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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello Members.

The Main Guard party at the end of May was a great success, nearly eighty members attended along with the Berwick Civic Party and the Civic Head and Deputy Head of Northumberland County Council.

Member's Louise and Bill Dryden and their daughter Rosalind organised a fantastic buffet and lots of refreshments, a good time was had by all.

This year's exhibition in the Officers room, The Outlaw King in Berwick, was suggested by Sandra Dods, and a new children's exhibition in the Soldiers room, organised by John Webster and Madelaine Ferrer, featured medieval Berwick with attractive and informative artwork by Tania Willis.

In July I attended Longridge Towers school Founders Day with Zoreen Lady Hill and then represented the society at the official opening of the new Visitor Centre in Walkergate, Chris Hardy is to be commended for this privately funded venture.

This summer the society has supported local events with donations to help with costs.

Berwick is showing signs of improvement and hopefully work will start on the development of a new hospital on the existing site.

Empty shops are being let so that is great news and The Borderlands Growth Deal is another source of investment for the town.

Also the Harbour Commission have been awarded a grant to replace the damaged alignment pier which is vital to the survival of Tweedmouth Dock. The project had been delayed by English Nature who wanted an ecological survey done.

I would like to thank everyone who has worked hard to make the Civic Society a vibrant and important part of Berwick. In particular, Michael Gallico our Treasurer, John Webster who looks after the newsletter and IT systems, and a welcome to Anne Humphrey who has taken on the role of Secretary. Without you all the society could not carry on.

*Ian Dods*

## EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS

On Wednesday, 8th May we held the postponement talk from the AGM given by James Lowther, Head of Visual Arts. It was well worth the wait - James' theme was "Sense of Place; Artists and their Responses to Berwick" and, in particular, he described the exhibition on them due to held in The Granary of Turners paintings - Northern Exposure has been much acclaimed.

The Main Guard Summer Exhibition Preview Party on 30th May was attended by about eighty guests which included The Civic Party - The Mayor, Anne Forbes, her consort Tony Forbes, The Sheriff, and Sheriff's lady; Mr and Mrs Martin Warner.

This was regarded as one of the best ever parties with a delicious buffet organised by Louise and Bill Dryden and Rosalind Dryden. Although, the weather was not all that great, serving the drinks outside proved successful. Sandra Dod's Exhibition on Robert the Bruce, The Outlaw King, has been much acclaimed this four-month season.

On Wednesday, 12th June there was a very lively and interesting "Visions for Berwick" Question Time with panellists; John Bell, Manager of Berwick Youth Project and Chairman of Berwick Rangers, Donna Goddard, Chairman of Governors at Berwick Academy and Andy Richardson, Chairman of the Berwick Harbour Commission.

On Thursday, 4th July, Chairman Ian Dods and Zoreen Hill attended the Longridge Towers School Founder's Day Prizegiving where our annual prize was presented to sixth former, Daniel Caddick for his great contribution to sport especially in coaching young players in cricket and rugby. His own many sporting successes include winning the Guy Comber Spirit of Cricket Award at Tillside in 2017 and the Josh Smith Trophy at Berwick Rugby Club for his significant contribution.

As always, this was a very enjoyable occasion. Eminent cleric, educationalist and broadcaster, Professor Norman Drummond was the guest speaker with the prizes being presented by his wife; Lady Elizabeth.

In 2016 and 2017, Sandra Pendlington of the Richard III Society gave fascinating talks on the history and discovery of

Richard III's remains in Leicester so it was very appropriate that on Wednesday, 10th July this year Paul East, Director of Outland Architects gave a talk on the creation of the Richard III Visitor Centre and the result of further excavations.



### **The new Richard III**

#### **Visitor Centre at Leicester**

Paul and his wife, Susan Hallsworth have acquired the building by the Barracks and the Cowport to run their businesses.

It is now named The Straw Yard and they have done a superb job in renovating the site. Report and photographs concerning this meeting appear in this Newsletter.

## OBITUARY JOHN WHEATLEY BLENCH

The Heritage Open Days took place 13th - 15th September with Berwick; "punching well above its weight" with thirty-eight events in the programme. Linda Bankier had calculated 8,000 visitors came to take part which exceeded the 7,000 of last year.

Some of our members stewarded at other sites but we concentrated on The Main Guard this year with, as well as the highly successful Exhibition on The Outlaw King, we had a children's activity centre in The Soldiers Room where our Children Elizabethan costumes had been returned with quizzes and colouring in sheets. These costumes had featured on the front cover of the HODs Programme. This was all very much enjoyed with an excellent turnout.

*Zoreen Hill*

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Wheatley Blench on 31st May aged 93. There will be those who have an in depth knowledge of his career in academia which saw him leave the old Berwick Grammar as a star pupil to attend St John's College, Cambridge then holding teaching posts in English Literature at Edinburgh and Aberdeen Universities and, finally, at the University of Durham.

I should, however like to concentrate on him being an old family friend and his role in The Civic Society. Away back in the 1950's and 60's, my parents and myself had very enjoyable evenings with Wheatley, his mother Frances Blench and his aunt Elizabeth Fisacerley. The conversation flowed and was extremely stimulating. Wheatley could be very witty and apart from obviously his great knowledge of literature, he was keenly interested in politics, the theatre and showbusiness. A very generous host, we exchanged much hospitality over the years at

dinners, parties and family occasions.

He was a longstanding member of The Civic Society and served on The Executive for some years, becoming Vice-Chairman from 2001 - 2003.

In 2003, he gave a talk entitled; "Two Otter Men" on the subject of authors, his friend Henry Williamson and Gavin Maxwell.

On another occasion he spoke on the well-known 1950's writer and broadcaster, Alan Melville who came from Berwick and was related to the Herriot family. At one time he wrote our reports for the Berwick Advertiser.

One of Wheatley's great passions was the Church and nearly all his life he was a dedicated High Anglican, many times in the past taking part in the service ceremonial.

However, there was always the impression that his leaning was towards the Catholic Church and two months before he died he converted while still retaining his affection for The Church of England.

His funeral took place on 17th June in St Cuthberts RC Church in the High Latin Mass Rite and he

was interred in Berwick Cemetery. To quote one of Wheatley's favourite sayings; "He had gone to his account". **Zoreen Hill**



*J W Blench*

*by*

*Brita Granstrom*

*owned by Peter Maule*



## THE MAIN GUARD - volunteers needed next year!

Against the southern rampart is the Main Guard, the only remaining one of four guardhouses that stood inside the gates of the town. The Main Guard building as we know it today dates from 1743. It was originally situated in front of the town hall and subsequently moved further up Marygate to the top of East Street. As a result of traffic congestion in 1815 it was moved from Marygate to its present site.

Although the Main Guard is now owned by English Heritage, Berwick's Civic Society holds it under license as their headquarters and maintains it as a museum during the summer months. The museum is in two sections: one room is devoted to the history of the town and the other houses a special exhibition that changes every year or two depending on the efforts of members. The museum is staffed by volunteers and is open daily (except Wednesdays) 1pm-5pm, from 1st June to 30th September with the opening period split into two 2-hour shifts.

There is however a **big** problem that is growing with the years and that relates to a shortage of volunteers from the membership to man the Main Guard during the summer season. It relies on a small group of individuals at the moment, willing to give up a couple of hours every so often but this year, for example, Zoreen Hill and Bob Steward in particular were occasionally on duty as much as five times in a week, due to a lack of volunteers.

This clearly is not fair nor sustainable and it may be that the community will eventually lose this popular visitor attraction unless more volunteers come forward to give help on occasion. It is not an onerous task and only involves being at the Main Guard for a couple of hours now and again to chat to visitors if required, and collect payment for the various guide leaflets and other items on sale.

**I appeal to members to come forward and put their name on a volunteers' list that will be used during the 2020 season by the co-ordinators,**

The way it works is that they phone up volunteers a week or more ahead to ask when available so that a rota can be created for the weeks ahead. If there are a good number of volunteers, then any individual may only be called upon once a month thus spreading the load fairly among members.

Please add your name to the list by contacting Zoreen on **01289 306 196**

*John Webster* (vice- chairman)



# CIVIC SOCIETY NEWS

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL USING NEW ONLINE SYSTEM

The way this will work using the new membership system is as follows.

Members using email will receive a reminder at the beginning of December saying that subscriptions are due by the end of December.

Subscriptions are £8 for individual and £12 for joint (e.g. husband and wife).

This email will include a link and by clicking on this you will be taken into your own membership record.

Please check this carefully and if need be click the 'Edit' button to change out of date information like phone number or address etc.

Remember to 'Save' your changes by clicking on the highlighted button when finished.

You will be asked to read the GDPR section then to tick a box to

say you accept how your data is used,

Finally, by clicking the 'Payments' box you can choose how you are going to pay (BACS, cheque). This renews your membership for the year and once your payment is received by the Treasurer your payment will be recorded by him on the system.

By the way, if you have a Standing Order set up then you should not receive an email reminder as your membership will renew once the payment is received.

*John Webster*



## WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T USE EMAIL

Our preference is for you to use the online system described above because it allows you to check your details and update if need be. It also simplifies the work of the Treasurer, myself! by renewing your membership record so that I only need to input your payment when it arrives. There are however a few members who do not use email or computers so here are instructions as to how your membership can be renewed in the traditional way.

There are four ways to renew your membership: the online methods make life simplest:

1. By setting up a standing order to the Society's bank account, to be paid on 15 January. The account is at Bank of Scotland, sort code 12-12-57, account no. 00156361, account name Berwick on Tweed Civic Society.
2. By making an online payment to the same account on 1 January. You can authorise this now and set 15 January for the actual payment.

*If you choose either of the above, please give your surname and initials as the payment reference*

*so that your payment can be identified easily: there are ten surnames shared by at least two different members of the Society.*

3. By sending a cheque or cash to Michael Gallico, 72 Ravensdowne, Berwick TD15 1DQ. No need to wait until 2020!
4. (least favourite) by paying in cash or cheque at either of the first meetings of 2020, on 8<sup>th</sup> January or 12<sup>th</sup> February.

If you joined the Society for the first time in autumn of 2019 your membership runs until December 2020, no renewal needed

Finally, if you decide not to renew your membership please let me know.

***Michael Gallico***

# RECENT TALKS

## THE BORDERLANDS GROWTH DEAL

**Janice Rose**, Head of Economy and Regeneration at Northumberland County Council, gave a talk to the Berwick-upon-Tweed Civic Society on Wednesday 24th April about The Borderland Inclusive Growth deal and the Berwick Theatre and Conference Centre bid which is one of the five main projects.

Janice Rose gave a background to the Borderlands Partnership which is a growth proposition backed by both the Scottish and UK Governments and, as referenced in the 2018 budget, is funded to the tune of £345 million.

She spoke of the area which is covered within the partnership which is the five local authority areas which straddle the border - Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland, Carlisle and Cumbria. This is a geography area, which is in the centre of the UK, around the size of Wales with 10% of the UK land mass but with a population of just

over one million people but is within a two-hour drive for 14 million people.

This is an area, she explained, which has many shared challenges and opportunities. The challenges include a loss of working age population, low wages, digital connectivity problems, a historic lack of investment and shortage of employment sites and issues with transport links. She highlighted how transport links are relatively good travelling north to south but how the network is not nearly as well set up for travelling west to east in the country and certainly within the Borderlands area.

In terms of the opportunities, Janice Rose spoke of the growing base of small and medium sized companies, the range of international companies, the underused strategic sites of national scale, our position and access to markets and natural assets.

She described this ongoing process as a "Unique Growth Deal" which aims to apply a "Border blind" approach and one

which complements the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal and the North of Tyne Devolution Deal. She emphasised that the focus was on rural economic growth and development and about redressing the lack of investment over the past 30 years.

When asked during questions at the end of her talk, Janice Rose, did not feel that the Growth Deal Process itself was at risk from the current political turmoil but said that Brexit has, undoubtedly, taken up a lot of time for civil servants and slowed the process down.

She explained that the capital will only be released following completion of full business cases and then outlined what the propositions were. The programmes eligible for funding are headed - Digital Borderlands, Borderlands Energy Investment Company, Business Productivity and Innovation, Destination Borderlands and Quality of Place.

The Borderlands partnership will also have a role in lobbying government for things which the area need such as around transport (the transport needs such as full dualing of the A1 would take up the entire £365 million so this is treated a "policy ask" as opposed to being able to be funded through

the partnership) and land and marine productivity.

Janice Rose, told the audience that each of the five local authorities have put forward one major bid for a project within their area. Northumberland County Council, backed by the Berwick Regeneration Commission, have chosen a project for Berwick - a new Berwick Theatre and Conference Centre. The projects from the other local authority areas include a Mountain Bike Innovation Centre, the Carlisle Station Gateway and Chapelcross Energy Park.

She said that the key aspects of these projects are that they are capable of being transformational and the benefits will extend beyond just the specific place they are sites.

The Maltings, she said, is currently successful and a new centre for theatre, film, a conference centre and for extended community use ticks all these boxes. She spoke of how Berwick could potentially be seen as being as an extension or mini version of the Edinburgh Festival and there would be other knock on benefits of this. For example, it would help the campaign for better transport links and later trains.

She explained that the detailed business case is still being worked on for this project and no decision has yet been made whether the new Maltings would be a brand new building on a new location or whether the major capital would be spent on extending the existing site with a mixture of substantial refurbishment and new build. She added that she was "95% sure" that this project would get over the line and it will go quiet for a little while all the details are being drawn up and ahead of the next Government Borderlands announcements, likely to be in June.

Janice Rose was thanked by new Civic Society Chairman, Ian Dods for her informative talk and enthusiasm she brings to the table and her work towards securing investment for Berwick which we have been starved of for decades.

***Zoreen Hill***

## **SENSE OF PLACE - ARTISTS AND THEIR REPOSSES TO BERWICK**

**James Lowther**, Head of Visual Art at Berwick Visual Arts, gave a fascinating talk to the Berwick-upon-Tweed Civic Society on the evening of Wednesday, 8th May entitled; "*Sense of Place - Artists and their Responses to Berwick*".

In an illustrated presentation, James Lowther displayed works of art by artists in Berwick including; Mike Nelson, Louise Cattrell, Paul Housley, Virginia Bodman, Fiona Crisp, Shona Illingorth, Uta Kogelsberger, Zoe Walker, Marcus Coates, Tacita Dean, Juan Munoz, Dan Graham, Lucia Noguiera, Elisabeth Ballet and Siobhan Davies.

He quoted the mission statement of The Maltings (Berwick) Trust which is to; "...guarantee that residents of all ages and visitors to this beautiful and remote corner of England have easy access to creative events and experiences which inspire, challenge and entertain - and which connect them directly with contemporary culture and debate" which match the

accessibility goals of the Arts Council England.

James Lowther gave an overview of the spaces where art in Berwick is exhibited which includes, predominantly, the Gymnasium Gallery and the Granary Gallery. He also spoke of the, highly successful, "artist in residence" programme where individuals, often from abroad, spend a year in Berwick and capture their "sense of place" which he described as; "the multi-faceted way in which we know notable or memorable places through sensing, experiencing, and remembering a geographical location and its features.

It is, therefore, a combination of our interaction with a physical environment and the meanings that we (as individuals and a society) bestow upon it, at the time or subsequently."

He discussed the exciting programme of upcoming events and exhibitions which include the Turner Northern Exposure at the Granary Gallery which will run between 25th May - 13th October and will be open Tues - Sun between 11am - 4pm. There will also be an event on Saturday, 25th May at 10.30am in The Maltings, "In Turner's Footsteps" to celebrate the launch.

Professor Emeritus, David Hill, who was Harewood Professor of Fine Arts at Leeds University and has researched and written about Turner since the early 1970s, will retrace Turner's footsteps in Northumberland and discover the sites and experiences that transformed a draftsman of architecture into a poet of the sublime.

James Lowther also talked of the excellent work Berwick Visual Arts are doing with the local schools to engage young people with the arts. There is also a programme of exhibitions, tours and art workshops and lectures in partnership with the Berwick Educational Association such as the upcoming lectures with Prof Maria Chester at the Maltings on; "Understanding Turner" which will be held on the 21st June and 19th July.

James Lowther took a range of questions about art in Berwick and was warmly thanked for this excellent and informative talk.

*Zoreen Hill*

## QUESTION TIME VISIONS FOR BERWICK

The Berwick-upon-Tweed Civic Society hosted a “Visions for Berwick” Question Time session at their meeting on the 12th June.

The panellists were Donna Goddard, Chair of Governors of Berwick Academy, John Bell, Manager of the Berwick Youth Project and Chairman of Berwick Rangers and Andy Richardson, Chairman of the Berwick Harbour Commission.

**Donna Goddard** gave an overview of the work being done to improve Berwick Academy and her personal commitment, as a parent and resident, to see major improvements. She gave an honest assessment of the financial and other challenges but spoke of the reasons for optimism. She highlighted the recent good news with the announcement that Northumberland County Council have committed a minimum of £15 million to a new school building. She also mentioned the support and funding from the local County Councillors for the refurbishment of their 2G playing pitch.

**John Bell** told the meeting of the Berwick Youth Project’s plans for the old Berwick Community Centre which has hit some feasibility obstacles and that the BYP was now considering the Old Brewery in Tweedmouth as an alternative location.

He also spoke of the disappointment of Berwick Rangers relegation from the Scottish League and plans for the future with the best chance of bouncing back being next season but he pointed out the high standard in non-league football and leagues like the Highlands division.

**Andy Richardson** spoke of the Scottish Government and Tweed Commission plans to reduce the season for net fishing which will have a significant impact on the Berwick netting station, Gardo. He pointed out the inconsistency between the Tweed Commission recommending this measure in the interests of salmon conservation with the fact they are now challenging the other part of the proposal which is to reduce the season for fishing by the spin method.

Andy Richardson also gave a candid account of the challenges facing the Harbour Commission

including delays and extra costs imposed by other bodies such as the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) following the award of the Coastal Community Fund Grant of £2m. He spoke also of the current opportunities especially those presented by attracting cruise ships to Berwick.

There were a range of interesting questions and a lively discussion after the presentations.

*Zoreen Hill*

# OTHER ITEMS

## BERWICK BARRACKS - WHAT'S HAPPENING?



With so many other projects affecting Berwick currently on the boil - such as the town branding exercise, the new sports centre and the plans for the new hospital, to name but a few - it's difficult to keep up. Not surprisingly, members of the Civic Society have been asking me - 'So what's happening about the Barracks?' I welcome this chance to bring everyone up to date.

Those with good memories will recall that in February of this year, English Heritage Trust - EHT, the charity which owns and manages the Barracks - announced that it had received a Resilient Heritage grant of £69,500 from the National

Lottery Heritage Fund. Together with significant funding from EHT itself and a modest contribution from other partners, this would allow the Trust to take the lead in developing the next stage of the project to transform the Barracks, enabling EHT and its partners - Northumberland County Council, Museums Northumberland, the Trustees of the Kings Own Scottish Borderers' Museum, the Maltings (Berwick) Trust and Berwick Museum and Archives Action Group - better to tell the dramatic story of Berwick and the Eastern Borders, and in the process creating an anchor tourist attraction to help drive Berwick's economic regeneration.

So what exactly is a Resilient Heritage grant? And why do we need yet another set of consultants examining the Barracks?

To answer these questions, we need to step back for a moment. Everyone who knows the Barracks will acknowledge that the site is large. It's also complex, both physically and in terms of the number of partners providing attractions there. Earlier work on



the project has confirmed that it will need very substantial capital investment to re-develop it. Particularly given current economic uncertainties, finding that money is going to be a major challenge. A phased re-development of the site is likely to be necessary, potentially involving a mix of public and private partners. And even when that re-development is complete, there will be yet more challenges.

How can the refurbished site pay its way - that is, be financially sustainable - into the future? And how can it best be managed so as to deliver a positive outcome for all the partners? In short, how can the Barracks become a resilient heritage resource into the future?

Potential funders have made clear to the project team that they will be reluctant to commit funds unless these questions can be answered convincingly.

So in order to work out the way forward and thus strengthen the business case for investment in the site, EHT, with the help of the National Lottery Heritage Fund's grant, has commissioned three pieces of work, looking respectively at:

- The Collections held by all the partners already on the site (and by Berwick Record Office, as a prospective partner).
- The Conservation issues to be addressed, not only in relation to the Barracks but to EHT's substantial other responsibilities in Berwick.
- Options for the long-term Development and Governance of the site.

These three pieces of work involve three different groups of consultants, each with appropriate expertise. They are keeping in close touch with each other, under the oversight of a steering group chaired by Andrea Selley, Director of EHT's North Region. Everyone involved is working to the same end - to help determine the most imaginative and viable option to secure the long-term future of the Barracks.

Briefly, and taking each strand of work in turn:

- The Collections review is looking at the management and storage of the collections held by the partners, analysing their significance and considering how they can best be presented to the public.

- The Conservation review is looking at the constraints and opportunities presented by the site, including heritage and health and safety issues.
- The Business Planning and Governance strand is examining such questions as:

1. *How can the partners exploit the enormous significance of the site, the collections and stories they tell, reflecting the role they play within the changing destination of Berwick?*
2. *How can the partners develop a sustainable financial model which is both ambitious and realistic?*
3. *How can the partners secure the substantial levels of capital required to transform the site and allow it to realise its potential in the ever more difficult funding climate that they are all facing?*
4. *What is the most effective and sustainable operational and governance model for running the future Barracks?*

The project steering group is aiming to pull the results of all this work together by the end of March

2020. This will then enable EHT and all the partners to decide how best to proceed and to prepare the convincing business case needed to secure the necessary investment in the site.

Two other brief but important points. First, the steering group and all of the consultants are trying to ensure that they consult all relevant stakeholders - including, of course, the Civic Society - as the work proceeds. But if you have views or practical suggestions to make, please make them known to me or to Sophie Howard (the manager of the Resilient Heritage project, who is based at the Barracks - [sophie.howard@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:sophie.howard@english-heritage.org.uk)).

Secondly, this is not all that is currently happening or planned to happen in and around the Barracks, to exploit the heritage of Berwick for the benefit of the town. EHT is working with the Civic Society to produce a self-guided tour of the Ramparts and their surrounding features. The partners are looking at ways of bringing more activity onto the site, to build on the success of the Food Festival and the recent Tour of Britain event. And later this autumn we will be turning our minds to how best we can mark the three

hundredth anniversary of the opening of the Barracks in 1721.

I look forward to reporting where we have got to when I speak at the Society's meeting in March next year.

*Philip Mawer*

## WATER AND SQUABBLES IN 19c BERWICK

Berwick was often short of water in the Nineteenth Century. Nor was what available often very desirable.

In 1846 the Mayor deemed it to be *'in such a filthy state as to be literally unfit for human use'*. This prompted the Town Council, which doubled as the Board of Health, to invest in a reservoir.

A site was chosen, the New Farm, and an engineer of some repute, Rawlinson, engaged to see to it. It did not though fulfil expectations. It leaked prodigiously, at a rate measured a little later at two gallons a minute.

It prompted a satirical ballad, one verse of which ran:

*The saw a vast expanse of mud*

*Dried by the solar beam*

*Through which there ran, in  
devious course*

*A tiny, thread-like stream*

Rawlinson was livid at being held up to ridicule with bottles being *'paraded through the town'* and the Town Council, often testy over criticism - it had a go at the Berwick Advertiser for calling its members 'know-nothings' - tried against all evidence, to maintain all was well.

The upshot was regular cuts to the supply, sometimes for six hours but at others the Bellman would give notice of no water tomorrow. Blocked pipes were a part of the problem. A frog, a rat, and an eight-inch trout were found in them in 1873.

What with the coal gas also getting into the water it was no surprise that the Chemistry lecturer, Dr Stevenson, found the waters *'unwholesome and positively unfit for domestic use'*. The state of the water was thought to be the cause of frequent intestinal troubles. Many went to Tweedmouth to get cleaner water. Indeed, tenders were put out for this purpose.

## NORTHUMBERLAND'S EARLY HISTORY SAXON AND VIKING TIMES

In 1903 the Town Council began consideration of a Joint Water Scheme. This quickly proved highly contentious, in part owing to a lamentable measure in 1875. That had been for Berwick's three wards, North, Middle, and South, to be rated separately, in part to save Berwick the cost of repairs to Spittal's roads, heavily used by factory traffic. This could not but sow division!

So it was that the North Ward maintained it did not need to participate in the scheme, claiming its water was adequate. It became bitter with Town Council behaving *'like a lot of quarrelling schoolboys'* and some being asked to leave a Public Meeting. Finance in the end compelled reconciliation as a local government loan would only be given with agreed and detailed plans. In January 1913, Cllr. Cowe cut the first sod of a new borehole at the Tower Works, a mere ten years after the scheme had first been presented to the Town Council.

*Michael Cullen*

No one knows for certain precisely when Christianity first established places of worship here. It is probable that Christians came with Roman merchant ships. St Columba brought Celtic Christianity to the Isle of Iona off the Scottish mainland from Ireland in 563AD and St Augustine Roman Christianity to Kent in 597. The decision which should hold sway over Northumberland was made by Oswald after winning the Battle of Heavenfield in 634, declaring himself to be a Celtic Christian King. Oswald had an Abbey built at Whitby in 658 and, ironically, it was there that Abbess Hilda presided over an historic council in 664 which decided that Roman Christianity was to be the form recognised throughout England. The Celtic Saints were banished to the far north.

The Saxon Heptarchy was not a success, forever at war within itself. When the Vikings laid siege to Lindisfarne in 793 they met with little resistance and marching south they laid waste the countryside. A second wave in the form of The Viking Great Army of 866 further reduced what was left of Deira, the land between the Humber and the Tees. The Vikings built their own settlements,

leaving us place names today with their own 'by' (farmstead) signature on the end. Saxon churches and monasteries were burnt, lands and intellects left uncultivated.

The Vikings eventually moved south, leaving the Saxon remnant free to rebuild their small communities. Fortunately for those living in southern Britain, King Alfred the Great defeated the Danes in a series of battles which drove them north once more much to the despair of the Saxons.

The last and most powerful Viking in the north was Siward, declared King of Northumbria. He terrorised the north but had one redeeming feature, like the Romans before him he kept the Scots and the Picts out of his territory. Siward died in bed in 1055 shortly before the Norman conquest and was succeeded by Earl Tostig, who was killed at Stamford Bridge near York shortly before the Battle of Hastings. King Harold made Morcar, brother of Edwin, Earl of Mercia, the third Earl of Northumbria.

After Harold's defeat by William Duke of Normandy, Earls Morcar and Edwin had to give up their land but were allowed to retain their titles. William gave Gospatric charge of both the land and armies of Northumbria. He was the son of Maldred, brother of Duncan, the father of King Malcolm of Scotland

and Gospatric was to be grateful for his Scottish connections.

William was crowned King by Aldred Archbishop of York. His armies did not necessarily fight for the love of William, they were hired mercenaries and wanted payment. William levied severe taxes, especially in the north which led to considerable unrest. There then followed an uprising against him when news spread that Swein the Dane was returning. Swein landed by the Humber but was defeated. Now distrustful of the north, William sent Robert de Comines and seven hundred men to secure Durham and take over as Earl of Northumberland. In January of 1069 Robert crossed the Tees into Durham. killing anyone he found. At Durham a large army was rallied which destroyed Robert's band. Only Robert and an aide survived the slaughter, they took refuge in a house but were discovered, the house was burnt and as they tried to make their escape both were beheaded.

Gaining in confidence, the rebels mustered support all the way back to York. They trapped the Governor of York Castle outside the city walls and killed him. Word was smuggled out of York to William that the only Norman Garrison north of the Humber was now under siege. William realised that Edwin and Morcar had turned against him, and were plotting with Gospatric. He made a terrible oath to avenge his dead

kinsmen in York and Durham. William was given to making oaths and often began them with the words "By God's splendour ....." this time he added "I will harry the north!"

Thus began an infamous chapter in our history known as 'The Harrying (or Harrowing) of The North' of 1069AD. "For 60 miles between York and Durham every village was deserted and scarce a house left standing, the whole district being reduced by fire and sword to a horrible desert, smoking in blood and ashes. The land lay uncultivated for nine years, and a dreadful famine ensued, which reduced the wretched inhabitants to eat the flesh of dogs, cats, horses and even human carcasses, multitudes lay on the ground unburied, and the few that escaped the sword perished in the fields overcome with want and misery." (The Reverend John Graves)

Gospatric fled to Scotland to seek refuge with his kinsmen. He survived for a time in Scotland, producing a son and heir named after him. It was this Gospatric who witnessed the Charters granted to the Abbey of Scone in 1115 and Holyrood at Edinburgh in 1128. His son, Huchtred in his turn had a son who styled himself Helias de Dundas, having obtained a charter from Waldevus, son of Gospatric his uncle. This document, dated 1145 AD is thought to be held to this day by

the Dundas family. The present Marquess of Zetland is the 28th in direct lineal descent from Gospatric, the Earl of Northumbria who stood against William the Conqueror. His father once told me that his son David Dundas, now Earl, earned more money for writing the song for the blue jeans advert 'I pull my blue jeans on' than his father ever did from his land holding.

The very last stand of the Britons against William was at Coatham Marshes on the Tees, where arrow heads are still found to this day. It is said that, had there been a remnant of Britons able to ambush the vulnerable William at Bilsdale near Helmsley following the Coatham battle, history would have taken a different turn. Making his way home through the Dale, William was caught in a spell of freak weather, an unseasonable snow storm and separated from his army, left with only six men to guard him. Even today farmers in Bilsdale have a saying for someone on a cold day "swearing like Billy Norman" apparently passed down from father to son. After Coatham, the desolation of Northumberland, from Bernica to Deira was complete. In 1070 King Malcolm of Scotland was able to wander south without challenge and destroyed any remaining villages, taking advantage to make the invasion he had feared to mount in 1058. It may have been this period which led to the naming

of Northumberland as 'any man's land.

*Alan Hughes.*

## SHOULD WE WORRY ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING?

It was back in 2006 that Al Gore first raised the issue of global warming in his video presentation "An Inconvenient Truth". It caused a great deal of debate at the time mainly because the effects that he described were only just becoming evident to scientists.

It was met with a hostile response from the fossil fuel industries, despite the fact that we now know that they were already aware of some of the adverse effects on the planet but put profit before people in much the same way as the tobacco industry did some decades earlier as regards the health dangers from smoking.

Sadly, this is still going on with gas from fracking being sold as a 'clean' fuel, which of course is nonsense because a tonne of carbon dioxide from burning gas from fracking is just as damaging to the planet as a tonne from burning coal.

More interesting are the climate change deniers, including the current US President, who seem oblivious to the effects that are now alarmingly obvious to anyone with a rational outlook on life. These deniers must surely offer an interesting case study for psychoanalysts as to why their minds work in this way although it has to be said that they are often the same people who believe that aliens built the pyramids despite the existence of architects' plans from the time, along with items such as set squares, levels, and other tools that have emerged during excavations.

So was the much-decried Al Gore right or wrong in his predictions of what would happen if atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations carried on increasing and given that critics said his predictions were alarmist and that much of his data was invalid.

A 2017 study looked at Al Gore's 2006 work and came to the conclusions that "*The basic truth, and its inconvenience, remains, In fact, it is clearer than ever that greenhouse gases are a major cause of the observed climate warming.*" and that "*the dire observations made in the original "An Inconvenient Truth" remain mostly on the mark*"

In other words, Al Gore got it more or less spot-on when he highlighted that atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations were increasing due to fossil fuel consumption and when he tried to identify the impact the subsequent warming would have on the planet. It is no longer controversial or alarmist to describe this warming as an existential threat to life on earth if nothing is done.

A decade or so ago we relied on the measurements of scientists using data from satellite or from field stations to provide the first evidence of the changes that were happening but I think most of us can now see with our own eyes that the climate both here and abroad is changing at a rapid and terrifying pace.

Storms of increasing frequency and severity throughout the world; intense rainfall that used to be a rare event now becoming commonplace even in the UK; long-lasting droughts that are leading to desertification and driving the mass migration of millions; melting ice caps and diminishing glaciers.

So, going back to the question in the title of the article - should we

worry about global warming? The answer is a definite YES because if we do nothing then the results will be dire due to perfect storm of outcomes such as the flooding of coastal communities from rising sea levels; dramatic reductions in crop yields, an effect already being seen in global markets; huge costs repairing infrastructure damaged by extreme weather events.

*John Webster*

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