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Newsletter July 2008

No 78

Public Meeting “3,000 Years of Human Settlement in the Eden Valley”

The intriguing title of this our most recent talk attracted a good audience. Mr Chris Robson was our speaker and, after briefly telling us something about his own history, he took us on a journey through time.

His story began long before the arrival of people as he explained something of the geology, flora and fauna of the area, moving swiftly through the Ice Age, Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) and Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) periods. The change from a hunter-gatherer to a farming way of life came in the Neolithic (New Stone Age) period. Forest clearances to make way for farming continued through the Bronze Age. Archaeology demonstrates trading contacts developed in the Bronze Age continued through the Iron Age. Technological innovation increased during the Iron Age and farming techniques improved. Population in Britain probably exceeded one million at this time.

We then arrived at the Roman invasion of 43 AD after which huge changes were forced on local people with the colonisation of the north and the building of forts, military bases and connecting roads. For this period, as well as archaeological evidence, there are written records. The Tullie House Museum at Carlisle contains many items and displays which help us to understand life here at that period. Our attention was drawn to linguistic links with Celtic languages to be found in local place names. The period following the collapse of the Roman Empire was, for most of the ex-Empire lands, the Dark Ages. For our rural area the farming way of life continued as before.

The narrative then came to the period of the threats by Anglian invaders from what are now the northern Netherlands, north-west Germany and southern Denmark. The first Danish settlement of Appleby occurred about 930 AD. Again, local place names reveal Nordic and Danish influences. Then followed a description of the chaos and economic dislocation brought about during the conflicts over this region between the kingdoms of Scotland and England until the Union of Crowns in 1603. Throughout the 12th and 13th centuries there was a huge growth in population. New settlements were established and new territory colonized. But in the 14th century came famine and disease, decimating the population. Farmers turned to livestock farming, this being less labour-intensive. Drove roads became a familiar feature in the landscape. Trading in sheep and wool brought prosperity to the area and to several Eden Valley families.

The area was not suitable for full industrialization but activities such as lime production and mining left their marks in the landscape in the forms of lime kilns, pannier tracks, hump bridges and miners' tracks. The enclosing of lands in the mid-19th century had its effect on the landscape as roads and boundary features were created.

More drastic changes were made to the landscape with the development of the railways – temporarily with the buildings required during the building process and permanently with the railways themselves. Transport also provided the most recent landscape changes as the M6 motorway made its way through Cumbria.

He ended by encouraging his audience to get out there, walk in the landscape and enjoy the emotional experience which comes with the study of its geology, its flora and fauna and its archaeology.

Throughout the talk reference was made to several published sources and acknowledgement was given to their authors. With such a vast scope, as Chris said, his could only be broad generalisations but his enthusiastic drawing together of the story made for an interesting and entertaining evening.

Vivienne Gate

From the Chairman

AGM

We are due to hold our AGM on 31st July. Alice Palmer has kindly agreed to tell us again about Lady Anne Clifford - it is a very long time since she did so, and there will be lots of new members to hear it, as well as many people who will welcome a repeat, so it will be useful and enjoyable, as Alice's talks always are.

We will be asking you all for formal permission to increase the annual subscription to pay for the Archive Room in the Public Hall, which we have agreed to rent from the Council. There is some electrical modification required before we actually "occupy" it, but we can start planning, if you will sanction the increase. We are asking you to agree to payment of £8 per person for 2008/2009. There will be no 'family' subscription.

Next, we will be asking for volunteers to work on stage one of the archive creation, which is creating a computer listing of all the material we have. Volunteers will be trained in the process of entering details of the material on to computer, which is essentially straight-forward but can be repetitive, and in handling the archive material that passes through their hands.

We hope to pick up tips and warnings from Crosby Ravensworth Archive during our visit on 26 June (before publication of this Newsletter). Please have your say during the AGM - that is what it is all about.

I would also like to give notice that I intend to resign from the Chairmanship of the Society at the 2009 AGM, so the search for another Chairman begins now!

The Fair

I wrote to the Chief Executive of Eden District Council to ask when we will get the promised opportunity to attend a "de-brief" meeting about the Fair, preferably in the evening. My letter had been acknowledged by Council "legal eagle", Mr Foote, Director of Corporate and Legal Services; I do not know how Mr Foote is involved with the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group, but anyway two days later I received a courteous reply from Mr Douglas! The relevant paragraph of his letter states:

"We are currently finalising details of (the de-brief meeting for Appleby Fair) which will be held on Wednesday 9 July in the Public Hall, Appleby. We have changed the format slightly this year in the sense that staff will be available during the day for people to call in and feed in comments on issues in relation to the Fair and there will be a formal meeting in the evening". I will not be around at the time, so it is up to you, folks, to take advantage of this very "Fair" offer.

Note: as readers may well have noted from *The Herald* 5 July edition, the 'de-brief' is to be held in the Supper Room and will take the form of a 'drop-in' session from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. with a formal meeting from 7.00 p.m to 9.00 p.m.

The *Herald* reports that Appleby Town Council agreed on a possible role for the New Fair Joint Committee in its new guise, as a "sounding board for residents" with quarterly meetings; I had interpreted

the structure of the Multi-Agency Group as showing the Appleby Town Council AND the New Fair Joint Forum (?) BOTH having an input, however ineffective, to the Multi-Agency Group. I have a feeling that it is a teacup affair, and won't matter much, but we will keep an eye on things even if only for amusement. Like when did the Town Council acquire the right to govern the affairs of the New Fair Joint Committee/Forum, having steadfastly renounced any involvement for years?

Appleby Accolade

We would like you to submit your own candidates for this feature - we only encounter a small part of Appleby, and obviously miss many activities worthy of public praise. For instance, on our way into Town we were delighted to see the loving care given to the flower beds outside Nos. 5-7 in Battlebarrow, contributing greatly to the "Appleby in Bloom" project.

We would like to award an accolade to Mr Neil Buck, of Eden District Client Services, and his staff, for their sterling work in clearing the Town of litter during Fair week. Most people agree that it was much better done than last year, and we know that it represents a considerable effort on the part of everyone involved. Thank you, guys!

Coffee Morning

As members will have read in *The Herald* (21 June edition), we held a "well-supported coffee morning" – on the previous Saturday. We are very grateful for the support and give sincere thanks to EVERYONE who helped make the event such a success.

I have to keep this short, because the Newsletter deadline hangs on the AGM, and Vivienne is drumming her fingers to get the texts in on time!

R Ian Campbell

History Slot

Chariots of Fire (Part 7)

Part 6 ended with the opening of a new fire station in Chapel Street and with a fire at Southfield Farm at which the Mayor turned out to assist.

The new fire station (opened 1901) had a quiet life for about three years as no fires were reported until November 1903. This perhaps accounts for a low turnout at a charity concert held in the Market Hall to raise funds for the brigade. A contemporary newspaper reported a 'miserably poor' attendance. Fortunately a minstrel evening held later proved more successful. The November 1903 fire was reported in Boroughgate which resulted in the death of a pony. (The annual report of the brigade the following April referred to two fires in Boroughgate – one at the premises of Mr Moore and the other at the Tufton Arms stables.) In December 1903 the Corporation accepted a tender by Messrs Merryweather to retube the engine at a cost of £23 15 shillings. (Note: "retube" not "reboiler" – see Newsletter No 76.)

In April 1904 the Corporation agreed to purchase another reel of hose and a ladder (there had been a shortage of ladders at the Tufton Arms fire). On 1 August the brigade attended a fire at Bolton. Serious difficulties were encountered which led to much discussion in the Council chamber. Once again, shortage of hose was the problem. The hose kept under the Town Hall steps was the original (supplied with the engine in 1879) and was equipped with screw couplings. The hoses at the fire station had instantaneous couplings. The brigade was six lengths of hose short at Bolton and could not get within 150 yards of the fire. Capt (Alderman) Rigg said the solution was simple. Either convert the hose kept at the Moot Hall or buy some more hose. (It is almost certain that Appleby's street hydrants were fitted with screw connectors so converting the original hose would have made things worse!) Alderman Heelis pointed out that the Bolton fire was half a mile from the nearest water – that could not happen within the borough. He thought it unfair that the ratepayers of Appleby should have to purchase equipment unlikely to be

required in the town. Capt Rigg said he had raised the problem before and asked for the matter to be discussed with the Rural District Council but nothing had been done. The Corporation appointed a sub-committee with power to confer with property owners outside the borough with a view to better equipping the brigade.

In June 1905 the National Boiler Insurance Co. recommended additional safety equipment for the fire engine. The engine was damaged in October that year whilst being taken to a water supply at Culgaith when it overturned. The fire under the boiler had to be extinguished, rendering the men virtual spectators.

When the Corporation next discussed the brigade in June 1906 it noted that three firemen had resigned and that replacements had been appointed. The equipment kept under the Moot Hall steps would be moved to the fire station which would be provided with a handcart for immediate use at fires within the borough. The Corporation also agreed to an annual grant, not exceeding £10, to be shared among the firemen who regularly attended drills. The Clerk was asked to contact the East Westmorland R.D.C. to enquire if it would contribute to the costs of the brigade.

In April 1907, there was a fire at Clickham where, yet again, the brigade suffered from lack of hose. Capt. Rigg said that such situations had a disastrous effect on the men's morale as they were constantly being reduced to bystanders.

In July 1908, £500-worth of damage was caused at the draper's premises of Richard Wharton in Bridge Street. It was reported that an employee, Mr Tuer, was lighting gas lamps when he found a sticking tap. He hit the tap with a hammer, broke the gas pipe and was fortunate not to have been more seriously injured in the explosion which followed.

In April 1909, John Sewell Rigg resigned from the captaincy of the brigade, a post he had held for 28 years. The Mayor, S Wood, thanked him for his long and glorious service and presented him with a framed testimonial on vellum. Capt Rigg, who had recently re-married, said the reason for retirement was not matrimony but inability to attend drills which his men expected him to do if they were there. Capt Steadman was appointed as his replacement. In December 1909, the Corporation was faced with yet another problem. A new Employers' Liability Act required it to insure its employees. Some Councillors claimed that the firemen were volunteers and that the Act did not apply. The Town Clerk reminded them that the men were given the status of employees in 1891. Others then argued that the men were not employees when outside the borough. Once again, the Clerk intervened – the Corporation could not avoid its legal responsibilities quite so easily. Councillors agreed that the brigade should not go outside the borough until the matter was settled. Yet another sub-committee was formed. The outcome of the sub-committee's deliberations must have been of concern to the men and to the astonishment of the Clerk. Councillors resolved to sever their employee/employer links with the brigade which would now be self managed. If the brigade went outside the borough it would have to reimburse the Corporation at the following rates - £2 2 shillings if the engine was used; £1 1 shilling if taken out but not used; for each mile or part mile beyond the boundary – 7 shillings and sixpence; if engaged more than eight hours – 5 shillings per hour plus the cost of any damage to the engine or equipment. By taking this draconian step, the Corporation avoided its responsibilities under the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act. It would continue to subsidise the men's private insurance scheme insofar as it covered them whilst in the borough. This meant an annual contribution of £2 compared with an estimated £30 had the Acts been complied with.

Self-management seemed to have been forgotten by June 1910, when the firemen voted 10-7 in favour of visiting London for their annual outing. The minority refused to agree and claimed that the grant from the Corporation was insufficient – they preferred Scarborough. The seven men said they would petition the Corporation but the Chairman of its Fire Extinguishment Committee said they would be sacked if they did. The men carried out their threat and so did the Corporation, each man receiving a formal letter of dismissal. The men contested the decision, not on the grounds that they were no longer employees but because the Fire Brigade Rules did not permit it. They remained sacked and the Corporation reduced its

grant towards the outing from £15 to £11. The dismissed men each sent a letter of resignation 'under protest' and returned their uniform – minus boots. The 'London' firemen were named as Capt Steadman, Lt J Ewbank, engineer T Dodgson and firemen W Tydd, W Bird, F W Balmer, E Thompson, J Elliott, F Potts and J Dodgson. The 'malcontents' were foreman W J Simpson and firemen T Brown, T Gibson, J Hope, T Robinson, G Shaw and W Spooner. At the Annual General Meeting held a few weeks later Fireman Bird was appointed foreman and four new men were appointed – J Knowles, G S Evans, J T Parkin and F V Tydd. An eventful year ended with a fire at New House Farm, Blencarn at which a barn was gutted and a bull killed.

In May 1911, the Corporation agreed to continue its contribution towards a private insurance policy paid by the firemen but only insofar as it covered their duties whilst in the borough. Councillors also agreed to purchase four pairs of firemen's boots and to grant 10 shillings to each man going on the annual outing. The outing, also in May, was, once again, to London. In marked contrast to the previous year every member of the brigade went. It must have been a 'grand day out' as, thanks to the good offices of Appleby's MP, Mr Sanderson, the men were able to see the preparations for the forthcoming coronation before enjoying good seats at the Trooping of the Colour where Mr Sanderson joined them. The brigade Annual General Meeting was held in July. There was a poor turn-out and Lt Ewbank took the chair. The men were said to have worked harmoniously during the year. Two men had resigned but only one was elected as a replacement. It was agreed not to provide a copy of the annual report to the Corporation.

In January 1912, there was a report of a wooden barn in Bongate on fire. The brigade attended but was unable to obtain any pressure from a nearby hydrant and, by the time the engine was working, the fire had burned itself out. The fire was thought to have been caused by a spark from a passing train. In February there was a serious fire at the Old Brewery (address given as Bongate). The property was owned by John Crosby of Powis House and occupied by Messrs Tydd, painters and plumbers. The premises contained large amounts of petrol, turpentine and paint. The outbreak was discovered at 1.40 a.m. by Mr W Slack who ran to the Moot Hall to raise the alarm. Unfortunately, the rope on the fire bell broke twice and a ladder had to be fetched before the alarm could be sounded. In the meantime, others had gone to St Lawrence's Church and rung one of the bells. The fire was close to houses which were said to be at considerable risk. Two jets of water were used and the fire confined to the warehouse which was badly damaged. Fireman Potts was injured in the fire and was still off sick several months later. An editorial in *The Observer* the following weekend pointed out that, whilst Appleby's fire brigade was as good as any for its size, it should not be hampered by an inefficient alarm system. "Few communities are now content to rely on the ringing of a bell either in a church or other place. The state of affairs in Appleby should not be possible. Penrith has abolished its antiquated fire bell in favour of a loud buzzer at the gas works." The comment prompted a letter from an Appleby resident who thought that a buzzer at the gas works would be a good idea if Appleby's gas works was able to generate sufficient pressure. He evidenced a recent occasion on which Appleby's shops were lit by candles for want of sufficient gas pressure.

To be continued

Graham Coles and Maggie Clowes

Heart of Eden Community Plan

The Heart of Eden group now consists of Appleby and eleven surrounding parishes who have joined together in the hope that they can wield more influence on behalf of their communities than they could do singly. Some issues are of general concern, others relate to particular areas. The Appleby group recently circulated a survey asking residents to list three things they liked about the town, three things they didn't and to suggest possible improvements. 106 replies were received and even with that number a huge variety of issues were raised. I would like to highlight one or two which are probably of particular interest to Appleby-in-Westmorland Society members.

Respondee really appreciated the fact that they lived in a beautiful town with historic buildings but they weren't all sure about sharing it with tourists. To a certain extent there is no choice - people will come regardless to marvel at the wonderful vista from the top of Boroughgate - the Georgian houses, the lime

trees (I know residents have mixed feelings about these!), the almshouses, the two crosses, the Moot Hall and St Lawrence church. It is an amazing heritage of which we as residents are custodians. Are we willing to share it and encourage others to come here and enjoy what we take for granted? If we want tourists (and their money) we need to cater for them.

Three things seem to be major requisites - easy parking, good accessible toilets, choice of places to eat and drink. They are all things which locals appreciate too. But are we prepared to leave parking spaces in the town centre for visitors? Have we got to park in the spaces designated for coaches? Have we enough toilets? Are they immaculate? Do our cafes and pubs go out of their way to cater for tourists?

What do people do when they come here once they've seen the buildings? The castle's closed, the almshouses cannot become a peepshow, the Moot Hall is only open by arrangement, the church is open but unable to provide guides to a building which encapsulates our history, we had a Shire Hall but it is closed and becoming an eyesore, you can walk by the river but only on one side unless you can cope with steps and mud. We've got a wonderful railway and well cared for station - should we be working with the Carlisle-Settle line to promote Appleby? Should we emphasise the link with Lady Anne Clifford? Should we aim to use the Exhibition Centre as a source of information about the town and its history? What is there for children? and the disabled? Should we aim to do something about those issues or just hope the visitors will go away? What is the role of the T.I.C.? Who should fund it? Should it be operating as a retail outlet to reduce its costs? Where does the Fair fit in? It was suggested a couple of years ago that it brought a great deal of money into the area - does it and who benefits?

The majority of respondees commented on the friendliness of the town but some people didn't have such good experiences; they referred to too much backbiting, apathy, lack of community spirit, unwillingness to accept change and, significantly for us, they referred to antagonism between the Town Council and the Society. It would be a shame if that perception detracted from what the Society is trying to do. As you know I hold no brief for the Council - councillors represent us and are responsible for our money through the precept - they must be answerable. However, they do what most of us won't - give up their time and are frequently frustrated by larger government bodies (although not in the case of the bus shelter for which the Council has had the money for three years!)

Whatever has happened in the past it does look as though the Council is trying to improve its procedures (for details see Graham's article).

Some joint working is already happening:

- the Council is leasing us a room in the Public Hall to store our archive
- the Society is working with Councillor Holloway in identifying problems with our streets
- Your Chairman has been an active member of the dear departed New Fair Joint Committee
- Your Treasurer is a member of the Heart of Eden Community plan which is led by Appleby Town Council

As I was writing I spotted this quote: *"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."* Do you agree?

Maggie Clowes

Current Affairs

Appleby New Fair – a personal perspective

In June 2007, Eden District Council's Standards' Committee determined, contrary to the advice of an independent solicitor, that our Society had, among its objectives, a desire to influence public opinion and policy. That put us on a par with organisations such as trades unions and the Church of England. We were not too sure how we might live up to E.D.C.'s expectations but we did our best.

In July 2007, I spoke at two public meetings called to discuss the Fair. I argued that the public of Appleby was being neglected and probably had been since 1975 which was the last year when all three tiers of local government had worked closely with the constabulary and managed the Fair rather than just let it happen. We were pleasantly surprised at the speed with which Cumbria Constabulary set up a new department at its headquarters which would handle all major public events. The police were first 'out of the blocks'.

In 2002, Appleby's Mayor, Cllr Thwaytes, wrote to Eden District Council and pointed out that it could not avoid its responsibilities towards the Fair. His plea received very short shrift. The advice of the District Council's solicitor was that E.D.C. should have nothing to do with it. Comments made by various District Councillors when the matter was discussed in Penrith show just how strongly they felt. "It is a nonsensical commitment and dangerous in the extreme" and "It is impossible to manage the unmanageable" were typical. Enter the District Council's Standards Committee and our chance to influence public opinion. In December 2007, Kevin Douglas, E.D.C.'s new Chief Executive, told a meeting of the New Fair Joint Committee that his Council now understood that it had a legal duty to provide for public safety and protection at events such as Appleby Fair and that he would formulate a management strategy which would co-ordinate the work of other organisations involved. His list did not include the New Fair Joint Committee. Early indications are that the revised arrangements worked well but credit for much of the improvement with regard to litter and general cleanliness must go to the New Fair Joint Committee which had the problems well in hand before E.D.C. took over. More is promised – such as control over unauthorised use of land for caravans and supervision of food outlets.

Finally, as our Chairman pointed out in the previous Newsletter, Cumbria County Council participated in the management structure and put £15,000 of financial support where 'its mouth was'. Appleby Town Council was unrepresented. Instead, it put conflicting comments into the public domain from which we are entitled to assume that our Council loved/hated the Fair and that visitors to it were welcome/unwelcome.

Which leads me to the 'history' bit, albeit by a somewhat tortuous route. I have often wondered when the Fair became a gypsy or Romany gathering so when *The Cumberland News* (June 6) published a number of interesting photographs under the heading "400 Years of Horse Trading" I thought the paper might well be well enough informed to take the Fair back to about 1600 – well before the notorious 'Charter' of 1685. (Incidentally, I did not read one single reference to that charter in any publication concerning this year's Fair – progress!) On that same day, Simon Evans gave an interesting lecture in the Supper Room as part of a series of talks run by the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Team for Traveller Education. He did not talk about Appleby Fair per se but his input was very helpful, none the less. He told his audience that the Romanies or gypsies arrived in England in about 1505 at a time when most people were settled, indeed confined, in their villages. The newcomers would have had much more in common with the itinerant community of drovers, pedlars, etc. than with the locals. Interchange between the various travelling groups was commonplace and customs and language now contain several Irish, Scots and Hindi words and, to a lesser extent, practices. Mr Evans made several references to Irish tinkers and Scottish drovers who made up the bulk of England's mobile population before the gypsies arrived. He pointed out, as did John Morson of Kendal who wrote a most informative letter to *The Herald* on 13 April 1946 (at the height of the first post-war debate about the future of the Fair), that the origins of Appleby Fair might be traceable to pre-Norman conquest days when itinerant traders or

'Paddies' roamed our ancient track ways. They always used byways which bypassed settlements and camped on common or waste land outwith the jurisdiction of the town or borough. They usually did business on the ancient camp sites and villagers would visit them. The contrary would render them foul of local dignitaries and tolls – both of which they preferred to avoid (no change there then). Mr Morson's observations fit neatly with my claim that Scottish drovers traditionally used Roman Road to bring Galloway and Highland cattle onto Fair Hill for centuries before New Fair became a gypsy gathering. Note: several local towns still have their 'Paddy Lane' – Kendal certainly does. Mr Evans emphasised that itinerants did not travel far or fast and that gatherings such as Appleby Fair did not become the huge events we know today before the advent of the motor car. Following Mr Evans' talk and Mr Morson's letter, I remain of the opinion that the most probable origin of the Fair is that Scottish drovers used Roman Road (an ancient track way which, in our area, ran from Coupland Beck in a straight line over Fair Hill, past Powis Cottages and on to Kirkby Thore). Local farmers and others would meet up with them on Bongate Common (Fair Hill) and trade. No doubt the drovers returned north as soon as they had parted with their livestock – job well done.

Having had my interest rekindled, I took a long look at the scrapbooks to see if I could find out when Brampton Hill Fair, to use its original name, became a gypsy gathering. For what its worth, newspaper references soon make it clear that the original fair was for cattle, sheep and horses and that it attracted dealers from far afield. Prior to the opening of Appleby Auction Mart (1876), the vast majority of beasts sold on the hill were sheep and cattle and the papers dutifully reported the mart prices, just as they do today. Whilst horses were traded on Fair Hill, the majority of sales were conducted on The Sands - again the newspapers reported the prices and, quite often, named the dealers involved. The opening of the Auction Mart led to a gradual decline in the number of cattle and sheep sold on Fair Hill – the last recorded sales on the hill being in 1904. Very few horses went through the auction. Not long after the auction mart opened, the owners began to advertise the June stock sales as New Fair Sale – a practice which continued until the mart closed and something I found confusing for a while. In 1888, *The Herald* reported, "The Brampton or New Fair, as it is generally called, was held on the hill near Appleby on Tuesday and Wednesday last. The former day is devoted chiefly to cattle and sheep. The horse fair commenced on The Sands on Tuesday evening where a number of animals were sold for the London and large town bus and van trade". The first indication that things were changing was *The Herald's* report of the 1890 Fair. Referring to the trade in cattle and sheep, the paper told us that quoting the prices would be useless as the classes and qualities varied so much. Having dismissed the sales aspect in one sentence, the paper went on, "The main fair was held on Wednesday when the Hill presented a lively appearance with its booths and tents and a bewildering parade of horses. The caravans of the nomad tribe of horse copers*, hawkers and potters with their scores of bare-headed crones, buxom women, strapping girls and healthy-looking children as they surrounded their camp fires over which mysterious and savoury culinary operations were being performed, afforded an interesting study". This was the first descriptive account of Fair Hill as a travellers' campsite that I have come across.

In 1901 the same paper reported that Fair Hill presented a fascinating study. "The crowd was an interesting one and represented all types from the hard-headed Westmorland farmer and the bona fide dealer to the horse cowping* gentlemen from all parts. Women were also plentiful, mostly of the Romany type and various encampments could be seen dotting the moor and lining the fairground." Readers will note the words "dotting" and "lining" – words which could not be used to describe today's fields full of caravans and towing vehicles. Government agents were active on the day purchasing mounts for cavalry regiments. It was clear from the report that it was still a genuine horse fair and that the "Westmorland farmer" and "bona fide dealer" could be differentiated from the "horse cowping gentlemen". [* Kelly's Directory defined 'cowping' as bartering. Kirkby Stephen's Cowper Day did not end until 1965.]

The 1901 report was the first to carry a reference to Romanies. The two reports (1890 and 1901) read together suggest to me that the Fair did not become a gypsy/Romany gathering until just over 100 years ago and even then it was on a very modest scale – a far cry from today's overwhelming 'happening'.

Interestingly I could not find references to horses being washed in the river until after World War II. Can any reader enlighten me?

The 1974 Fair that caused all the trouble as it was not controlled at all well, prompted newspaper headlines such as “New Fair changed from a two day horse fair to a two week free for all” and “New Fair brings Chaos” brought an estimated 700 caravans into Appleby. When the word got round that things would change in 1975 the number of vans dropped to 500. Last year, 2007, there were 1,291. This year the number of vans rose to 1,828. In 1974, 53-year old Bill Brough, who was the ‘travellers’ spokesman’, told *The Herald* that, when he was a boy the Fair was a friendly place. “There were only about forty vans then, all horse drawn,” he added.

Unfortunate Memory Lapses?

In the previous Newsletter I pointed out that the present Mayor had not one but four opportunities to declare an interest in a matter to be considered by the Council. The draft minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in April read, “The Clerk stated that she remembered that Mrs Patterson had declared an interest on every occasion when the shop lease in question was discussed since, as Clerk, she took particular interest in such matters, but it was likely to be a clerical error that she had failed to include it in her minutes”.

Some interest – some memory!

Appleby Town Council

We may be getting somewhere at last. For at least twelve years the Society has urged our Town Council to adopt modern practices and get something done – we achieved very little. But last year Eden District Council kindly elevated us to an organisation capable of influencing public opinion and policy and in our previous Newsletter I suggested that the incoming Mayor might try to improve matters. The following is an extract from the minutes of her first Council meeting as Mayor (21 May).

C9/05/08 MAYOR’S REPORT AND COUNCILLORS’ QUESTIONS

The Mayor’s (first) report was received and noted, including :

- ◆ thanks to Councillors for their support at Mayormaking and also the Mayor’s Sunday Service
- ◆ thanks also to youth organisations who attended on Sunday and to the Air Training Corps
- ◆ thanks to Simon Walton, for his reading in Church and to the Mayor’s Chaplain for the service
- ◆ a request for permission to take the Mayor and Mayoress’ chains out of the Parish when attending Fulwood Barracks in June to meet H.R.H. the Queen on behalf of the town
- ◆ advice from Paul Sagar at EDC re. the no smoking signs for the Cloisters
- ◆ concern that the Council and Committee meetings were currently too long and a request that all Members read the Good Meetings Guide advice contained in the latest CALC Circular in an effort to reduce the number of late sittings
- ◆ a new system whereby the Clerk would in future list on her report all items placed on the centre table for Members to read and/or request a copy, in an effort to reduce agenda-fuelled late sittings
- ◆ a request that all Working Party minutes first be approved as accurate by all attendees and then be given to the Clerk to issue to all Councillors, either by email or via paper copies on desks
- ◆ a reminder that Members presenting those WP (and also the two main Committees’) minutes should then only read out the recommendations, since all Councillors will already have read the minutes, thus saving valuable meeting time

Members will quickly recognise parts of our wish list – a good start. (I’m not sure that Her Majesty would like it to be known that her Royal and Ancient Borough now refers to her as H.R.H. – that’s probably treason but I won’t quibble.) More to the point is the Mayor’s determination to follow the advice contained in the Good Meetings Guide. It, too, is entirely supportive of the Society’s efforts. Long may it last. Thank you Mr Mayor. As I have said and written so very often – criticism of the Council can and will cease once it is clear that the rules are being followed.

The CALC Circular, dated May 2008, reads:-

"Are your council meetings time well spent? Good productive meetings are at the heart of a good council. Poor meetings are demoralising, invariably mean the council is not serving its community well and are a problem which should be addressed urgently. It is important to be clear about the purpose of a council meeting. The primary purpose is to make decisions; it is not a general discussion forum or information exchange. The decisions taken should also be the more important decisions – minor and routine decisions should be taken by the Clerk.

Everyone has their own specific role at a meeting – the Chairman to ensure the business is conducted efficiently with fair opportunities for all councillors to contribute; the councillor to express views that are relevant and succinct and the Clerk to give authoritative advice that assists the council in taking legal decisions. A good Chairman will ensure that these respective roles are fully understood by everyone present – with tactful reminders when necessary.

Good meetings require well constructed agendas. The Chairman and Clerk should plan an agenda carefully before it is sent out. An agenda item must clearly specify, for the benefit of councillors and the general public, the decision to be taken, not just a vague topic like "Highway Matters". Where a decision is to be taken the item will usually read, "To consider", where the item is for information only it will read, "To note" (or "To receive"). Decisions cannot be legally taken unless the matter has been explicitly identified on the agenda. For this reason items such as "Matters arising" and "AOB" should not be on the agenda.

Particular care should be taken with items for information (such as correspondence received) and reports from representatives. They can be a major contributor to overlong meetings. Do they really need to be on the agenda if decisions are not required? Could the information be circulated or made available by other means with an opportunity for councillors to place any genuine issues arising on a subsequent agenda? It is not the role of a council to discuss absolutely everything that moves in its parish or passes through the council office – keep a sense of focus and priorities.

Finally, everyone should take responsibility for helping to make all meetings good meetings by ensuring their own contributions are brief, strictly relevant to the matter for decision, constructive and respectful to the views of fellow councillors. Not much to ask, is it?"

Those final words, "Not much to ask, is it?", say it all. The CALC Good Meetings Guide will henceforth be a yardstick by which to judge the Town Council.

The last word

I admit to being a little hard on our new Mayor recently and that I let some of her unfounded criticism of our Society and its members get to me but I never dreamed of referring to her as "Essex Girl". According to *The Herald*, that tribute was paid to her by a fellow Councillor on Mayor-making day. Not surprising the newspaper's headline read, "Essex Girl becomes Mayor". In view of some of the less than flattering definitions of the phrase 'Essex Girl' to be found, can it be called a 'tribute'?

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Councillor Budding who was, for two years, Appleby's unpaid finance officer and the mastermind behind proposals to privatise the Tourist Information Centre and to place all of Appleby's public buildings into a trust, has resigned from the Council. Whatever our individual views might be about his ideas, there is no doubting that his enthusiasm and talent will be sorely missed in the Council chamber.

Graham Coles

Committee Meeting

Matters Arising from Minutes for 8 April 2008: Playing Field/Memorial Trees – further reminder to be sent to Mr Emerson. No news about the Play Wall; Lady Anne DVD – no progress on this matter and it was agreed that the item should be removed from the agenda; Exhibitions – a letter is to be sent asking for exhibition space in the T.I.C. for 2009 in order that the Society is made aware of the official position regarding plans for the space. If the space is not available, an alternative will have to be found; Society

Archive – reports were given about negotiations for the room in the Market Hall and of the meeting held to discuss the database; Pot Holes Working Group – rather than duplicate effort, it was agreed that any problems brought to the attention of Society members will be passed on to Town Councillor, Ian Holloway who is liaising with Capita Highways; Dilapidated Buildings – no news about Shire Hall and the exterior of the empty shop on Bridge Street has been painted.

Reports: Treasurer/Membership – balance £6017.46 (including £705 from Appleby Legacy, £234.62 grant monies and £65 from Ian's talk). Nothing to report on Membership; Oral History – volunteer has come forward, interested in undertaking interviews; Planning/Townscape – no discussion on this matter; Appleby New Fair Joint Committee – concern expressed at the 'side-lining' of this body by the Police, County and Eden District Council organisations formed to deal with this year's Fair. Kevin Douglas (Chief Executive, Eden District Council) will be asked for details of the promised 'follow-up' meeting; Chamber of Trade and Community Association – the Society would like to continue to be kept informed about ideas and developments and will request copies of minutes of meetings. Some discussion took place about the Parish Plan and Parish Survey.

Newsletter: discussion took place about deadline for contributions, layout and 'Appleby Accolade'.

Correspondence received: Windermere and Bowness Civic Society News Issue 94; letter from Paul Foote, Eden District Council.

Coffee Morning 14 June 2008 Report: a very successful morning. Thanks to organiser and helpers to be expressed via the Newsletter.

Arrangements for A.G.M.: change of speaker – Alice Palmer will give a talk on "The Life and Times of Lady Anne Clifford". Discussion took place regarding increase in subs and Committee members confirmed whether or not they would stand for re-election. Chairman will conduct the whole meeting.

Any Other Business: Christmas meeting will be held as a part of the usual bi-monthly programme – 29 November 2009; e-mail received about a proposed new T.V. programme involving young people from the gypsy/travelling communities.

Next meeting: Tuesday, 12 August 2008, 7.30 p.m.

From the Secretary

Visit to Appleby: Thursday 10 July 2008 - members of Heskett Local History Society are visiting Appleby and will be given a tour including Boroughgate, the Chapel at St Anne's Alms Houses, St Lawrence's Church and the Moot Hall.

Railway Photographs: we have received an e-mail from Peter Burgess asking for 'unseen photographs of railways including stations around Appleby'. Peter runs a website www.cumbria-railways.co.uk If anyone has anything that they are willing to pass on to Peter, please get in touch with him direct.

Computers: in connection with our Archive project, we are looking for two computer monitors. If any reader has a monitor that they no longer need, please can you let Vivienne know (tel: 017683 51597).

Visit to Keswick Museum: as we hurtle towards August, please note that an evening visit has been arranged to Keswick Museum on Thursday 14 August, starting at 7.00 p.m. Jamie Barnes is planning a short tour of the Museum and is devising a quiz. Between 22 July and 30 August the subject of the exhibition on display at the Museum is "150 years of Eccentric Inventions from 1851". Flyer enclosed.

Cumbria Local History Federation: is holding its Annual Convention 2008 and A.G.M. on Saturday 27 September at the University of Cumbria, Newton Rigg, Penrith. The themes will be "Writing and

researching local history in Cumbria” with key speaker, Dr Angus Winchester of Lancaster University and “Beyond Words – an evaluation of 30 years of Oral History” with key speaker, Jane Renouf of Ambleside Oral History Group. Further details from Vivienne.

Eden Area Police Community Liaison Forum: will hold its next meeting on Tuesday 29 July 2008, 7.00 p.m. at Masonic Hall, Main street, Alston. Ask Vivienne for details of the Agenda.

Renewals of Subscriptions: in view of the proposed increase and removal of the ‘family subscription’ option to be discussed at the A.G.M., I have not included the usual Membership Application/Renewal Form with this Newsletter. The forms will be available once the result of the voting on the proposal is known.

Next Meeting

**Thursday 31 July 2008
7.30 p.m. Supper Room, Market Hall**

**A.G.M.
followed by**

“The Life and Times of Lady Anne Clifford”

Speaker: Alice Palmer

Society-member Alice is well-known for her interest in and admiration of Lady Anne Clifford and gives us the benefit of her knowledge in an entertaining and informative talk.
(Members please note this change to our advertised programme.)

Website: www.applebysociety.force9.co.uk

If you have enjoyed reading this Newsletter and are not already a member of the *Appleby-in-Westmorland Society*, you could have it delivered free to your home six times a year simply by joining the Society.

A £6 individual/£10 family (rates to July 2008 A.G.M.) subscription also entitles you to attend six bi-monthly meetings free. These are usually held in the Supper Room of the Market Hall on the last Thursday of January, March, May, July (our A.G.M. meeting), September and November at 7.30 in the evening. Application forms are available at the Library.

The contents of this Newsletter may be freely used to the advantage of Appleby-in-Westmorland but, in order to comply with their wishes, the **personal histories** of living persons MUST NOT be used in whole or in part without the written consent of the Society which retains the copyright.

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The Newsletter is published by the Appleby-in-Westmorland Society and is edited by Vivienne Gate, Secretary, tel: 017683 51597