



Ravenstonedale Parish History Group

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday 15th May 2013

Chairman's Notes

Welcome to the first Newsletter from RPHG. We are now two years old and have begun to establish a pattern for group activities. These include weekly meetings on a Thursday afternoon, monthly talks throughout the winter and collating a growing archive of local history material. Various members are pursuing their own research projects, which lead to interesting insights into the local history of this parish

Monthly Talks

Over the past two years topics have covered the ancient history of Mallerstang and Nine Standards, the wild and violent 13th century border battles which engulfed these parts, the equally complex religious 17th century battles encompassing the persecution of the Quakers a once powerful influence in this parish and more recently the devastating effects of the 1st World War on the lives of everyone, rich and poor in the upper Eden valley. Gentler subjects have included farming and village life in this valley and the lives of some of its more influential inhabitants. The standard of presentation has, without exception, been high and we are very grateful to the speakers who have given most generously of their time and knowledge.



Some further discussion after the Talk is over
On behalf of our members, I would also like to thank Sue Capel and Ann Metcalfe-Gibson for drawing together the speakers' programme and to Sue Capel, followed now by Maren White, for writing up a resumee for the local press.

Thursday afternoons

Throughout the year, with the exception of January when we do not meet, a small band of steadfast volunteers help with a variety of tasks, cataloguing and filing local family information, compiling photographs of local events mostly from the 1960s, and photographs of all the houses and farms in the parish and where possible their more recent inhabitants



Thursday afternoon with some visitors

The major undertaking for the next month or so is to amalgamate all the

catalogued documents in our collection, at present on our individual computers, into one big research file on the newly acquired Parish Council computer. As none of us are experts, the vagaries of the computer are thwarting our efforts somewhat! If anyone would like to come along to help (you are not expected to be a computer whiz!), you would be more than welcome.

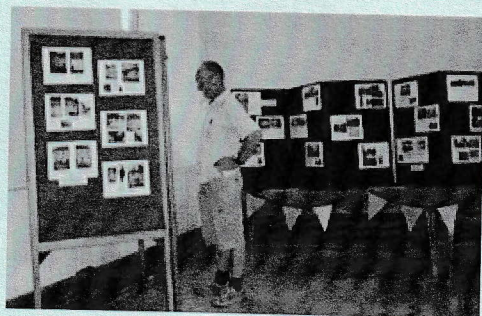
Diamond Jubilee Exhibitions

The main project over the past year has been the Diamond Jubilee exhibition when we put on an exhibition of photographs of all the houses in both villages with the names of their inhabitants in 1952. A chance remark from Val Fermer about getting the electoral roll for that year from the Kendal Archive sparked off the idea. We soon discovered that quite a lot the houses had names we did not recognise or which seemed to have disappeared altogether. It was time to call in the experts, so one Thursday afternoon in early spring we invited Thomas Balmer, Wilson Law, Doris and John Morphet and Chris Read to go through the Electoral Roll and sort out who lived where, helped by cups of tea and Sally Cannon's cakes. They did a brilliant job....it was most informative and there was much discussion, reminiscing and laughter. Our grateful thanks to them and to Wendy Hunter and the WI for letting us use the photographs from their parish survey in 1988. We hope to build up gradually a record of individual houses and farms and their occupants over the last century.

The Jubilee Weekend exhibition brought in a steady stream of visitors to have a look at who was living in their house sixty years ago.



Sorting through the 1952 Electoral Roll



Checking out who was living where

Tinclar Library Visit

We received an invitation from the Trustees of the Tinclar Library to visit their recently refurbished premises in Bampton. Originally the Library, a theological one left by the Rev'd Jonathan Tinclar, was left to Bampton Parish in 1750. Such collections, set up by the Vicar to aid him in his theological studies included books on Law and the Sciences etc; and were often the only source of research in a country parish. True or not it is

rumoured that for many years the collection languished in boxes under the vicar's bed! In the early 1990s the collection was re-catalogued and moved into the Church Hall. As well as the collection of theological books it has a very extensive collection of old and more recent local history books. Our visit was a most interesting one and the Trustees had very kindly sorted out books, which



had particular mention of Ravenstone-dale.

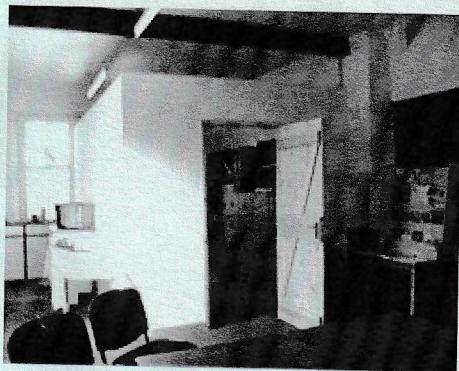
Looking through the collection with the help of Trustee Chairman

John Burgess – High Chapel History

The library also contains information about our own High Chapel. The collated preparatory notes and documentation for a book (never published) about the history of the High Chapel by John Burgess was purchased for the history archives. Sally has been sorting through the notes.

The Tinclar Library is open on the first Monday in the month from 7.pm to 9.pm and at other times by appointment. I can strongly recommend a visit.

Council's Neighbourhood Forum. Archive shelving, filing cabinet and other office furniture have been kindly donated by Cumbria CVS in Penrith. The Ravenstonedale Parish History Group was able to contribute £1000 to the Parish Council towards the cost of construction of the History Room.



The new history room and storage cabinets

Upper Eden History Documents

Since the Society has lost its storage space in Kirkby Stephen we are happy to be able to store some of its documents in one of our cabinets until it has the chance to find new premises.

Old Graveyard Map

Jane Christian and her mother, Mary Woodger, a granddaughter of Rev George Manning called in during the summer bringing their hand-written map of the graveyard drawn up by Mr Woodger in the 1950s. It was particularly helpful in giving names to gravestones about which there had been some uncertainty. They kindly gave permission to use the map as a basis for a printed copy set out by Chris Elphick.

Graveyard Information

A comprehensive survey of the High Chapel Graveyard has been carried out by Michelle and Elliot Hartley of Garsdale Design.

Central Heating

During the autumn central heating has been installed and we are now able to use the main hall for our talks, exhibitions etc all the year round.

Christmas get-together

We were able to have our annual Christmas gathering in the main hall and were comfortably warm and jolly. This 'do' would not happen were it not for Anne Wappett and Marlene Taylor's skills in decorating the room and tables in a festive manner and you members and friends bringing your own mulled-wine and food!



Marlene and Anne setting out food

I am also very grateful to Les Neal and his son, Simon for devising two quizzes, one with a seasonal theme the other topographical, testing us on our knowledge of local names and also Bill Wappett who did a splendid job on

the keyboard playing Christmas tunes and carols and so setting the seasonal mood. Our thanks to all our helpers.



Bill taking a break from the keyboard

RPHG Website.

Originally initiated by Sue Capel and Val Fermer, the group is developing its own website and now that Sue has moved away, Alex Watts Tobin has offered to help Val. The site should be a great asset to the group and we are grateful to them both for taking on what seems a very complex task.

Heritage Open Days

These will take place nationally from **September 12th-15th 2013.**

We plan to continue the Diamond Jubilee Exhibition by displaying photographs of all the outlying houses and farms and their occupants in 1952/53.

The **1952 Electoral Roll Exhibition** will open on **Friday, September 13th in the evening** with a talk and display of **Clothing from 1900-1970** by **Lynne Hopwood** who has the Temperance Hall Museum of Costume in Kirkby Stephen. Lynne has a vast collection of clothing and is a knowledgeable and lively speaker. She uses live models to display her costumes. The evening will start with wine and canapés, it will be a fundraising function for the Ravenstonedale Parish History Group

and the High Chapel Community & Heritage Centre . It should be an entertaining evening so make a note of it!....please!

Communication

*Former committee members names
and contact details redacted.*

Committee

I would like to thank the Committee for their support in the running of the group, each member has something to contribute be it practically, seeing to small jobs in the building, furniture 'removal' for talks, exhibitions, historical research, cataloguing, contacting speakers, keeping an eye on memberships and money etc. In particular I would like to thank Sally Cannon (who is not a Committee member) for her constancy in attendance at the Thursday afternoon meetings.

Finally, our thanks to YOU our members for your support. I know that some of you live far, far away but the fact you **want** to be a member is a big boost to our morale and you are not forgotten....and to the others of you...keep coming to the meetings....we need you!

History Enquiries

We are pleased to have received a number of enquiries, often by e-mail, from members and non-members (but potential) from all over this country and abroad researching families and properties in the area. It gives a great deal of satisfaction to be able to solve some of these problems.

The history room contains parish records of various categories including Nonconformists, Quakers, etc.

Newspaper cuttings and photographs recording many people and events.

The archive is open to visitors on Thursdays between 2.00 and 4.00pm. Visitors are welcome at other times by arrangement.

High Chapel Building

It will always be High Chapel regardless of the redevelopment as a Community & Heritage Centre. The most important thing is that we have managed to retain ownership of this historic property for the community that built it.

The main hall has been turned into a useful group meeting place. The vestry has been repaired and now has a small kitchen facility as well as housing the new central heating boiler. New crockery will soon be arriving and a complete new set of chairs has been acquired for the hall and upstairs room.

All these items have been made possible by the generosity of outside funding bodies including the National Lottery, Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council to whom we are extremely grateful.

Repairs and improvements, including provision of toilet facilities will continue as funding allows.

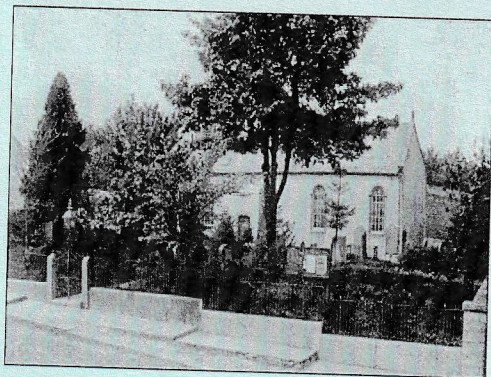
It is rewarding to note that the building is coming back to life as new groups start to make use of this versatile building with its meeting rooms of different sizes.

The History Room

We now have our own room within the Community & Heritage Centre where the archives and equipment are stored. we have the use of the Parish Council's computer with internet access, printer/scanner/copier and a projector. Thanks to Chris Elphick's grant application skills these were acquired with the help of a £1,000 grant from Cumbria County Council

Kendal Civic Society Visit

In June the Kendal Civic Society came to look round the High Chapel and had a brief tour round the village. Chris Elphick explained the plans that the parish has for the building and the ongoing alterations accompanied by a small display of photographs showing the changes made over the years.



Annual General Meeting 2013

Wednesday 15th May in the Community & Heritage Centre at 7.30pm

The proposed programme for next year, which will continue to be held on the 3rd Wednesday in the month starting in September 2013-2014 is

18th September

Erik Matthews-

Lammerside & Later Mediaeval Mallerstang

16th October 2013-

Jan Hicks-

The Wool industry in Cumbria

20th November 2013

Peter Lewis-

Lunacy in the Eden Valley...

18th December 2013

Members & Friends

Christmas Get-together

15th January 2014

Val Fermer-

First World War Soldiers in the Parish

19th February 2014

Ian Murray

History of the Navy communities in Mallerstang in 1870.

19th March 2014

Margaret Gowling-

A woman's place in 17th century life in the Upper Eden

Meetings start at 7.30pm. Entry—Members £1.00, Non-members £2.00

Evening Talks for early 2013

January 16th: Les Neal: *Ravenstonedale*

Park and Walls – Love or Larceny

February 20th: Val Fermer: *The Thompson*

and Graham Families

March 20th: Judith Clarke: *Arthurian*

Legends in Cumbria