

Ravenstonedale Parish History Group

Newsletter Autumn 2016

We must apologise for the non-appearance of our newsletter since autumn 2014, especially as we are aware that there are some members who are unable to attend our meetings. You will see that we now have a new format so that the newsletter can be easily emailed to most of our members to save postage. Those without access to email will of course continue to receive a hard copy in the post. If you receive the monthly Parish newsletter, The Link, details of meetings are also listed in that.

Please remember that if you 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 regularly.

The Group can be contacted by leaving a Comment on a form on the History Group website, which will be reviewed before it's published on the website, and then answered either privately or on the website as appropriate. Your email address will not be published.

Your current Committee is

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

Annual General Meetings 2015 and 2016

The Committee would like to thank those members who attended our AGMs in 2015 and 2016. In 2015 our new Chairman, Val Fermer, thanked the outgoing Chairman Caroline Morris for all her hard work helping to set up the History Group. Val gave her first Chairman's Report at the recent 2016 AGM and some extracts are reproduced in this Newsletter.

Our monthly programme of talks in the High Chapel Community and Heritage Centre (from September to March) continues to be well-received, with an average of 28 people attending. We continue to catalogue our archives in the History Room upstairs at High Chapel each Thursday afternoon to document our extensive and growing collection and to enable it to be searched more easily. We would like to extend our thanks to Sally Cannon who, having a new laptop she was not using, kindly donated it to the Group. This allows more than one person to catalogue items at one time.

Our thanks are due also to Lee Crampton who has downloaded Windows 10 on to the laptop for us, and is enabling its use with a digital projector which we have also been given. It has been known for our speakers to arrive without vital pieces of their kit, so it's good to be prepared!

The first three meetings of next season will be:

21st September: a talk by Val Fermer our Chairman, on prominent local family the Carvers, entitled *A Ravenstonedale Entrepreneur, with Connections to Carts, Canals and Cotton*.

19th October: a talk by Trevor Avery entitled *Ambleside Child Survivors of the Holocaust*

16th November: a talk by David Williams on *Westmorland Maps*.

All on Wednesdays at 7.30pm in High Chapel Community and Heritage Centre as usual.

Gifts to the Archive



Geoff Waldram, the great-nephew of Edward Jeffrey, the talented and prolific artist who lived in the village from the late 1940's to the late 1970's, has kindly donated copies of the monthly *Cumbria* magazine for which Edward Jeffrey designed and painted over two hundred covers. We now have an almost complete run of these magazines with the Edward Jeffrey covers. Many of the issues also include his illustrations of Cumbrian shows, personalities and wildlife. We have also been able to help another more distant relative of the artist who contacted us for information to fill in gaps in his family history.

Michael Metcalfe-Gibson has donated an album of photographs showing the construction of the Ravenstonedale bypass in the 1980's. This is now available to view in the archive at the History Room upstairs in High Chapel. We have also been given copies of several old Ordnance Survey maps of the Parish, several books of local interest - as well as some much-needed shelves for storage.

A copy of their research into the **Ravenstonedale Park and Walls** has been given to us by Dr Les Neal and his son Simon Neal M.A. – this is an investigation into the imparking of the land to the north of the village by Lord Wharton in the early 1560's.

We received a number of items including photographs, yearbooks and craftwork from the former Ravenstonedale Primary School, which most of you will know closed recently. Our major project over last winter was to sort and catalogue this material. Anything which falls into the remit of the County Archive at Kendal will be given to them after being copied and catalogued.

Our forthcoming annual exhibition this autumn will be about the three former schools in our Parish: Fell End, Newbiggin-on-Lune and Ravenstonedale School. We have already received offers of items to be lent to us for the exhibition, but please contact us if you have anything of interest relating to any of the schools which you would either like to donate to the History Group, or lend to us for the exhibition.

Please make a note of the exhibition dates now: **Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th October 2016 from 2pm to 5pm each day.** We hope to see as many of our members and friends as possible – as usual, refreshments will be available, with proceeds being split between the History Group and the High Chapel.

Elm Lodge Fete July 2015

On a showery and windy day fortunately we had a stall inside in the marquee where we were pleased to see many members and friends, recruit some new members, and display some historical local farm and estate sales prospectuses from our growing collection, as well as showing examples of family research undertaken for people locally and elsewhere.

We have also recruited new members on Thursday afternoons, as we continue to receive visitors from far and wide who have ancestors who originated in the Parish. On two occasions, committee members visited the local hostelrys to assist visitors who were either staying in or briefly visiting Ravenstonedale, including one who provided several photographs of their ancestors for our archive. On another occasion, a chance visit to the History Room enabled a passing couple to obtain information about their family previously unknown to them. A lady also travelled up from Essex to research an elusive Curate of her local church who had originated in Ravenstonedale. Once, an American visitor stopped by the home of a

member who took the visitor to the History Room to try to search for her ancestors' records. Siblings who had contacted us by email, visited and stayed in the village to attend one of the talks, as their ancestor and family were mentioned in the talk. Subsequently, they gave us a generous donation which will be used to provide yet more storage for our ever-expanding collection.

We have assisted a number of researchers more remotely by email. In one case we were able to provide a copy of a Will of a 7x great grandfather. In another case we were able to correct an enquirer's research to prove he was **not** descended from the Fothergill family! We also assisted a lady from Surrey by finding a record of the death of a 5x great grandfather and the remarriage of his widow. The lady provided us with details of her 4x great grandfather's involvement with the local militia in Napoleonic times in Surrey!

Our influence is global, as we have had American, Canadian and Australian visitors to the Heritage Centre and we correspond with other researchers with Ravenstonedale heritage in US and Australia.

Local Agriculture: Autumn Exhibition 10th and 11th October 2015



This ancient wooden wheelbarrow with an iron-rimmed wheel has been in use at Needlehouse for many years. It was the centrepiece of the display of farming equipment including hay rakes and swingletrees as well as household items, which were kindly lent to us for last October's exhibition on the theme of Local Agriculture. We were also lent a collection of photographs featuring many of these items in use during the 1920's. We also displayed many items from our collection including

photographs and scrapbooks such as the Young Farmers annual scrapbooks from the 1980's and 1990's, as well as their attendance book from 1957-1982, a Minute Book of their meetings from the 1960's and



1970's, and their financial records from 1957-78, all of which were donated to the History Group by Joyce Nicholson. Numerous sales prospectuses from local farms over the years, several of which were donated by William and June Ellis, were on display, along with some of the former trophies from Ravenstonedale Agricultural Show - these were collected by the late John Jackson and donated to us by Susan Huck. We are now able to use an A3 printer/scanner and a laminator to copy larger documents, e.g. sale prospectuses and Wills. The laminator enables posters and copies of photographs to be longer lasting and more easily handled, and is perfect for improving the presentation of our exhibits at our annual exhibition. Recently we have been able to help one of our members with the early history of their property, a former farm, and some of our research about this was on show. Over 70 people visited the exhibition over the two afternoons, and we received more than £100 in donations and from sales of refreshments – including the delicious cakes and scones. Our thanks go to everyone that helped to make the event such a success.

The Committee hope to see as many members as possible during the coming months – either at the exhibition, an evening talk or on a Thursday afternoon between 2pm and 4pm in the History Room upstairs at High Chapel. Come and see what we have in the archive!