
News and Views

MONTHLY MEETINGS

2.15pm Thursday 21 November
Players Theatre, Penrith

CUMBRIAN VERNACULAR BUILDINGS June Hill

Traditionally, most homes have been built in accordance with local custom from locally derived raw materials and so might be called 'vernacular'. Thus each area of Cumbria has developed its own style using the local slate in the central Lakes, red sandstone in north eastern Cumbria and the west coast and limestone on the south Lakeland peninsulas. June Hill has had a particular interest in such Cumbrian buildings for many years, leading her to form the Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group. Her enthusiasm, expertise and knowledge show through in her presentations so she will offer a fascinating and enjoyable talk.

'Middle' Farm, Mosedale



2.15pm Thursday 19th December
Players Theatre, Penrith

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: U3A GROUPS

We have a wide range of talent within our own branch of the U3A. Several of our own interest groups will be presenting a range of drama, instrumental music and folk songs together with dance to offer diverse entertainment for our Christmas Special this year. Do come along to support our members and to enjoy their contributions!

Penrith U3A Ukulele Band



ONE-OFF AND SHORT-RUN PROGRAMMES

ST ANDREW'S SATURDAYS

All St Andrew's Saturday meetings have the same basic arrangements:
Downstairs meeting room, St Andrew's Parish Centre, Penrith
10.00am to noon, with break for coffee (own arrangements)
Cost, no booking required, £2 at the door (visitors welcome £3), pamphlets free
Further information, contact Robin Acland, 017687 79672 or rtacland@gmail.com

Saturday 19th October

POEMS IN TRANSLATION

Reminder from previous newsletter: Translation allows us to enjoy poems that would otherwise be out of our reach. But does it always distort so much that really we can come nowhere near the rewards of the original? For fine poems almost certainly new to you and discussion of challenging issues, Robin Acland and Sheila Fletcher have assembled a lively collection of poems, the majority by women poets and/or translators.

Louise Labé (1526-1566)



"Who would suppose a passion wouldn't thrive
That fates and gods together did contrive?"

Saturday 16th November

SAPPHO

Why is the poetry of Sappho still remembered with admiration today, though she lived 2,600 years ago, in a world utterly different from ours? Although a woman in a man's world, she was regarded in ancient times as one of the nine finest poets ever. In her time, a poem was not something to be read, but performed to an audience: not spoken but sung: called 'lyric' not because of its form or subject matter, but simply because the performer accompanied him/herself on a simple stringed instrument, the lyre.

Yet despite the inevitable uncertainties of translation we can understand what she says, and appreciate her diction and poetic form; and we can hear the sound and rhythm of her lines in her own language.

Most of her work known in Roman times has not survived, and the manuscripts and papyrus fragments we do have are difficult to decipher: but we have more than enough to explore the range of her subject-matter, and make our judgements on her artistry.

John Fletcher illustrates and explores Sappho's poetry and its context with us, pamphlet as ever free on the day.



Saturday 21st December

THE YEAR'S MIDNIGHT

As close as can be to the winter solstice, this is the proper time to go deeply into John Donne's extraordinary poem 'A Nocturnal upon St Lucy's Day ("Tis the year's midnight and it is the day's"). It isn't easy; nor is it cheerful; but it is rewarding! Also it is readily found on the web, if you would like to familiarise yourself before we meet. So too is Thomas Campion's 'Now Winter Nights Enlarge' (first line same as title), which is entirely joyful and straightforward and will start off our morning. These two poems are roughly contemporaneous. Other deep midwinter poems will follow in the pamphlet for the day. Let me know if you have favourites to suggest; I will try to include them.

NOVEMBER OPEN DAY – EVERYONE INVITED

Friday 22 November, 10.00am to 12.30pm, Penrith Rugby Club

Do come and join us for another relaxed get-together at the Rugby Club. Just drop in for coffee, a chat and see what our Interest groups are up to at present. Perhaps you could encourage a non U3A member to come with you.

We also welcome the opportunity for you to pass on ideas to committee and to meet members who have joined our U3A recently. The new members will be invited individually, and as usual the event will be open to members of the public to have a look at what we do.

Richard Hall. U3A Committee

NOTICEBOARD



Food and Art Through the Ages: From Renaissance Sugar Sculpture to 3D Printing

A lecture by Tasha Marks at Appleby Market Hall
11am Wednesday 13 November

Tasha Marks is a food historian who takes inspiration from historical cookbooks to create edible art, championing the use of food as an artistic medium. In 2011 Tasha set up *AVM Curiosities* and has been involved in projects ranging from museum-style exhibitions and sculptural installations to lectures and limited-edition confectionery. With a practice heavily influenced by history, Tasha has diverse culinary interests ranging from 16th century cabinets of curiosity to 1930s medicinal cookery.

The Christmas Tree: From Forest Fir to Festive Feature

A lecture by Dr Claire Walsh at Appleby Market Hall
11am Wednesday 11 December

The tree is central to many religions and cultures, and the Christmas Tree presents us with over five centuries of art and meaning. Vital to the imagery of both the pagan world and Christianity, its significance emerged in Norse yuletide, ancient Rome and with the early-medieval saints, before its diverse strands were drawn together to symbolize the modern Christmas. Decorated and shimmering with light the Christmas Tree has brought Christmas into the heart of the family.

Claire lectures widely, for the Victoria & Albert Museum, The Open University, the Courtauld Institute of Art and others, as well as in Europe and the USA.

The Friends of Penrith and Eden Museum

Shap - from Trackway to Trunk Road. Talk by Liz Amos - at 2pm on Tuesday 26 November 2019. This talk is illustrated with photographs from the Shap Local History Archive and from members of the Society.

Brougham Castle and the early history of the site. Talk by Joseph Jackson - at 2pm on Tuesday 28 January 2020. Brougham Castle is well known locally and has an extensive history, but, what is perhaps less well known, is the history of the site before the castle was built.

For more details of the talks visit www.eden.gov.uk/leisure-culture-and-events/penrith-and-eden-museum/museum-friends-and-volunteers/

EVENT REPORTS

TYNEMOUTH - A HISTORY



Tynemouth's Castle and Priory, with the golden sands of King Edward's bay in the foreground. (©English Heritage)

Our speaker in September was one of our own members, Maurice Longville, who comes from Tynemouth and is both an enthusiast and expert on its history of distant and much more recent times. Well-illustrated by interestingly selected photos, his excellent presentation drew us into the considerable contribution the town has made to the life of the country as well as to its region.

Standing high above the river Tyne on the coast of the North Sea ensured Tynemouth's maritime significance and determined its choice as a site for a Roman fort, a castle and a priory in earlier eras. The monastery was established in the 7th century and became the

choice of burial for three kings: Oswin, King of Deira (651); Osred II, King of Northumbria (792); and, for a time, Malcolm III, King of Scots (1093). Their crowns are seen on the town's coat of arms along with its more recent associations, coal and shipping.

Tynemouth has weathered many storms of history as well as those inflicted by severe gales. Viking raids destroyed the priory twice in the 9th century and then the Normans laid waste to the town in the 11th century. By the 19th century the focus of Tynemouth had changed significantly with fishing and its role as a port dominant. Old photos show how crowded the harbour area had become with high life and low life flourishing, intensified by the building of the railway.

A further significance of Tynemouth was its role in the development of the lifeboat service. Both Cullercoats and Tynemouth have experienced tragedies with boats running aground on rocks and storms preventing their rescue. In 1864 one particular gale leading to 32 deaths saw the foundation of the first ever Volunteer Life Brigade at Tynemouth, an idea readily adopted in other coastal areas. The renowned 19th century artists, Winslow Homer and Robert Jobling, helped to publicise the lives and tragedies of the Tynesiders and their paintings offer a helpful insight into their lives. Altogether, the appreciative audience much enjoyed Maurice's impressive presentation and many plan to visit this multi-faceted resort.

Sue Tomlinson

ARCHITECTURE 2 - VISIT TO SALTAIRE



Salts Mill

182,000 by 1851 and hence, with no proper sanitation or adequate housing, appalling living conditions were experienced by the huge work-force and cholera became rife. Saltaire was created in the 1850s to provide a new centre for the expanding business of Titus Salt.

Guided tours of Saltaire are available for groups so we were able to explore key parts of the impressively designed new town with a local resident who, though she originated in Poland, has taken enormous interest in Saltaire and has read widely on the role of Sir Titus Salt in its establishment and development. Very much an entrepreneur, Salt was prepared to venture into new areas of textile production and was the first to find ways of machine-spinning both Donskoi wool from Russia and Alpaca wool from Peru. These breakthroughs significantly contributed to the huge wealth of Salt whose customers included Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

The yellow sandstone buildings of Saltaire, some designed on Italianate lines by Lockwood and Mawson, cannot fail to impress and it was most interesting to see the neat rows of well-built houses for the workers who were also provided with a communal wash house and bath-house, drinking water, and a hospital. The mill, again built from the attractive local stone was vast, indeed, at 545 feet long and six storeys high, it was the largest in Europe, and hugely profitable. With our guide, we were also able to explore the United Reformed Church which looks rather like a beautiful Roman temple but topped by a somewhat incongruous high dome. Inside it is quite palatial with a coffered ceiling, dark blue scagliola (imitation marble) pillars and chandeliers. There is a most beautiful mausoleum housing the remains of Sir Titus and of other members of his family. The addition of the letters T and S decorating this and other buildings in the town was also pointed out.



The United Reformed Church

After our tour, we split up to have lunch and to explore the rest of Saltaire. Our group was very enterprising with quite a diversity of activities undertaken. For instance one went on a canal boat trip along the adjacent Leeds and Liverpool canal, others walked along the canal towpath towards the old Shipton Glen tramway, two were fortunate to be invited inside one of the former workers' houses in Saltaire, others visited the mill building to see the film of the life of Titus Salt and the David Hockney art gallery, and most watched the filming of a programme to be shown next year on 'The English Game', noting the changes being made to create a more authentic 19th century atmosphere in the town.



Some of the group at Saltaire



Victoria Hall, originally Saltaire Institute

One point of interest from the day was how past events and characters may be differently portrayed. The 'official' view of Titus Salt's achievements is very positive: that he was a philanthropic and humanitarian individual; our guide offered an alternative standpoint, suggesting that he was above all a businessman, determined to maximise his own profits and publicise his endeavours. We left Saltaire, reflecting on our own opinions of this hard-working, successful businessman, attempting to reach a fair judgment, according to the standards of the nineteenth century rather than those of today.

Sue Tomlinson

Copy Deadline for next issue - Monday 9th December

If you would like any part of the Newsletter in LARGE PRINT, please contact the editors

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