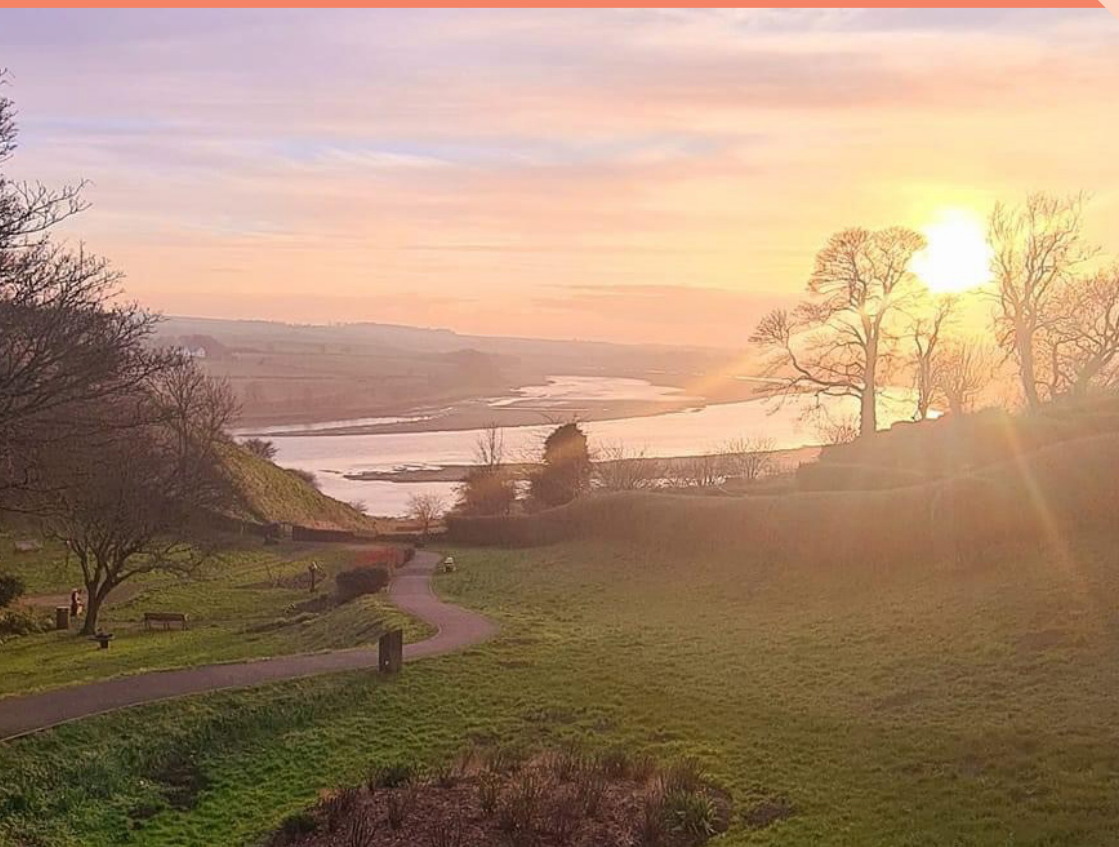


BERWICK-UPON-TWEED  
CIVIC SOCIETY



SPRING NEWSLETTER

2024



*Berwick Parish Church © Canon Alan Hughes  
[See Coldstream Guards article]*

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**Cover Photo by Tommy McLeod**

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello Members,

Since last December's Newsletter, all aspects of The Civic Society have been progressing really well with the Executive and Sub-Committees having a strong, experienced and well qualified membership.

In Planning and Development, Brian Gowthorpe continues to raise the Society's profile and represents us on important committees and groups in the town.

After the 'Heritage in Partnership' event last October, I am pleased that our cooperation with other societies and organisations, already quite strong, is growing.

In Events and Promotions, we have had interesting and well attended meetings. Sandra Gann has provided excellent write-ups which appear later in the Newsletter.

The Christmas Party was held for the first time in the Tweedmouth Bowling Club, a lovely venue with excellent catering - we shall hold the event there again this year.

The 2024-2025 calendar is enclosed with the programme of events and speakers. The Heritage Open Days event takes place on 6th – 15th September. Part of the Programme will include a talk by the Georgian Society's Honorary Archivist, Gilbert O'Brien who, until recently, lived in Berwick and was a member of our Planning and Development Committee. We shall be delighted to meet him again.

The town is really gearing up for the Berwick Bridge 400 celebrations with the main events on the 3rd and 4th August. This year's Main Guard Exhibition will be having this as its theme along with the other bridges. We look forward to seeing many of you on the 24th May at the Preview Party.

I must express my thanks to all who have done so much on the committees and been a great support.

Much appreciation goes to the Treasurer, Bob Humphrey, who has done an excellent job keeping the finances in order! I am sure that Anne and Sandra will be superb in their new roles as Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Mark Dodds has recently joined the Executive. He is an experienced Town Planning professional and will be giving a talk next year on the 'Health of the Town Centre'. He has taken over the Historic Town Map project and is hoping to help with the elusive Neighbourhood Plan.

Although, I am stepping down as Chairman of the Society, this is not quite a valedictory report as I shall still chair the Events and Promotions Sub-Committee and be a member of the Executive and Planning and Development Sub-Committee.

I am delighted to be handing over to Anne Humphrey who has been a superb Vice Chairman and Hon. Secretary. We have worked closely together and she has already been much involved with all aspects of our work especially The Main Guard, our events and instigated the Historic Map Project.

It is pleasing to see the great success of the new Leisure Centre, when Leisure Centres across the Country are being forced to close, and the new Hospital seems to be progressing well.

However, there seems to be some uncertainty over the current big projects of The Maltings and The Barracks. It is hoped that 'the powers that be' realise the tremendous asset that they are to the Town and beyond, and their potential, and ensure that funding is secured.

Personally, I also hope that the new two-tier system for the schools in Berwick is a success and the infrastructure is fully funded to produce a much enhanced education experience for our children and young people.

At the time of writing, there are three elections coming up - in May, for the North East Mayor and Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner and, of course, a general Parliamentary election in the coming months. Next year, there will be Local Council Elections. The political scene could be a very changing landscape and we hope whoever is or remains in power will recognise Berwick - its assets and potential.

As always, we are very grateful to Suzanne and Bryan Stanley for editing and compiling the Newsletter so beautifully.

With very best wishes to you all - I hope you have a lovely summer.

*Zoreen Hill, Retiring Chairman*

## HON SECRETARY'S REPORT

I would, firstly, like to thank the members who have taken offices and positions on the various committees which is greatly appreciated by the Civic Society. **We are still looking for an Honorary Secretary and if anyone is interested, please contact anyone on the Executive Committee; this also includes anyone wishing to join a sub-committee.** The sub-committees play an important and integral part in the Civic Society.

The Main Guard Berwick Bridges Exhibition is progressing and the committee is working very hard to get it ready for the Preview Party on Friday 24th May 2024. Our thanks go to those who have volunteered, and to the organisations and members who have loaned items for the exhibition. Hopefully, we will have another successful season.



The new opening hours for The Main Guard will be 12:00pm to 4:00pm, closed Wednesday.

We are delighted to be part of the Bridge 400 celebrations and are looking forward to the celebration weekend on 3rd-4th August when the whole town celebrates.

*Left - Berwick Old Bridge by Angus Hamilton.*

We are looking for more Stewards that weekend as The Main Guard will be included in the celebration areas.

We will also again this year be participating in the Heritage Open Days and will be looking for extra Stewards. This seems to be a theme - where would we be without our dedicated Stewards!

The Planning and Development Committee under the chairmanship of Brian Gowthorpe is studying and commenting on local planning applications. We are very lucky to have such highly qualified and expert team members, who are highly regarded.

The Events and Promotions committee have put together a great diary for 2024-25 of varied and interesting talks for members and non-members, and we look forward to the combined meeting with the History Society in October. It is always an enjoyable event and working with other organisations is heartening in strengthening bonds.

The Society's thanks go to Bryan and Suzanne Stanley who work so hard on our newsletter, it is very much appreciated.

I have left the best till last, Zoreen, Lady Hill retired as Chairman, what can one say about our Colonel in Chief? Your dedication to and hard work for the Civic Society knows no bounds. Zoreen saw the Society through Covid and all that this brought with it. She made sure that we kept going and that The Main Guard was able to open again. The Executive are delighted that she agreed to stay on the Executive Committee and is Chair of the Events and Promotion Committee. We are so very grateful to you for everything that you do on our behalf and the way you represent the Society, but most of all we appreciate your friendship. Thank you.

*Anne Humphrey, Hon. Secretary*

## HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

Those of you who were at the 2024 AGM may well recognise some of what follows!

The Society's finances remain relatively healthy, and we do everything that we can to keep our costs as low as we possibly can. Our 2023 accounts show that we actually made a small profit of just over £200. Which sounds good and much better than the £3,000 loss that I projected this time last year. However, within that profit are:

- A donation of £500 to the Historic Map project
- A bequest of £1,200
- A credit of approx £900 to our electricity account by Scottish Power to correct their incorrect billing from 2021-22.

If we take all of these out of the picture then our true position for 2023 looks more like a loss of around £2,400. However, we are fortunate in that we have sufficient funds to be able to carry this for the foreseeable future.

I did send out copies of the 2023 accounts prior to the AGM, but if anyone didn't receive these, I'll be happy to send a copy on to you, and to answer any queries you might have.

I would like to thank Jim Waugh for once again examining our accounts; it is very much appreciated.

**Bob Humphrey, Hon Treasurer**



## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

2024 has seen us continuing to attract new members, with 7 joining since the previous Newsletter. Thank you to each of those new members for joining; I hope that you are all enjoying the talks and also that you will be visiting the Main Guard exhibition over the summer. Thanks too to all of you who have been members for longer. We currently have 186 members plus five other organisations which is a very healthy number.

Sadly, two of our members have died recently: Audrey Conway and John Johnston. Our condolences go out to their families and friends.

I know that I have said this before, but it remains true; it is our members who make the Society what it is. We are exceedingly grateful to everyone who helps out in some way: committee members, Main Guard stewards, contributors to newsletters, helping with talks, the Remembrance Service, the list goes on. So, if you think there is something you would like to do to help, please let me or indeed any Exec member know. It's all about spreading the load.

Annual subscriptions were due on 1st January. The vast majority of you have renewed, but there are still a small number outstanding. If you are one of these you should be getting emails from me about this directly. Subs remain the same as in 2022, namely £12 for a joint membership or £8 for a single.

As I said at the AGM, I will be looking at the level of subs for 2025 over the coming months as I'm aware that they haven't changed for some years.

As email is the quickest and most effective way for us to contact you, it is really helpful if we have your email address. For the majority of you we do have one, and you'll know that we have it because you'll be getting notifications coming through. For some of you we don't though, and indeed there are a few where the address we do have is bouncing back to us. If you're not seeing the notifications, then please let me have your correct email address. That would be very helpful. Thank you.

**Bob Humphrey, Membership Secretary**

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT UPDATE, SPRING 2024

The Civic Society's role in Planning & Development has gradually expanded since Brian Gowthorpe, a retired Chartered Surveyor, agreed to lead the Committee in 2020. His background in property investment, development, heritage and climate change adaptation is complemented by the wider skills of the dedicated Committee members, including town planning, housing, building conservation and extensive local knowledge. We have adopted a relatively formal approach to reviewing and commenting on planning applications. Wherever possible we try to encourage appropriate and carefully designed development, but constructive criticism is often called for. We aim to do this as calmly, professionally and authoritatively as possible.

The Committee regularly comments on draft legislation and guidance, and has produced short guides for building owners considering planning applications for new doors and windows. The Committee has carried out a study of holiday accommodation in Berwick and is working to further develop a 3-D digital model of our town, as well as a shops database which will inform a wider town centre health check. The Committee liaises with the Conservation Area Advisory Group, the planning team at Northumberland County Council and the Town Council. Brian Gowthorpe represents the Civic Society on the Berwick Town Forum and on a recently-formed small local group advising The Maltings on its proposed redevelopment.



*Marygate, Berwick - proposed conversion to 4 flats and small shop*



*West Street, Berwick - approval granted for conversion to 5 new 2-bed flats*

In the last six months there have been a lot more planning applications than usual and the planning authority generally seems to be dealing with them more rapidly. The last three-year period has seen significant growth in applications and approvals for residential conversions above and behind retail and bank premises on Hide Hill, Marygate and West Street. Many of these are permitted development, but some are listed buildings and external alterations generally require planning applications because the buildings are in the Conservation Area. These various approvals should bring several long underused or semi-derelict spaces in the town centre back into productive use. The majority look likely to be holiday flats but this is part of the range of accommodation required by visitors to the town. Some of the new flats would not be ideal for full time residents because of poor outlooks and limited daylight, so short-term letting may be more appropriate.

## LOOKING THROUGH BERWICK'S WINDOWS

*A presentation by Annie Robinson, January 2024*

When did you last give more than a passing glance at any of the beautiful stained-glass windows in many of Berwick's buildings? That was the question that we asked ourselves following Annie's comprehensive, educational and fascinating talk about the history of glassmaking and stained glass, the stories of the glaziers responsible for such skill and craftsmanship over the centuries, and finally a closer look at many examples of beautiful stained-glass windows in Berwick today.

The earliest glass makers were the Mesopotamians, a thousand years or so before the Egyptians and Romans, who excelled in the making of small coloured glass objects. The basic methods of glass-making have remained unchanged since then when glass was made by melting sand, potash and lime together in clay pots and fused at high temperatures. It was coloured by adding metallic salts and oxides during manufacture.

Stained-glass windows, where small pieces of coloured glass are crafted into patterns held together by strips of lead in a rigid frame, were first seen in Italy, France and Germany. One of the first such windows in Britain was created in 675 CE by French glaziers in the monastery of St Peter in Monkwearmouth in 'pre-Roman' style. Annie described the development of techniques in the manufacture of glass over the following centuries which enabled glass to be produced with different qualities and different colours and styles reflecting the historic period. The medieval period was highlighted as a time of great glass manufacture. It became an art form, initially used in biblical illustrations to inform a mostly illiterate population. The Victorian times saw a revival of glass-making techniques widely used in the Arts and Crafts movement with names still familiar to us, such as William Morris, Louis Comfort Tiffany and Charles Rennie McIntosh.

With the Old Bridge in Berwick celebrating its 400th anniversary this year, Annie next described the story of glass-making from James 1 in 1615 (who prohibited the use of wood as a fuel for glass as there was a shortage of timber at that time) to important glaziers and their families in the North East, showing us many illustrations of their styles and techniques.

Last, but not least, we were shown illustrations of the many stained-glass windows in Berwick from the 17th C to modern times, and the impact of the window tax 1696 – 1845. Her research into the stories of the glaziers that were behind these windows was fascinating and it's good to know that she is producing a map of these sites in Berwick.



Finally, it was a privilege to be shown a preview of Annie's work developing a stained-glass window triptych commemorating the Old Bridge's 400th Anniversary. Her passion and knowledge were evident throughout her talk and her display of glass objects and reference books collected over 30 years was much appreciated by the audience.

*Sandra Gann*

## AUSTRALIAN ODYSSEY – TWO REMOTE ADVENTURES IN THE OUTBACK

*A talk by Gwen & Antony Chessell, February 2024*

Gwen and Antony introduced two contrasting talks, one of an adventure in South Australia into Queensland, and the other to the far north of the Northern Territory on the Arafura Sea.

Gwen told us about what was supposed to be a round camping trip with brother-in-law, Don, in his well-equipped Toyota Land-Cruiser, stopping at different points on the way: up the Birdsville Track via Cordillo Downs to Innamincka, and then back to Adelaide down the Strzelecki Track. It turned out to be something rather different due to heavy rain, wind and mud, adverse conditions marking the end of a long drought. Leaving Adelaide before dawn, the first 418 miles brought them to Marree, an important junction for two outback tracks, famous as trading routes for Aborigines before European settlement and then for Afghan camel trains and cattle droving. Leaving Marree and starting up the Birdsville Track, it was another 500 miles to Birdsville. Gwen



touched on the history and cultural beliefs of the Aborigines as she described the Cooper Flood Plain. In the evening, they camped in the bed of Cooper Creek, unpleasant but the only place that offered some shelter.

*Left – Birdsville Track, Lake Harry ruins*

An uncomfortable night in pouring rain forced an early dash to the Mungerannie Roadhouse, the only place for fuel, food and beds on the Track. Here, all sorts of dripping wet and bedraggled travellers appeared out of the gloom. Evidence of the sad story of failed settlement, ruined homesteads and graves was all around this otherwise most welcome haven.

Next day, the rain had eased, although the track conditions on the 319 miles to Birdsville left a lot to be desired. Stopping at the Mirra Mitta bore, the importance of the Great Artesian Basin and bore holes were mentioned as was Captain George Sturt's expedition which did much to open up the outback for settlement, and then through the Gibber Desert. That night was spent in the atmospheric Birdsville Hotel before next morning negotiating the challenging conditions of the Cordillo Downs track to Innamincka. They arrived just ahead of the next rain-storm, the Toyota plastered from roof to wheel arches in mud, and the inside of the vehicle a brown twilight. The next day the sun came out and they rested on the banks of Cooper Creek for a couple of days doing a bit of fishing and exploring while dwelling on the tragic tale of the Burke and Wills expedition to cross Australia. Leaving Innamincka, the way home to Adelaide was down the Strzelecki Track through the Cobbler Desert, via the Aboriginal Ochre Quarries, to the start of the sealed road at Lyndhurst and the final 'camp' for the night in the comfortable quarters of the Parachilna Pub, and thence to Adelaide. The great outback camping trip had turned into the great outback pub crawl.

Then Antony told us of a visit to the 'Forsaken Settlement' of Victoria at Port Essington on the Coburg Peninsula in the tropical far north of Australia.

*Right – Victoria Settlement, Hospital and Kitchen Ruins.*

This was the site of a British military settlement garrisoned by the Royal Marines and their families from 1838 until 1849 and named in honour of the new Queen, Victoria. It was intended to establish British possession of the north of Australia, to protect traders and trading routes in the area against pirates and foreign



competition, and block any territorial ambitions of the French and the Dutch. There had been two previous attempts to establish settlements on Melville Island and at Raffles Bay, Port Essington. The initial military and civilian population of Victoria was 48 and, during the eleven years of its existence, it remained below 100 except when supplemented by the crews of visiting and protecting ships. At first, the people were

housed in prefabricated buildings made in Sydney but, later the Marines, aided by convicts, constructed stone buildings with the married quarters being in a Cornish style with round chimneys.

The long-abandoned site is situated in a National Park jointly managed by a Board consisting of traditional Aboriginal land-owners who have Native Title and representatives of the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. Permits are necessary in order to visit the site which is not easily accessible except by 4-WD vehicle or by light aircraft followed by a lengthy boat trip with the aid of a bush guide. Antony described the Wilderness Lodge where they stayed and the deceptive appearance of the apparently tropical paradise with its hidden marine hazards such as crocodiles, box jellyfish, cone snails, sharks and stingrays. The ruined site was described, its history explained and details given of the struggle to maintain the settlement under conditions of heat and humidity which, at times, were almost unbearable for its inhabitants. Expectations were unrealised and malaria and other diseases took their toll with a mortality rate of one-quarter of the garrison and their families. Eventually the Colonial Office decided that no foreign power could take possession of these northern lands without infringing British sovereignty. Also, there was no longer any trading or revictualling reason to maintain the lonely outpost and the decision was made to abandon the settlement; the garrison sailed away on 30 November 1849. The site retains a haunting atmosphere to this day with its forgotten tombs, its crumbling ruins, the encroaching, trailing vines and spear grass, all creating an aura of sadness and desolation. It was a rather sombre return to the Wilderness Lodge, followed by a torrential tropical downpour which added to the subdued mood.

## QUESTION TIME PANEL

*March 2024*

We were delighted to welcome three speakers, each giving a presentation vital to the growth and economy of Berwick-upon-Tweed. It was interesting to contrast the perhaps more prosperous tourists that we welcome into our area with the needs of the homeless and disadvantaged in our community, and in particular the impact on future life chances for the children in these groups.

**Jackie Brothwood, Director Engage-Ed Ltd**

Jackie told us that Engage-Ed is an alternative, unregistered school hub, run as a private business, in partnership with other Berwick schools. It provides opportunities for those disadvantaged pupils who are unable to benefit from mainstream education to gain formal qualifications through a non-formal learning approach and to be able to participate in society as equal citizens. They may have been partially or wholly excluded



from mainstream education or disadvantaged by adverse childhood experiences. They may present as vulnerable, uncommunicative and hostile to an apparently alien society. Statistics demonstrated the impact this situation would have on their adult life outcomes, even leading to criminality.

Engage-Ed currently has 20 mostly male students in the 12 – 16 years' age group. It offers 18 hours of specialist schooling over a 3-day week. It provides all students with a flexible and innovative education programme tailored to meet their individual learning needs and styles. It offers a nurturing environment, albeit with strict boundaries. It ensures that each pupil has an education based on the National Curriculum with a foundation of Maths and English which will enable them to return to full-time education and have better future employment opportunities. Students have participated in community schemes where this is appropriate. Jackie's passion stems from her own experiences of education and employment. She gave examples of two of their successes - one pupil going on to study music and another achieving two A levels.

#### **Neil Carney, Head of Destination, Visit Northumberland**

Neil provided us with statistics showing the important contribution visitors make to the local economy: in 2019 Berwick received £56m from 500,000 visitors, 100,000 of them staying for 3 – 4 nights, accounting for £40m spent. Berwick is the fourth most visited place in Northumberland and research showed that visitors come for culture, history and landscape.

This provided the background to the work of Visit Northumberland, its priorities being to provide leadership and engage with all agencies in the tourism field. We saw the significance of having visitors stay for longer periods, and to this end we must have a 'product' to sell, with good publicity structures using websites and the media to reach a wider audience, as well as access to a good visitor information venue in every place.

This year Visit Northumberland is promoting tourism on the theme of Places compared to previous campaigns which had promoted Activities. It is important to have a feature of the town that can be a visitor draw, and with that in mind, the concept of a 'Living Barracks' featuring history and culture as well as entertainment and visitor facilities was seen as an asset. Neil, like many of us, is not a native Northumbrian but came to this area and 'was bewitched by its magic'; he wants to share its assets in a way that will also benefit the community.

#### **Michael Farr, Executive Director, Bernicia**

Michael's statistics demonstrated the fact that homelessness is a national as well as a local issue. In Northumberland alone in 2023 12,500 people were seeking accommodation. We were reminded of the impact of homelessness on health and the effect on other life opportunities, particularly for those 140,000 children nationally who are living in temporary accommodation.

Bernicia has welcomed NCC's backing and financial input, together with other partners, to enable it to build 58 affordable new homes in Berwick. Bernicia's £13m scheme will see a mix of 2- and 3-bed bungalows and 2-, 3- and 4-bed family homes built on the site of the former Seton Hall at Tweedmouth. The houses, with affordable rents or shared ownership, are aimed at local people in all age groups.

Michael addressed facing the challenges causing the housing crisis, including population increase, growth of second homes and airbnb, the Right to Buy and the new regulations meaning that many private single property owners were dropping out of the lettings market. Looking to the future there must be a long-term Housing Plan with reforms of the regulations affecting this sector. The ultimate aim is to achieve the balance between want and need.

*Sandra Gann*

## **THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**

*A presentation by Geoff Seddon, Volunteer Speaker, April 2024*

We were pleased to welcome Geoff Seddon and hear his excellent presentation on the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in this the 80th anniversary year of D-Day.

We have seen the small simple white headstones that mark the graves of people of every rank, class and ethnicity who have lost their lives fighting in the two World Wars, but Geoff's talk opened up the massive worldwide background work of the CWGC in their undertaking to ensure that every casualty of war is recorded and commemorated, whether in large monuments with many names, memorial grounds, gardens or individual gravestones in small churchyards, of all of which are maintained for today and the future. This includes honouring the 600,000 people lost at sea.

In 1914 a mobile ambulance unit run by the British Red Cross arrived on the Western Front. It was headed by a former civil servant and journalist named Fabian Ware who at 45 was too old to join the Army. Saddened by the improvised nature of burials and grave marking, Ware lobbied higher authorities to turn his unit into a dedicated team. This small beginning led to the CWGC being formed, now a global organisation in 23,000 locations in 150 countries. In Britain the total dead from the two world wars is 1.7 million, although only 1.1 million have headstones, illustrating the many that have not been found or identified. The workforce numbers 17,000, the majority of whom

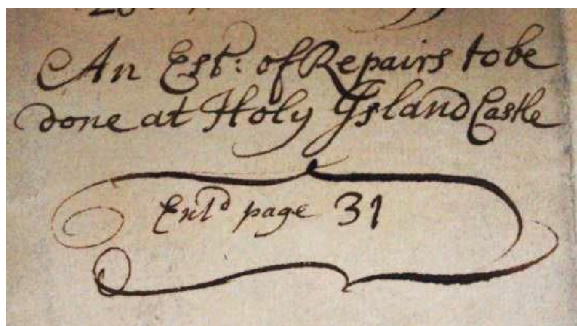
are gardeners and stone masons. Designated people in each region are responsible for checking and maintaining those individual graves that are situated in local churchyards. The work includes repair and reconstruction of graves that have been damaged. Work continues to be done on locating, exhuming and identifying bodies which continue to be found. Funding is provided by the member governments of the Commonwealth nations who share the cost of the Commission's work proportionately to the number of their graves.

Geoff then gave poignant examples of the new CWGC app which enables one to find the story of any person on their records. One can also use the app to insert a location to find a list of graves in an area and the people commemorated in them. Finally, we were reminded that the work of the Commission is dependent upon the contribution of Volunteers. Its website gives further information of opportunities to participate in any way and also about the special free events and activities arranged for the Commemoration week in May 2024 at <https://www.cwgc.org>

*Sandra Gann*

## THE ERRINGTON AFFAIR: THE FALL OF HOLY ISLAND CASTLE, OCTOBER 1715

*A presentation by Nick Lewis, May 2024*



*Re-pointing of embrasures on the lower battery in 1699 © Newcastle City Library*

These included plans, surveys and inventories of arms which did not change until the 20th century. Beckman also investigated the rightful owners of guns purchased by Collingwood from inauspicious sources.

In 1549 Lindisfarne Castle – a fort with a fortified harbour - occupied a strategic position against the attempted French invasions. It remained a military site until the 19th century. In that time there was only one occasion when it overcame an attempted siege.

The Glorious Revolution in 1688–89 resulted in the Roman Catholic Stewart King James II England & VII Scotland fleeing to exile in France. James' daughter Mary and her husband William ascended the throne. However, they were Protestant and eventually the House of Hanover succeeded, Protestant but German. It was James II's son, James Stewart, who initiated the Jacobite rising in Scotland in an attempt to regain the throne for the Stewart line. It was against this background of conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics that the Errington Affair happened. Lancelot Errington, a Northumbrian Master Mariner (but known smuggler and gun runner) was one of a number of Northumbrians who supported the Jacobites. A plan was hatched to gain access to Lindisfarne and to this end on the 10th October 1715, 'The Mary', filled with goods including brandy, anchored in the harbour.

Lancelot Errington had known the Master Gunner in his previous role as a barber, and hoped his past connection would allow easy entry for himself and his nephew Mark. However, he was at lunch and they were asked to wait.

Losing patience, they fired guns and proclaimed the castle for the Jacobites. There followed a tale of many skirmishes between the Jacobite invaders and the defenders of Lindisfarne. The Jacobites were disappointed in hoping for reinforcements from the French anchored nearby, and with the help of a detachment of men from Berwick the castle was finally reclaimed. The Erringtons fled but were captured and imprisoned. Undeterred, with the help of conspirators, they burrowed out of prison and escaped by boat. Eventually Lancelot Errington was pardoned and became a publican until his death in 1745.



*Buck's Castle 1728 © Nat Trust*

However, it was the need for a review of the defences of Lindisfarne, both the buildings and the armoury, following this attempted invasion which was the most positive outcome of the Errington Affair.

*Sandra Gann*



## Berwick Parish Church & The Military

*Berwick's USP is its uniqueness, not least in its Parish Church and its military associations*

Berwick has been a military garrison town since medieval times, under Elizabeth I second only in importance to Calais in defending the nation against the French and the Scot.

The original Church was a poor building, which King James condemned as unsuitable for his military garrison ordering a new build. Nothing happened until The Commonwealth, when the present Holy Trinity became the only PARISH church built during Cromwell's time to his wishes, no spire, bells, statuary or altar. Others were built but in the traditional royalist style or as Roundhead private chapels.

Monck's Regiment of Foot, later to be renamed The Coldstream Guards, was founded south of Berwick, out of five companies of Governor of Berwick Colonel Fenwick's men and five from his father-in-law Arthur Hasselrig. They entered town as plans were underway for a new church and helped by leading stone on flat carts from the then ruined Castle. Fenwick helped further by telling Parliament he feared an attack, begging funds to buy provisions; he used this money to build the church. Hence the memorial to Fenwick in Church: "principal instrument in causing this church to be built, a good man is a public good" and the appropriateness of the Coldstream Colours gifted by Queen Elizabeth II placed over their founder's memorial.



Guards hence the wish of Queen Elizabeth to grant us The Regimental Colours. Oral

The Coldstream should have been called The Berwick Guards. On marching to London and restoring the Monarchy, The King asked "where have you marched from?" Having adventured around Scotland pausing at Coldstream, they answered "Coldstream" to which he replied "Then I shall name you my Coldstream Guards". Charles II asked the wrong question; had he asked "where were you raised?" their name would have been Berwick Guards.

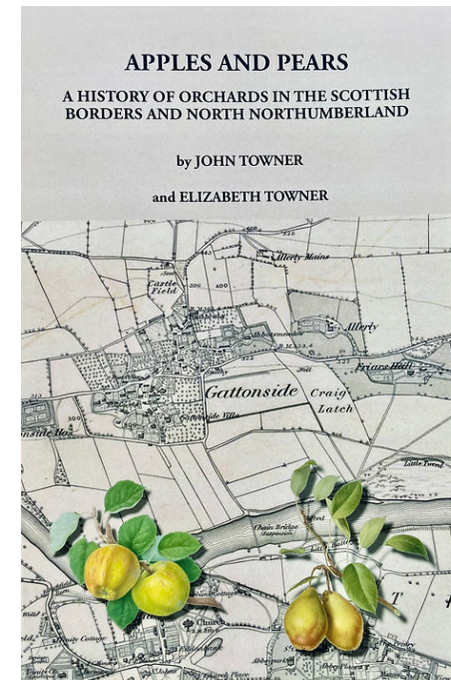
Berwick Parish Church is the founding Church of The Coldstream

history is vital, how many remember their march through Berwick in 1950 or more recently in 2000 and 2009? The Coldstream Guards are the longest continuously serving Regiment in The British Army and not only guard Royal Palaces but serve on operations. A number of the Guardsmen who marched through Berwick in 2000 and 2009 were killed on active operational service. Men of the Regiment visit Berwick Parish Church regularly as can be seen from Regimental social media posts.

**Canon Alan Hughes, Coldstream Guards and The Parachute Regiment.**  
**Proud to live in the grounds of Colonel Fenwick's Governor's House.**

## Book Review

### "Apples and Pears": a history of northern orchards



Our general assumption is that the southern counties - chiefly Kent, Hereford and Worcester - supply and have forever supplied most British apples (though sadly well over 50% of our apple consumption is now imported). However, in their introduction, the Towners cite the People's Trust for Endangered Species, whose nationwide ongoing surveys have traced 100 orchard sites in the Borders and 50 in Northumberland, most now abandoned. It stands to reason that in earlier ages, when transportation and food preservation were difficult, people would have grown apples and pears here, whether as individual trees in domestic gardens, or in larger orchards ("a space devoted to the cultivation of fruit trees") in the monasteries, the walled gardens of country estates, and in town orchards. The book investigates these, century by century, and explores the many reasons for their eventual decline.

The Towners' curiosity was stimulated during the planting of a Community Orchard in their own village (Norham), and by their awareness of an increasing enthusiasm for orchard planting, particularly using old varieties of the pome fruits. The resulting book represents an enormous amount of detailed archival and field research, but is far from



a mere dry survey. As they move through the documented history of apples in the UK from the Romans onwards, they consider the effects of the physical environment, human culture, and how the fruit was used. This results in a fascinating survey of poverty, wealth, fashion, horticultural expertise and plant breeding, the development of specialist nurseries, the celebrated gardeners and nurserymen in The Borders and Northumberland, and the Apple and Pear Congresses of the late 19th Century. These were set up to identify which varieties were grown in Britain, to systematise the naming of them and to assess which varieties best suited different areas of the country. The local statistics are of great interest: for example, to one or more of the national congresses, Paxton House sent 111 varieties of apple, Howick Hall 106, Alnwick Castle and Minto House, each 100, The Hirsell, Coldstream 71 and Haggerston Castle and Mertoun House each 56. Figures for pears are equally interesting – and to us unexpected, given the very limited range of varieties of both fruits we now see retailed [though those of us over 50 can probably still remember a much larger range on sale from our independent greengrocers - I certainly can. SS].



*Scotch Bridget apple at Anton's Hill*



*Norham Community Orchard in spring*

This is such a well-produced book (it even feels nice!), with an excellent range of maps, plans, photographs old and new, botanical illustrations and useful appendices, that I recommend it highly to those with an interest in horticultural, botanical, culinary or local history, and definitely to anyone thinking of initiating a community orchard.

*Apples and Pears: a history of orchards in the Scottish Borders and North Northumberland*, by John & Elizabeth Towner. Berwick: Berwickshire Naturalists' Club, 2024. ISBN 978-0-9516434-9-5. £12 (£10 to BNC members).

**Suzanne Stanley**



*"Old Bridge End" Lithograph by Derek Jones c1985*



*Bridge 400 Committee walk-about with Alan Hughes. © Canon A Hughes*

# The Berwick Civic Society

is a Registered Charity (No. 508953)

Website: [www.berwickcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.berwickcivicsociety.org.uk)

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