation to the surrounding area, building a vision and setting out where you wish to arrive at in set time periods and focusing on animating - "creating vibrancy, a destination and an experience".

In something which Tony Kirsop also highlighted, Ken Dunbar emphasised the need to re-think the high street not so much in retail terms but as places for socialising and living.

Commenting on the rich architectural heritage in Berwick, Ken Dunbar referred to the "in between architecture"; as well as the buildings themselves regeneration involved considering how spaces are used and perceived. He also added that the approach should be an "asset based" one - that towns, like Berwick, should be; "capitalising on strengths" and it is not about; "immersing in the gaps and weaknesses".

Finally, he advised of the importance of using policy levers to support the regeneration agenda, to aim for balance and a fusion of physical, digital and experience, relentlessly pursuing investment around the priorities for regeneration and to create a growth mindset - "selling" an area by promoting "future truths" for which you are striving for.

Tony Kirsop, started his presentation by setting out the current role and focus of the Northumberland County Council Regeneration team which includes working on the economic strategy delivery plan, identifying corporate programmes and external funding opportunities, strategic transport, employability and inclusion and the large potential regeneration investment through North of Tyne

Devolution and the Borderlands Growth Initiative.

Tony Kirsop also set out the emerging priorities of North of Tyne devolution which are job creation for the area with higher pay levels, better opportunities through education and training with a big emphasis on building strong partnerships with employers and business. There is also a focus on creating; "Places where people want to live" which requires more affordable housing and the creation of vibrant communities that provide choice and inspire pride. There is also an emphasis on connecting communities through good quality digital connectivity and local transport.

In terms of the Borderlands Growth Deal, he set out the plans for major growth in the borders region of England and Scotland which involved several different priorities including enterprise, innovation, transport connectivity and employability and inclusion.

Regarding Berwick, Tony Kirsop referred to the Northumberland County Council and Berwick Regeneration Commission bid for major funding for a new theatre and conference centre with news on this due shortly. He also discussed the future high street

fund, a government initiative and other potential funding for Berwick for the much needed uplift for the High Street here.

Tony Kirsop also set out how community regeneration was being led in other towns in Northumberland and the use of town forums and similar partnerships in the twelve main towns, engagement with the network of parish and town councils, the promotion of town and investment programmes and support to the voluntary sector and social enterprises. He explained that the range of help available from the NCC community regeneration team includes business support and help with governance and funding bids.

Following the presentations there was a lively discussion and plenty input from the audience about where assistance was required in Berwick and other ideas for regeneration and economic growth.

Zoreen Hill

PRIESTS' WHORES, OR PARAGONS OF PIETY?

Dr Anne Thompson visits Berwick regularly, recently she launched her book 'Parish Clergy Wives in Elizabethan England' (available from Amazon) at a meeting of Berwick Civic Society in Berwick Parish Church Centre on 13th March.

To set the scene: In 1525, former Monk and religious reformer Martin Luther married former nun Katharina Von Bura, their marriage becoming an iconic episode of the Protestant Reformation. Many of Jesus' followers and The Apostles were married, Matthew writing of Saint Peter's Mother in law, one contemporary recording that Peter had to watch his own wife put to death.

As the Christian Church developed, Priests were expected to be celibate even if previously married. Clearly many were not, for in 530 Emperor Justinian had to declare all marriages of clergy void and any children of their union illegitimate. Over the centuries Roman or Latin clergy married, by the 10th C most rural and many urban clergy and bishops, many fathering children.

In 1139 the Second Lateran Council banned clergy from marrying and yet many clergy

continued to enter into relationships resulting in children, including six Popes, some of their children becoming Priests and eleven sons of Popes became Popes. Pope Benedict VIII banned all clergy children from inheriting their Priestly father's lands or property, which were to be taken under church control.

The English Church Reformation came under the rule of Henry VIII. English Catholic clergy had largely remained unmarried but not always celibate. Henry's 'Six Articles' reaffirmed clerical celibacy. Given the relative conservatism of the times, any women who associated with Priests were considered to be worse than of no worth and given unflattering names.

Edward VI repealed the six articles and so clergy were free to marry. However, this permission had no model, no job specification and the only women willing to marry Priests were said to be "disreputable women, desperate widows, women of low social status and illegitimate daughters of clergy."

Then Catholic Queen (Bloody) Mary took the throne and reversed the Reformation, demanding a return to clerical celibacy, ordering all married clergy to divorce in order to stay in Holy Orders. On Mary's demise, The Reformation was reinstated by her daughter Elizabeth I who tolerated clergy marriage, though many clergy

seeking out their former wives found that they had remarried.

Dr Thompson's book comes in at this point and describes how, under Elizabeth I the status and role of clergy wives began to develop. She gives a wealth of contemporary accounts from the times with fascinating details.

It was hard for parishes to openly welcome these new clergy wives into full society, given previous public opinion of women who associated with clergy, also to provide houses for clergy families and sufficient funds to pay them. Similarly for parishes today, except for Roman Catholic congregations where their clergy remain celibate in a household sufficient for one man alone.

Anne's research reveals Elizabethan records of parishes gradually encouraging clergy to marry. The profiles including - "Honest, discrete and sober women, Godly, pious" and "perfect pearls of precious purity, subject to her husband, who dress in decent attire according to her calling."

The gifts of such women then began to be appreciated, not only in supporting their husbands but also in encouraging parishioners, involving themselves in public life and pastoral ministry as counsellors and Godparents to children.

All of this laying the foundations for today's modern clergy wife, each in their generation bringing their own distinctive and respected gifts to parish life.

Canon Alan Hughes

Alan added the personal note that follows by way of illustrating the theme of the talk in today's world.

I have been particularly fortunate. As a mature student of 24 in Scotland, being Anglican and not Church of Scotland, I was not eligible for any grants.

After our marriage in Edinburgh Cathedral by Bishop Kenneth Carey my wife Susan taught Art to pay my way through four years of training, then subsidised my curacies and continuing parish ministry unselfishly through her employment and family legacies.

A patient and prayerful support, welcoming callers to our open house at all hours of day and night. Sunday School teacher, church Council member, writer of baptism and marriage registers, church cleaner, flower arranger, creator of prayer cards and sketches of churches and mother of two, grandmother of four.

As we approach our Golden Wedding I thank God that I did not minister in the pre Elizabethan times which Dr Anne Thompson records in her book.

OTHER ITEMS

HOW WELL DO WE KNOW OUR AREA

A few random thoughts from a bear of little brain to encourage your own research. There is no evidence of Homo Sapiens or Neanderthal Man in Scotland during the interglacial periods and, during the last ice age, the sheet was five miles deep over Scotland, reducing to three miles when it reached what we call London, 'man' only entering our land as hunter gatherers over the last 10,000yrs.

We can visit 5000yr old Edin's Broch just over the Border into Scotland, cup marks and carved circles at Roughting Linn south of Berwick from the same period. There are many ancient burial mounds throughout the north of England, long or circular 'Barrows' rough constructions of earth and stone 2.5 metres high, 8 to 16 metres in diameter. They were built to hold cremated remains sealed in earthen pots, dated by carbon 14 test to around 1800 BC,

The Bronze-Age. Bronze-age man gradually cleared oak forests between the Tweed and Humber in order to cultivate land, raising sheep and barley, hence our own Bar-Wick, the place of the Barley.

Trading swords of bronze, knives of flint and jet ornaments for gold from Ireland and stone battle axes from Scandinavia, our forebears wore woollen dress buttoned down the front and hunted deer, wild bulls, wolves, wildcats and pigs amongst the oak trees.

After the Bronze-Age came Iron man, somewhere around 800 BC and his age continues into our own as we develop his discovery of extracting metallic content of ironstone. In 1836 the Danish archaeologist J.C.Thomsen defined three technological ages of man, Stone, Bronze and Iron, we often refer to the inhabitants of his third age as Ancient Britons.

Their new technology helped revolutionise the clearing of forest and cultivation of land by introducing iron scythes, axes, hoes and ploughs. Defence against invaders was strengthened by iron swords, spears, daggers and shields but The Romans had more and better weapons and were better organised. The first written records of our area were left by the Romans in the 1st century, but their interest was easily distracted by problems at home. Alaric the Goth had attacked Rome and so Emperor Honorius headed home to help and

left the Britons to fend for themselves. Picts and Scots scaled Hadrian's Wall and laid waste the north of England.

In 446AD the Britons sent a message to the Roman Governor of Gaul (France) begging help, this letter came to be known as 'The Groans of the Britons'. The Governor had his own troubles with Attila the Hun and was unwilling to weaken his position. Vortigern the then leader of the Britons turned to the Saxons over in Germany for help, which came in the shape of an army led by Hengist. So began another milestone in our history, the union of the Anglo-Saxons, which was to last with one or two rude interruptions by the Vikings, until the Norman Conquest. With good reason, these times came to be known as The Dark Ages.

Hengist liked what he saw over here and summoned his brother, they seized the entire country for themselves, chasing the Scots and Picts back over the wall and the Britons into remote corners of the land. Legend has it that King Arthur fought a famous battle at Mount Baden in 515AD leading the Britons to Victory over the Saxons. It is thought that Mount Baden is what is now known as Eston Nab at Eston in Cleveland, there is certainly evidence of a Saxon Camp there.

Any victory was short lived however; the Saxons eventually

triumphed and set up government throughout Britain by dividing it into seven distinct Kingdoms known as The Saxon Heptarchy. The last and largest of these was North-humber-land.

This Kingdom was itself divided into two smaller units, Bernica between the Tweed and the Tees and Deira between the Tees and the Humber. Deira was Saxon for 'wild beast' perhaps reflecting the abundance of those animals which were hunted there in our oak forests.

Alan Hughes

BERWICK ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Evidence of Berwick's past comes about from archaeological activity. In the past it has sometimes come about more randomly.

In 1935, demolition of an old granary behind the King's Arms Hotel revealed a network of subterranean tunnels. The suggestion was made that the carts bringing in hay from the surrounding countryside brought in more than hay: that whisky was stored there before being smuggled over the Border. The siting of the cellar directly below the old stables would seem to support this contention.

In 1937, workmen making a sand pit in Spittal uncovered a number of bones and skeletons. These were thought to be burials from the medieval leper hospital known to have been there.

Another chance discovery as a result of work in Dunlop's shop revealed a "*pile of small silver coins, slightly larger than a sixpence*" from the reign of Henry VI and showed the king with "*hair plaited over his ears*". There were

about thirty coins stored in a neat pile.

Another reminder of this era was a cannon ball unearthed at the waterworks and possibly the skull found under the floor of a Bridge Street baker.

Another skull surfaced bizarrely when hooked by an M.P. fishing the Lennel.

Michael Cullen

The Berwick Civic Society

is a Registered Charity (No. 508953)

Website: www.berwickcivicsociety.org.uk

Office Bearers 2019-2020

Chairman.....	<i>Ian Dods</i>
Vice-Chairman.....	<i>John Webster</i>
Hon. Treasurer & Membership Secretary.....	<i>Michael Gallico</i>
Hon. Secretary.....	<i>Vacant post</i>
Newsletter & Website.....	<i>John Webster</i>

Please feel free to email any Officer of the Society using:

contact@berwickcivicsociety.org.uk

Membership application can be made from the website using the *'Join Us'* link

The Society is organised as several committees to manage its various activities:

Executive - the above office bearers and other Society members

Events and Promotions - organising the programme of talks and social events

Main Guard - planning exhibitions and managing helpers during the summer opening days

Planning and Development - responding to planning applications

Publications - preparation and sale of guides and other material published by the Society