



*Appleby in Westmorland • Root and Branch • May it Flourish Forever*

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**NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER**  
**Newsletter May 2008**

**No 77**

**Public Meeting 27 March 2008 “Creating a Parish Archive”**

We very much looked forward to hearing the story of this most interesting project and were not disappointed as Gordon Bowness, Chairman of Crosby Ravensworth Parish Council and Eileen Risk, Secretary of Crosby Ravensworth Parish Archive told us of their experiences.

Very briefly: Eileen told us how, in 1998/9, the Parish Council took part in a Local Heritage Initiative pilot project to *test and demonstrate how to help local communities to understand, record, conserve, restore and celebrate the local heritage around them that provides the context for their one lives*. We learned about the good response to the initial questionnaire whereby small committees carried out the Maulds Meaburn Green survey, replacement of stepping stones in Crosby-Silver Street, a limekilns survey, the survey of Dale Banks beck, a survey of parish monuments, a survey of wild flowers, a house survey and interviews of oral histories of older residents. A cross-section of parishioners agreed to keep diaries for the year. Photographic records were kept of the surveys and all local events in the year. A book was to be produced, bringing it all together. Monthly meetings were held to monitor progress and someone from the Countryside Agency kept in touch on a regular basis and helped plan the next stage. A grant of £3,000 was allocated. The project was complete by the end of 1999 and the task of collecting all reports from committees and writing the book began. The resulting publication, called *Beyond Black Dub*, was published in June 2000. The Countryside Agency and Local Heritage Initiative were so impressed by the project it was featured in their video and booklet and local representatives were invited to the launch of the full LHI scheme. Having gathered all this information and realising that important records were being lost as folk died and possessions were destroyed, participants realized the need for a Parish Archive.

Gordon then explained all the ups and downs of how the building now housing the records was chosen and renovated. It took about 6 years and lots of hard work, disappointments and a steep learning curve to get to the official opening on 24 March 2006. The first property considered suitable was sold to someone else. The next building to be identified eventually became the home of the Archive but it needed considerable renovation work. To complete the Heritage Lottery Fund application meant obtaining quotes from trades people, getting an architect's appraisal report, ensuring no bats were roosting in the building, completing planning applications and gaining change of use permissions. With lots of hard working together the form was completed and the application was accepted. Then, the builder was unable to do the work. Back to the drawing board. A second builder's quote was higher than the original but HLF would not increase its grant. With adjustments and savings, the project was given the go-ahead. More questions came from HLF – more form-filling. HLF granted almost £50,000. £4,267 came from *Awards for All (Lottery Grants for Local People)* and £1,550 came from *The Hadfield Trust*. The Parish Council also contributed. As well as funding renovations, the grants were used to obtain all the shelving, office furniture and equipment.

With lots of help and training from Cumbria Archive Service staff at Kendal Record Office and the Conservation Unit in Carlisle, volunteers stored the material and created a database catalogue system, creating finding aids and processes allowing the easy tracing and replacing of documents used by researchers. These researchers come from all corners of the earth – a sure sign of success. A lively question and answer session followed, with great interest being shown in the items Eileen and Gordon had brought with them.

### **Visit to Haweswater Pumping Station and Museum 24 April 2008**

30 members joined the visit to Haweswater and we spent a most interesting evening. The Headworks Controller at Haweswater for United Utilities gave a fascinating and fact-filled talk about the North West's largest water supply reservoir. There followed a tour of the pumping station. Lots of questions were asked as we toured and were answered knowledgeably and enthusiastically by our guide.

Vivienne Gate

### **From the Chairman**

#### **Let's All Go To The Fair!**

It's just like London buses - none around for HOURS, then too many all at once! Until last summer, NO-ONE wanted to touch the management of the Fair with a barge-pole! Now look what we've got:

- A high-powered Police Events Management Committee. (At the New Fair Joint Committee on 1 April 2008 there was one policeman present - the posse has moved to other fields!)
- A plan by Mr Douglas, Chief Executive of Eden District Council, to set up a Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group of Eden District Council - formed of people who are senior enough in their agency to be able to exert responsibility and who have access to finance (power and money). In fact this seems to have got going - Inspector Skelton reported to the Town Meeting that the police plan for the New Fair 2008 would be submitted to this Group for approval on 28 April, which implies that they have started to take control.
- The County Council Committee for Eden is asked to support this Group with money (£10,000 + £5,000 highways money) via their representative on the Group (the Area Support Manager) and via the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee

Then there is the report in the *The Herald* of the research done by a Salford University study group into last year's Fair, (and also by them into travellers' problems generally); this was presented to an unspecified committee chaired by district councillor Richard Turner, chairman of the Cumbria Housing Group, on Monday 14th April. Apparently "the county and district councils" commissioned this. Many of their conclusions are reflected in Mr Douglas's plan.

**(Have you noticed the bit that's missing? Well, the only representative voice for Appleby is Cllr Mary Warburton on the Eden Committee of the CCC!)**

However, a Focus Group from Appleby has met (no councillors allowed) working via a consultant to the EDC Appleby New Fair Scrutiny Review Group (sic). (No power, no money)

Despite polite mouthings about the New Fair Joint Committee, I think it is effectively finished, and just as well, really - it has never had any clout. No-one is going to pay any attention to its members - (no power, no money), but I think it was gratuitously rude to ignore Ella Langan, the Chairman, who has tried to hold the thing together for many years, so completely.

I "chair" the Infra-structure Working Party of the Appleby Joint Fair Committee on your behalf; two professional members have been working hard to try to improve toilet provision and litter disposal; apart from lack of finance, which obviously hampers our efforts, we have to say that we

have encountered a significant lack of enthusiasm among Appleby folk to help us by providing sites for toilets and litter provision (obviously mainly along both sides of the river and along Battlebarrow and mainly for Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Fair week) - it is NIMBY writ large (Not In My Back Yard). Unless the new arrangements are more stringent (power and money), we think that during Fair Week we will continue to suffer from personal evacuation in the streets and knee-deep piles of litter (though there is more provision this year than last.) I hope mightily that I will not have this job much longer.

### **Consultation**

“When is a consultation not a consultation? When it is conducted by any form of government organisation” - M. Clowes.

“Consultation” has become a word that you have to wash your mouth out after using, when applied in modern politics at all levels. It is purely a box that has to be ticked to show that it has been done (“otherwise we won’t get the grant”), however unreal and farcical it is. We can quote countless examples (like the planning submissions studiously checked every month by ATC, whose comments are totally ignored, &c, &c) but the one that has recently been in the forefront of our minds is that about the new crossing on the Sands. We were asked to comment at about ten days notice, so we rushed the Committee together and produced a sober and carefully thought-out critique of the plans. I have yet to receive an acknowledgement of or reply to our submission, despite a reminder. We suggested it was a sledgehammer to crack a walnut as some railings would have sufficed; among other comments, we mentioned that the left turn off the bridge would have to be carefully planned to give long lorries room to turn. About three days into construction, the workers found that there was not enough room for long lorries to turn and they had to re-lay it. And so on.

What effect can any comment of ours possibly have on anything? Like the “consultation” about the reorganisation of the form of governance in Eden District Council. The Chief Executive of Eden District Council, Mr Douglas, was quoted in *The Herald* as saying that “. . . the consultation was only to seek views and the final decision would be with the council. It was not up for referendum or vote”. So why bother to comment, when the decision is driven by paid officials and semi-professional councillors - there is no possibility of anything we say having any meaningful effect probably because WE CANNOT HURT THE COUNCIL - they are entirely fireproof! If we DID have power to hurt them financially or otherwise, things might change, but then probably no-one would volunteer to serve on a Council. Might there be the germ of an idea there?

### **Lifebelts**

For the umpteenth time, one of the lifebelts in the Sands area has been vandalised - not only the cork ring has gone, so has the rope and the lid of the container. But all is well - we were told at the Town Meeting that there is a spare in the Town Clerk’s office - no doubt ready for instant use! Mind you, we cannot keep asking Ella Langan to get us replacements, she would soon disappear behind the stockpile!

I sympathise with the Council in this matter, and for once have no sensible advice to offer. What can they do to stop this? Answer - probably nothing - the red pillars are a magnet for rowdies to have “fun” with.

But if we think hard about what they are supposed to do - save life - are they really much good? We have to discount the Police and the Fire Service - neither is equipped for water rescue (they told us so) and anyway they are not on instant call. Same applies to the Coastguard; don’t laugh - they are a rescue service for the Lakes! (We asked)

Set the scene - the river is running high and fast; person falls into river and sets off for Carlisle. Say they are spotted at once, and there are people near to the ring; ring is grabbed (not very easy if you are unfamiliar with the mechanism), it is run to the river bank, where it is hurled into the water, by a fit and active person (they are quite heavy), hopefully somewhere near the fast-moving body, and remembering to hold on to the rope. But the victim is halfway to Holme Bridge by this time!

It is true that they could be of use when the river is low and not running fast, in some of the holes in the riverbed.

It is a very difficult problem, and at least the belts show that Appleby is conscious of it - but can we afford to continually renew lout fodder when it is probably not too effective anyway? Maybe we just have to say yes and bite the bullet!

### **Town Meeting 21 April**

The annual Town Meeting was a pretty low-key affair. Town Council officers' reports were routine - we had the draft accounts in good time, though the other reports were only available on the night.

I asked where the £25,000 from 2007/8 precept was, as it was not identifiable from the accounts; Cllr Budding, standing in for the new (but fully paid) Responsible Finance Officer, said he didn't know which fund it was in, but he would find out and, in the final accounts, would identify that part of the precept money devoted to building repairs, because it was a good idea to split it into a sub-account so we could ensure it was spent on the buildings repair, especially when another £25,000 was placed into it from the 2008/9 precept.

Mrs Clowes pointed out that the charities looked after by the Council had attracted huge interest sums over the years, and that the Charities Commission did not like interest sums being held in a charity's fund instead of being disbursed according to the charity provisions. Cllr Budding said that plans were afoot to spend some of the money.

Cllr Morgan spoke about new initiatives and Council Charter obligations, but I didn't follow most of it, I'm afraid.

In the absence of the County Councillor, I tabled a question as to whether or not the "snagging" after the town enhancement plan had been abandoned. Cllr Rooke assured me that strenuous efforts were still being made to get the job done; Mrs Gate pointed out that Pye's, the relevant contractors, were still working for the Council outside her office in Kendal, so their non-compliance with the contract seemed to have had no adverse effect on their employment!

Cllr Connell expressed his disappointment at Eden District Council's turning deaf ears to his plea before the Council to retain the public toilets that are to be closed (back to the situation 3 years ago, and to hell with tourism!)

Inspector Skelton from the police told us at great length how good his Force is; he was quizzed strongly about traffic arrangements during the Fair and was able to reassure people about the possible temporary closure of the Sands.

Mr Rowlandson put in a plea for help and understanding re. Eden Open Air (the Centre 67 youth facility), the main thrust of what he said being that lack of money hampered their efforts to keep up their good work in interesting young people in activities off the streets.

There followed detailed queries about the RADAR key to the disabled toilets at the TIC; about the Deputy Mayor not declaring an interest in a matter under discussion (see Current Affairs by Graham); and about long-standing problems concerning access across Scattergate Green.

## Value for Money

I normally leave most of the civic matters in the Newsletter to Graham, but I thought he might not be available this issue, having to spend more time in hospital. I am happy to say that he has returned, an ounce or two lighter than heretofore, but with typewriter finger unimpeded. However, the subject I dealt with in his possible absence is important to us all and not brand new, so I will lay it before you – sources are Council publications:

### Part One

From the Appleby Town Council Accounts – year ended 31 March 2008 – Council Staff:

	£
T.I.C. Wages (1)	28,817.88
Market Hall Wages (2)	15,176.30
Administration Salaries	<u>14,606.75</u>
Total	58,600.93

For 2008/9 add approx £5,000 for RFO 5,000.00

Approx total for 2008/9 **63,600.00**

Note (1) The TIC lost **£11,913.12** during the year

Note (2) The Market Hall lost **£5,923.10** during the year

### Part Two

Summary of Mayor's report to the Annual Town Meeting – Achievements during the year

- Personal efforts to keep Appleby-in-Westmorland in public eye
- Personal and joint efforts to increase number of visiting coaches
- Council efforts got street lighting put up (3)
- Council efforts got Chapel Street re-surfaced (4)
- Cllr Langan's efforts got Shire Hall toilets opened during Fair Week

Note (3) After two years

Note (4) Other initiatives also involved

**QUESTION – is the expenditure in Part One compatible with the achievements in Part Two?  
i.e Are we getting value for money?**

## Pothole Reporting

At the Town Meeting, Cllr Holloway stated that he had taken on negotiating about the state of Appleby streets. It seems daft that we should persevere with our own initiative alongside the Town efforts, so I approached him, and he is pleased to use our resources to the benefit of Appleby as a whole. Basically, we aim to link our resources (the eyes of our members, especially those who put their names on the list to help), and his resource (contacts in the relevant highways departments) to report defects in the roads and streets around the Town. I shall be writing personally to the members of the observer team with details of how to channel their reports to try to get the best result, both short- and long-term.

## Appleby Accolade

We are delighted to see the wonderful paint jobs in the town centre - the Masonic Hall (very smart), and the corner with Cleator's, "The Feel Good Factory" and "Essences". We **need** fresh paint to

raise our spirits after the disappointments of the closed and dilapidated shops in Bridge Street, and the failure of any authority to get to grips with the “snagging” (more like rebuilding by now!) after the town enhancement of THREE YEARS ago!

R Ian Campbell

### **History Slot**

#### **THE AUGUST ASSIZE IN APPLEBY**

##### **The End of the Story**

Our ancient Applebian was nowhere to be seen at the end of the Assize so I will have to tell you what happened there. Not much I can tell you about Robert Atkinson. There's no account of his trial, but he was executed to the great satisfaction of Lady Anne who regarded him as her enemy. She says in her diary: “In which time they (the Judges) kept the Assizes in the Moothall in Appleby Towne, where Robert Atkinson, one of my Tennants in Mallerstang, and that great Enemie, was condemned to be hang'd drawn and quarter'd as a Traitor to ye King, for having had a hand in the late Plotte and Conspiracie, so as he was executed accordingly the first Day of the Month following.” It is not clear whether he was executed in Appleby but there is no doubt that the execution took place. There is a legend that, because he had turned King's Evidence, a pardon had been sent from London but, conveniently for his accusers, it arrived too late. I have heard a wild, and surely slanderous, suggestion that the reprieve would have been sent to Lady Anne as Sheriff of Westmorland and stayed in her pocket until the sentence had been carried out. Whatever the truth of that, Lady Anne's antagonism to Robert Atkinson did not extend to his widow. In her diary we read that in 1676 Mrs Elizabeth Atkinson was invited to dine at Brougham Castle where Lady Anne made her a gift of two shillings.

In contrast to Atkinson we have a blow by blow account of the trial of Francis Howgill. The Quakers' use of print was a major strength and from very early times they kept detailed records of all they did. In 1753 Joseph Besse produced a book called “A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers”. In it is what reads like a verbatim account of Howgill's trial. One cannot help feeling sorry for the Judge in this case. He was actually staying in the Castle with Lady Anne who is a staunch Anglican. (Could it be because of pressure from her that only one Quaker is recorded in Appleby at this time although there were many in the surrounding area?) It is likely that Sir Philip Musgrave, that great persecutor of the Quakers, was also staying there. He was related to Lady Anne and he had hunted down Robert Atkinson and would have wanted to see him finally punished. If those two strong characters had tried to exert any pressure on the Judge in respect of Francis Howgill they would have been disappointed. From the way he addresses the prisoner you get the impression that he really didn't want to send him to prison.

The sticking point for the trial was Howgill's refusal to take the Oath of Allegiance:

Judge: I am come to execute the Law; and the Law requires an Oath, and I cannot alter it. Do you think the Law must be changed for you. Your principles are altogether inconsistent with the Law and Government. I pray you show me which way we shall proceed. Show me some reason and give me some ground.

The Judge gives Howgill ample opportunity to put his case. Although he is convinced of the righteousness of his cause the Quaker is fully aware of the implications of his refusal to take the oath:

Francis: I did not deny it (the oath) out of Obstinacy or Wilfulness, neither in contempt of the King's Law and Government for I would rather choose my Liberty than Bonds, and I am sensible it is to be a great damage to me; I have a wife and children, and some estate which we might subsist on and do Goode to others, and I know all this lies at stake but if it were my life also I dare not but do as I do, lest I should incur the displeasure of God.

Inevitably he is found guilty but even when he is brought back into court to be sentenced the Judge still gives him a chance to argue his case, which he does, citing authorities from the past to prove that the early Christians did not swear:

Judge            Surely you mistake.

Francis        I have not their books here.

Judge        Will you say upon your honest word, they denied all Swearing.

Francis        What I have said is true.

According to our commentator, the Judge was reluctant to do his duty. Apparently he “pronounced sentence with a faint and low Voice”:

Judge        You are put out of the King’s protection, and the benefit of the Law. Your lands are confiscate to the King during your life and your goods and chattels for ever and you are to be prisoner during your Life

Francis        Hard sentence for obeying the command of Christ but I am content and in perfect Peace with the Lord. And the Lord forgive you all

Judge        Well if you will yet be subject to the Laws, the King will show you mercy.

Francis        The Lord has showed mercy to me.

(If the King had been present he might well have shown mercy - Charles is on record as writing to Sir Daniel Fleming saying it was “not the King’s pleasure to have these poore people so troubled upon account of their being Quakers only” but he was a long way off in London and too busy revelling to ensure that he was obeyed.)

Francis spent the last years of his life in the gaol on the bridge. His treatment, though harsh at first, seems to have improved over the years when he was allowed visitors, even receiving the Mayor of Appleby. Local people seem to have seen him as a sort of early Citizens Advice Bureau. This is a short extract from a rhymed tribute penned after his death:

Sure Appleby may now its loss bewail  
It hath no more such to detain in jail  
No man so fit your difficulties to end  
Mongst lawyers now your money you must spend.

Daniel Fleming described Francis Howgill as “a great speaker among the Quakers, if they got rid of him, probably they could not get along without him.” Although he was no longer free to preach in person, he continued to communicate with fellow Quakers by writing letters and pamphlets. Even when he was an itinerant preacher he had always found time to write regular reports of what Quaker missionaries were achieving and to pen pamphlets putting the case for Quakerism. The Quakers had their own printing presses in London and an efficient method of distributing them (something I am still researching). What I think is amazing is that, while a prisoner, he wrote two major contributions to the religious debate as well as many letters encouraging fellow Quakers who were being heavily persecuted. One of the pamphlets is particularly interesting as it shows that someone was getting books to him in prison. The Rector of Greystoke, Alan Smalwood, had given a major sermon in Carlisle Cathedral to the Justices justifying the use of oaths. He had the advantage of a cosy study to write in, access to his many works of reference and to an approved printer in York. Francis in his prison cell relied on his trusty Bible and whatever books fellow Quakers could get to him. Writing materials had to be purchased and brought in for him; remember that he would have been writing with a quill pen but he still produced a closely reasoned manuscript that ran to 84 densely packed pages which had to be taken to London to be printed. The Smalwood book was published in 1664; Francis’ response appeared only two years later - that is pretty good going in any circumstances.

A petition was sent to the King in 1668 pleading for his release but, like Atkinson's reprieve, it came too late. Francis died in that year still in prison. His wife and friends were allowed to be with him and he had time to write a special letter to his daughter, Abigail, asking her to care for her mother. He was buried at home in Grayrigg.

*Post script.* I found an entry in the Kendal Parish Registers for the birth of a son to Francis Howgill of Grayrigg in 1669. Could this refer to our Francis?

Maggie Clowes

#### Chariots of Fire (Part 6)

We ended Part 5 in 1891, the year in which the Borough Council won a court case against a farmer who had refused to pay for the services of the brigade when it attended a fire more than eight miles from Appleby. The outcome was that the Council gave the firemen the nominal status of employees even though they remained unpaid.

The next A.G.M. was held in the King's Head in April 1892. There had been just one call-out during the year, to a farm at Newby Hall but I have not found any report in the local press.

1892 proved to be a 'quiet' year due, mainly, to the unavailability of the fire engine which required £50-worth of repairs. Cllr (Capt) Rigg asked for council support but his request was not well-received. A suggestion that the fire brigade should pay what it could from its own funds and that the Council would make up the difference was defeated on a vote. The fire brigade certainly did not have that kind of money. A Councillor suggested that a contribution should be sought from the East Ward Union, to whom the fire engine was first offered. Capt Rigg said he had tried that but had been turned down, even though the engine was often used outside the borough of Appleby. The Council reluctantly agreed to foot the bill. On 5 December 1892 a young man rode to Appleby from Brampton on horseback. He rang the fire bell and reported a fire at a farm in the village. The alarm was sounded at 10 p.m. and, 'within minutes', Capt Rigg and Lt Moordaff were on their way – without the fire engine, which was still broken. The blaze was tackled with buckets of water.

The 1893 A.G.M., once again held in the King's Head, mentioned the small fire at Brampton and nothing more was heard of the brigade until the next A.G.M., in March 1894, which reported that the engine had been repaired but not used during the previous twelve months.

1895 was more exciting. The brigade agreed that the Borough Surveyor could have two lengths of old hose for flushing sewers and the Council asked if the owner of the engine house would repair the doors. On 20 August there was a "great fire" at Appleby Castle. It was discovered by Annie Field, a Castle servant, in a closet near to the kitchen maid's room. The fire bell was rung at 5 p.m. and Captain Rigg rode up to the Castle in great haste, followed shortly by the fire engine and some firemen. Hundreds of willing hands cleared the main rooms of pictures, tapestries, armour and moveable furniture. The fire was thought to have been caused by the overheating of a wooden beam near to an open fire – a common problem in old buildings. Tea and coffee were provided by Mrs Rigg, King's Head Hotel. Six members of the brigade remained overnight and Mr Barrett, Lord Hothfield's agent, made his way from Skipton Castle to make sure that everything was made ready for the annual autumn visit of his Lordship and guests. Lord Hothfield sent a letter of thanks to the brigade, paid for the cost of the turnout and donated £20 to brigade funds. To show their appreciation, members of the brigade gave a demonstration of their abilities during Lord Hothfield's next visit, attended by 16 members, including Capt Rigg. This was the first time Lord Hothfield had seen 'his' engine since donating it in 1879.

John Sewell Rigg, Captain of the Fire Brigade, became Mayor of Appleby in 1896. His appointment prompted the following in the *Yorkshire Post*. "The quaint little borough of Appleby is taking some pride from the fact that it is probably the only town in England where the mayor



drives the fire engine. J S Rigg has recently succeeded Lord Hothfield as mayor of the County Town of Westmorland. He is not only one of the hardest working members of the corporation and of the County Council but takes a practical interest in the affairs of the fire brigade of which he is captain.”

On 4 February 1897, the brigade attended a barn fire at Morland Hall. It was 1¼ hours before the engine arrived, by which time the barn and contents were destroyed. The A.G.M. held early in March was told that there had been no fires in the town during the past year and the only call had been to Morland Hall. The meeting discussed the need for more drivers and whether the engine house should be equipped with gas. Members complained that the quality of horses sometimes made available left much to be desired. It was agreed that, in future, one of the men would go immediately to the Kings Head Hotel stables when the alarm was raised and select from the best horses kept there. The main event in Appleby during 1897 was, of course, Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee parade, in which the fire brigade took part.

In March 1898, members of the brigade were treated to some ‘plain speaking’ from their captain. He reminded them that rules had to be obeyed and that those who did not attend drills would be dismissed. The fire hydrants had been tested during the year. There were complaints about Corporation officials who were in the habit of using fire brigade equipment but not returning it. A meeting of the Corporation in May 1898 was concerned at the cost of the brigade which was now running at something like £20 per annum against a budget of £13. Some members thought the cost too high. Cllr Rigg (the captain) countered by saying, “I have not in all my travelling met with any town where the fire department is not an expensive item though the burgesses are generally very grateful that they have some protection. I am not aware of any town where the fire engine is a self paying institution.” Alderman Graham responded, “There is no doubt that the fire engine is of benefit but at Appleby we are in this position; we have plenty of force to send to send water over the highest in the town without the engine.” Cllr Rigg interjected, “No.” Alderman Graham continued, “It was sent over the castle and that’s the highest we have.” Cllr Rigg replied, “It was insufficient had we not had the engine working. It would have been quite insufficient without it. The rural population benefit but, in return, the town benefits from the rural population.” Cllr Sanderson recalled that he had been a member of the East Ward Board of Guardians when it turned down the offer of a fire engine and that was when the Corporation took it on. Given that Cllr Sanderson claimed personal knowledge of the decision, we can, perhaps, accept what he said. It certainly helps to understand the confusion which surrounded the arrival of the engine in 1879 to which we have referred earlier. Cllr Sanderson was not alone in thinking that the engine was an expensive luxury but the Corporation agreed that the engine was occasionally useful to the rural communities who, in turn, frequented Appleby’s markets. They agreed to maintain the engine, provided costs were kept to a minimum. In July 1898 there was a fire in a three storey dwelling house on Scattergate, owned by Stephen Brunskill. The alarm was raised, both at the Moot Hall and St Lawrence Church, but the fire was quickly put out, before the brigade arrived, by neighbours who borrowed ladders and buckets. The next call-out was in November when there was a fire at the premises of William Salkeld, Bridge Street. In December 1898, the Corporation discussed the need for a new fire station which would meet the standards set by the Parish Fire Engines Act 1898. Members considered a proposal to acquire land on Chapel Street next to the Gas Works, to be used as a fire station and Corporation works yard. The estimated cost was £755.

In February 1899, there was a barn fire at Bongate Mill, quickly extinguished by the brigade which attached hoses to the hydrant opposite Bongate Church. In March, the Corporation was told that the Local Government Board, which would have to authorise any loan required for building the new fire station, intended to hold an inquiry into the Corporation plans. The Annual General Meeting, held that same month, was told that discipline had much improved and that brigade was up to its authorised strength (20). Captain Rigg was re-elected. There had been ‘difficulties’ with the call

boys, whose job it was to take word to the firemen whenever the alarm was raised. It was agreed that they would, in future, be paid half their usual fee if the call turned out to be a false alarm.

The Local Government Board Inquiry was held in the Moot Hall during April 1899. We are indebted to the reporter from the *Penrith Observer* for what follows. The Town Clerk outlined the history of the land at Chapel Street and the Surveyor outlined his plans. The mayor explained that the engine was horsed from various posting establishments and was used frequently. Councillor Nelson interrupted and said he was opposed to the proposal as the rates were high enough already. The Inspector asked, "Do you pay for the present engine house?" Surveyor's response, "Yes." Cllr Nelson rose again to say, "We have one engine house and we don't want another. The present place for the store yard they say is an eyesore but the new one will be a bigger eyesore than ever." Alderman Heelis, with reference to the present yard said, "It stands on a public footpath and we are encroaching on it." Cllr Nelson responded, "It is not upon a footpath, besides the present place costs us nothing. We are now going to have something put on the rates for a benefit we do not want." Cllr Walton asked, "What is the place going to be built for?" The Inspector asked him, "Didn't you hear what was said?" Cllr Walton asked again, "What are we going to borrow the money for?" The Inspector retorted, "You know as well as I what it is for. If you have a point to make, make it and don't ask any more stupid questions." Cllr Walton, "We have a good fire station and we do not want another. We get it for two pounds a year and what do we want to put the rates up for?" Inspector, "Are the rates high?" Town Clerk, "Two shillings and three pence in the pound." Inspector, "I wish I could get away with two shillings and three pence." Cllr Nelson, "I want to know if they are going to get the engine out of the place when they've made it." Cllr Walton, "That's what I want to know." Inspector, "One at a time please." Cllr Nelson, "They cannot get it out especially when there is a flood on." Inspector, "Is the present place ever flooded?" Cllr Nelson, "Not where the engine house is." Inspector, "The two places seem to be on the same level." [Note: the 'Old Engine House' on the Sands frequently flooded to a depth of several feet, most recently in January 2005.] Town Clerk, "In the Annual Report of the fire brigade the Council was congratulated for its decision to change the site." Cllr Walton, "Some did and some did not. There are a lot that don't want a change." Inspector, "I'll see the place." And he did. The Board later sanctioned a loan of £644.

In January 1901, the Corporation accepted the following tenders for the new works: joiners – Slinger and Gowling; plumbers – Dent and Co; slating and plastering – Messrs S Dodgson and Sons; masons – J Robinson. The total projected cost came to £461 7 shillings. In May the Corporation agreed minor amendments to the plans – there was to be no ceiling in the engine house, which was to be fitted with an iron-framed roof. The following month, Councillors considered using iron columns but stuck to the original plans which required wood. At that same meeting Councillors were informed that the Gas Company had agreed certain easements on account of the new fire station. (The Corporation did not own the Gas Works until 1905.) The Corporation agreed to tell the caretaker of the old engine house that he would not be required after the end of the month, to which the Town Clerk responded by pointing out that he had already given notice of his intention to terminate on 6 February. The fire station was opened in 1901 and demolished in 2004 to make way for the new Medical Centre. The Society was instrumental in ensuring that the old borough coat of arms which was built into the front wall of the fire station was rescued and it is now a permanent feature in the car park at the Medical Centre.

Let us go back to 1899 which was when the Corporation outlined its plans for the new fire station.

In April that year there was a serious fire in a Dutch barn at Southfield Farm which was owned by William Wappett. Mr and Mrs Wappett and their family, apart from two sons who had gone into Appleby, had retired to bed but they were woken by the sight and sound of the barn fire at 11.30 p.m. The family set about saving the livestock and sent a messenger to Appleby. Within minutes of the alarm being sounded, the brigade was on its way and was quickly in action, despite

the difficult road to the farm. The only available water was a pond and this was quickly emptied. Water was then taken from the river about 500 yards away. A great many people turned up to help, including the Mayor, but the barn was destroyed.

To be continued .....

Maggie Clowes and Graham Coles

### **Committee Meeting**

**Matters Arising from Minutes for 5 February 2008:** Memorial Trees - Mr Emerson gave an assurance he will carry out the planting of the replacement hornbeam and the grinding-down of the removed tree, as promised; Explorer Films/Lady Anne DVD - a script has been prepared for further consideration; 2008 Exhibition - 2,780 visitors, huge thanks to Anne and helpers; Society Archive - considerable discussion over the offer of the use of a room in the Market Hall and the raising of subs to pay for the annual costs, Vivienne to arrange a meeting to further discuss the database; Pot Holes Working Group - Ian had found a map to help identify the location of problems, complaints to be put in writing to the Committee member liaising with Highways dept; Heritage Open Days - Committee has offered to organise guided walks.

**Reports:** Treasurer/Membership - balance £5,755.67 (including £705 from Appleby Legacy) plus £234.62 grant money and £65 from Ian's talk, being held for the Lady Anne DVD project; Oral History - nothing to report; Planning/Townscape - several planning applications discussed, no objections being put forward, nothing further to report re 'snagging' list; Appleby New Fair Joint Committee - it was reported that there will not be a new ramp, considerable discussions took place about the Police, County and District Council bodies being formed to 'organise' the Fair and about the Appleby Fair Focus Group; Cemetery Chapel - item to be removed from the agenda; Chamber of Trade and Community Association - is discussing the re-vamping of the Lady Anne Trail leaflet.

**Newsletter:** deadline given for receipt of contributions.

**Correspondence received:** Eden Area Police Community Forum notification of meeting to be held in The Mews Suite, Tufton Arms Hotel, Appleby on 28 April 2008, 7.00 p.m.; FOCAS Newsletter issue 66; Windermere and Bowness Civic Society News issue 93; Cumbria Local History Federation bulletin 47, giving notice of the Annual Convention 27 September 2008 at Newton Rigg; *BALH The Local Historian Vol 38 No 3, February 2008.*

**Coffee Morning:** arranged for Saturday 14 June. Anne Crosby in charge of arrangements.

**Visit to Crosby Ravensworth Parish Archive:** VG to make arrangements (since the meeting, visit arranged for the evening of Thursday 26 June 2008).

**Dilapidated Buildings:** Mr McNally, E.D.C., to be contacted again about continuing concerns, especially regarding the vacant shop premises on Bridge Street.

**Any Other Business:** suggestions put forward about arrangements for the Christmas Evening and Committee members asked to bring any further ideas to the next meeting.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday 17 June 2008, 7.30 p.m.

**From the Secretary**

Visit to Crosby Ravensworth Parish Archive: arranged for Thursday 26 June 2008. See flyer.

Next Meeting

**Thursday 29 May 2008  
7.30 p.m. Supper Room, Market Hall**

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

Speaker, Mr Chris Robson, gives an illustrated talk about the pre-history and historical geography of our area.

**Website: [www.applebysociety.force9.co.uk](http://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 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.

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