

RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP



Newsletter Autumn 2017

As last year we will be emailing our newsletter to most of our members to save postage. Those without access to email will of course receive a copy in the post. If you receive the monthly Parish newsletter, The Link, details of meetings are also listed in that, and please remember that if you do have access to the internet you can keep up to date with History Group news and events by checking the website www.ravenstonedalehistory.org.uk on a regular basis (our website can also be reached via a link from the Ravenstonedale Community website www.ravenstonedale.org).

If you wish to contact the History Group please leave a comment on one of the forms on our website. Your email address will NOT be shown online – it is only visible to you and to the website admin, who will endeavour to contact you within a week or so. Comments are all reviewed before they are published on the website, and then answered either privately or on the website as appropriate. If you wish to telephone the History Group, please call either 015396 23308 or 07798 688057.

Annual General Meeting 2017

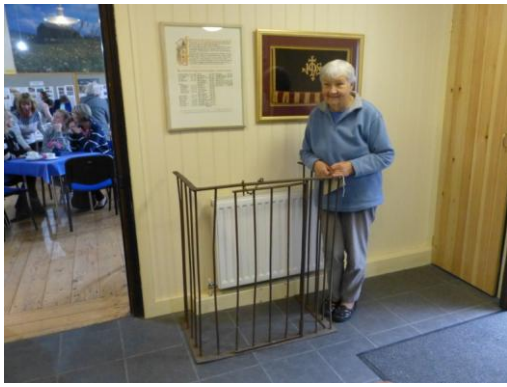
The Committee would like to thank those members who attended the AGM held in May 2017. Chris Elphick, who has been our Treasurer and Membership Secretary since the Group was formed, announced his intention to stand down. The Chairman thanked Chris, and his wife Diane, for all their work on behalf of the Group. The Committee therefore asked for volunteers(s) to become Treasurer and Membership Secretary, and after discussions with members we are delighted to confirm the rearranged Committee as follows:

Chair:	Sue Prince
Vice-Chairman:	Jackie Wedd
Secretary:	Caroline Morris
Treasurer/Membership Secretary:	Val Fermer
Other committee members:	Chris Elphick, Diane Elphick; Chris Harrison-Beck; Ann Metcalfe-Gibson; Bill Wappett

Evening meetings

Evening talks have again been well supported by both members and non-members, with an average attendance of 24, and we have learnt about subjects as diverse as the Ambleside Child Survivors of the Holocaust, maps of Westmorland and the Carver family, one of whom made a great impression on how the village of Ravenstonedale looks today.

At the Christmas get-together we were treated to another of Les Neal's fiendish quizzes; this time on the subject of Christmas – Santa's reindeer names, the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas and an "Only Connect" style Connecting Wall. The mulled wine and mince pies certainly helped!



October 2016 Exhibition – Three Parish Schools – or is it Four?

Over 100 people attended over the two days and we were very pleased to welcome former pupils from Ravenstonedale, Newbiggin-on-Lune and Fell End Schools who were able to help us identify many of the pupils in the school photographs we have been given. We also featured a brief history of Dogbar School which existed in the Parish at one time. Our thanks to everyone who lent or donated items for the exhibition – we are particularly pleased to have been able to show the cast-iron fireguard which stood round the stove in Fell End Schoolroom to one of the former pupils who remembers standing next to it to keep warm during the 1940's when she attended the school from the age of 5.

Schoolroom to one of the former pupils who remembers standing next to it to keep warm during the 1940's when she attended the school from the age of 5.



Traditional crafts made at Ravenstonedale School also featured.



Next season's programme of evening talks:

Wednesday 20th September at 7.30pm in High Chapel: Ian Carradice returns – this time to talk about Aspects of Life in Ravenstonedale c.1905-1920, seen through the picture postcard album of his grandmother, Lizzie Fothergill of Wray Green.

18th October at 7.30pm: The Story of the Westmorland Motorway Services – John Dunning. This talk will take place in the Hall at Newbiggin-on-Lune – the first time that we have held a talk in this part of the Parish.

15th November at 7.30pm in High Chapel: Inside a Lakeland Farmhouse – Andy Lowe.

The Christmas get-together for members and friends will take place on Wednesday 13th December at 7.30pm in High Chapel.

In January and February 2018 our talks will be by committee members – Val is currently researching *Parish Hostelries, Past and Present* for 17th January and Jackie is preparing a talk about *Edward Jeffrey*, the artist and illustrator who lived in Ravenstonedale from the late 1940's for about 30 years, first at The Chantry and then at The Stables. Some people have kindly offered to lend original Edward Jeffrey paintings, illustrated books, magazines and other items for the evening of 21st February. Val and Jackie would be very pleased to hear from anyone who may have memories and stories either about the hostelries or about Edward Jeffrey which they would be prepared to share!

In March, our second talk in the Hall at Newbiggin will be on Statesmen, Messuages and Tenements in Town Angle by Les Neal.

Gifts to the Archive

This year we have been given a bound set of the first Ordnance Survey maps of the Parish of Ravenstonedale dated 1859. This will be available for people to see in the History Room, either on Thursday afternoons between 2 and 4pm as usual (except January), or by appointment. It complements a later set of maps which we have also been given. We have also reframed a hand-coloured edition of Wainwright's map of Westmorland, donated to us by a resident who was moving away from the village.

At time of writing two members of our committee, Chris Harrison-Beck and Bill Wappett, are constructing made-to-measure new shelves for our storage and once this is finished we will be able to keep larger items such as the maps, historical artwork and previous exhibition displays flat on shelves. We will also be purchasing some new museum-standard archive boxes so that we can store our ever-growing archive of documents in the right conditions. For example, we have just received a very kind donation of many files of research done by a local gentleman, which his widow felt belonged in the History Group archives. We will as usual be sorting and cataloguing this research, bearing in mind that if there are any unique original documents we will copy them and then pass them to the County Record Office.

We were delighted to welcome Phyllis Edgerly Ring and her husband Jon to the village from the USA in the summer. Phyllis's family lived at The Chantry and Chantry Lodge for many years, and she was



fascinated to see the piece of wood from the lid of her great-uncle's sea chest, used when he was a naval chaplain, which was found during renovations at Chantry Lodge and is now on display in the History Room. Phyllis not only donated a signed copy of one of her novels to the History Group, but she and Jon have also offered

to finance the new shelves in the History Room. The Group is extremely grateful!

We will be showing the bound set of the first Parish Ordnance Survey maps, as well as other items from our collection, including historic photographs of Parish gardens, as part of our annual exhibition in High Chapel, which this year will be on **Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th October from 2pm to 5pm each day**. We have more Ravenstonedale school photos and yearbooks with people to be identified, this time from around 2000-2001. We hope to see as many of our members and friends as possible – entry is free but as usual, refreshments will be on sale.

Some of this collection of photographs of Parish gardens was displayed in High Chapel during the weekend when four gardens and the allotments were open for the National Garden Scheme in July. We also showed some folders from previous exhibitions and mounted a display with our research into the history of Tarn Gill Bridge and the ongoing efforts of the Friends to save it from being demolished. The weekend raised over £2,500 for the nursing and medical charities which the NGS supports.



Over £350 was donated to the High Chapel committee - their share of the takings for the delicious refreshments which they and their helpers provided.

Events over the Summer

We welcomed a group from Hesket Local History Group one evening in June for a guided walk round Ravenstonedale village, and some of our members joined in too.



In July eight of us visited Shap and managed to enjoy a guided walk round the village there – although it was somewhat curtailed by a heavy downpour at the start!



Note the date here in the unusual form A.M. which stands for Anno Mundi – In the Year of the World.

Members of the Group have also recently visited the superb Swaledale Museum in Reeth, and enjoyed an afternoon with the curator, Helen Bainbridge (seen here on the right).



This visit was prompted by our email contact with Tracy Little, from the Upper Dales Family History Society helping with her research into the Alderson family, and also by a query from a researcher who contacted our website looking into a family from Hawes, one of whose sons was educated at Ravenstonedale School and who went on to become Dean of Hereford, after having founded a nationally-renowned school in Hampshire. (see below). Subsequently we have received another enquiry from someone trying to trace her father's ancestors in both Swaledale and Ravenstonedale, and the more we look into this connection between Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and the Upper Eden Valley, the more we find. Helen gave us lots of advice and tips on how to rearrange and index our archives and we were pleased that Tracy could join us too. The Museum is well worth a visit and contains some familiar faces – and some not so familiar objects...



More Family History Research

Comments left on the website have led to three people visiting the village to further family history research – with more to come! As noted above, Norman Denison from King's Somborne in Hampshire spent a week in the area researching the founder of King's Somborne School, Richard Dawes. This pioneering school was based on the educational principles which Richard Dawes first learnt as a scholar taught by John Robinson at Ravenstonedale in the early 1800's. Richard moved on from Ravenstonedale to be coached for entry to Trinity College, Cambridge by John Gough in Kendal. He later became Bursar of Downing College, but was passed over for election to Master in 1835 as he had earlier voted for the admission of Dissenters to the University.

Norman and his wife visited the History Room to see our items connected with the school and John Robinson, and visited the church, where Dawes would have worshipped, as well as the school building as it now is. We await the publication of the next chapter in Norman's ongoing project on the life and work of King's Somborne's eminent Victorian!



Meanwhile, Jeremy Webb contacted us via the website looking for details of his mother's Hewetson ancestry and kindly volunteered to write the following article for the newsletter. We sent him a map in advance of his visit with the relevant farms marked on it, as well as reassuring him of the accuracy of Keith Lovet Watson's painstaking research over many years into the various Hewetson families – the History Group is extremely fortunate to have a digital copy of this, as only twenty or so copies were privately published and most are in institutions such as the British Library, the Bodleian, and various County Archives.

Jeremy Webb writes:

My links with Ravenstonedale have come as quite a surprise; my GGGrandfather was Robert Hewetson (1828-1904) of Lockholme Foot/Piper Hole. His second son, John (1861-1900), died of tuberculosis aged 39 in the Leeds workhouse in the same year as he uprooted his family from Sunderland. John, who had two sons and two daughters, mysteriously left the younger son Robert William (1891-1960) behind with 'friends' in Sunderland. My maternal Grandfather, John (1887-1972), was the elder son and remained in South Yorkshire where I knew him.

Retirement and a pile of family documents was the motivation that led me to unravel my family's background. It has been a fascinating, and at times, sobering project opening windows on lives and experiences which have been an emotional roller-coaster.

I thought I would share some of the highs and lows in an article for your newsletter.

I struggle to find a suitable verb; do you discover, create, unravel, formalise, make (fabricate!) or tabulate a family tree? It is (too) easy to 'create' a tree and I found Ancestry.com a master at this with many of the archived trees wholly unreliable. With that in mind I have tried to only include data that can be cross-checked; inheriting a pile of family documents and some research by an aunt has helped. By contrast my wife has nothing and we have struggled to put together a family tree we can believe in. The moral is you can never start too soon and our experience has prompted a son-in-law to tape conversations with his grandmother.

The highs have been surprises; we tracked down the family of my Grandfather's brother Robert Wm. Hewetson and discovered my Father's cousin established a finishing school in Switzerland that is still operating. His death in a car accident and subsequent reburial in a family plot in Manchester resolved a mystery for the alumni association and got me corresponding with a French speaking second cousin.

The insights, via census data and parish records, have painted a sometimes depressing picture of hard lives in poor conditions. The frame of mind and motivation of John Hewetson when he joined the Bradford Pals in 1915 is easier to imagine now we know that at age 13, when living in poverty, he lost his father and was separated from his brother.

August 2017

We are very grateful to Jeremy for his article and pleased that we could be of help.