



COUNTY DURHAM FORUM for HISTORY & HERITAGE



President: John Grundy

Newsletter • Issue 3 • July 2026

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Mark Smith

Win Stokes

Bernard Taylor

Secretary Position Vacant

☐ www.durhamweb.org.uk

☐ [Facebook Let's Talk Heritage](#)
[County Durham Forum for History & Heritage](#)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Marian Morrison

Since the AGM, the committee has continued to focus on supporting members, planning future events, and developing new opportunities for the Forum.

Highlights include:

- Progress on the new Forum website
- Submission of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for a 13-month Norman heritage programme
- Planning for the Bishop Auckland History & Heritage Fair
- Further Coffee & Chat networking events for Forum members

Thank you to everyone who supports our activities and helps promote local history and heritage across County Durham.

INFORMATION FOR EXHIBITORS

at the Bishop Auckland History & Heritage Fair

- **NEW—exhibition space in No 43 Market Place**
we will not be in the Town Hall this year
- Contact Margaret if you would like to book a **FREE** table
- Electricity available but must be booked in advance

BISHOP AUCKLAND HISTORY & HERITAGE FAIR

SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2026

Supported by the County Durham
Forum for History & Heritage

FREE exhibition tables
for Forum Members

📍 in No 43 Bishop Auckland
Market Place 10.00—3.00



DISCOVER
LOCAL HISTORY



EXPLORE
HERITAGE



CONNECT WITH
OUR COMMUNITY

Everyone welcome!

COFFEE CATCH UP

- ◇ Coffee & Chat
- ◇ Wednesday 14 October
- ◇ 10.00am
- ◇ The Bishop's Kitchen Café
Auckland Castle

Meet committee members and fellow history enthusiasts over a **free** cup of coffee in an informal setting



ANNFIELD PLAIN LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Meetings held at Annfield Plain Library
10.00 am for 10.15 start

13 July	A Trip Down the River Wear from source to sea in old postcards	G Nairn
10 Aug	People from the Pages Exhibition and Talk from The Story	D Layland
14 Sept	Gibside in the Derwent Valley	D Butler
12 Oct	Durham and Dunbar Identifying Scottish Soldiers At Palace Green	R Annis

Annfieldplain.lib@durham.gov.uk

T: 03000 269511

ARCH & ARCH

Lecture Programme 2026

Face to face meetings held at 2.30pm in
Room ER140

Elvet Riverside, New Elvet DH1 3JT

Afterwards, for those who would like to join us we will go for a drink (tea/coffee/or stronger) at the public bar, Royal County Hotel

archandarch.dandn@gmail.com

August	Holiday no meeting
7 September	Lay Cannon Michelle Brown talk to be arranged
5 October	Martin Peagam Talk to be arranged



WHEATLEY HILL HISTORY CLUB 2026 MEETINGS

Information: history.club2@btinternet.com

Meetings are held in
Wheatley House, Woodlands Avenue
at **11.00am** £3.00 includes tea/coffee/raffle

26 Aug	The Man They Named A Town After	M Hedley
30 Sept	The Bowes Family Their Houses & Gardens	A Green
28 Oct	The Hoppers of Iveston—a Quaker Family	C Mead

Latest newsletter:

<https://wheatley-hill.org.uk/newsletters/>

For more information:
history.club2@btinternet.com

SEDGEFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

2026 PROGRAMME

Meetings are held in
Ceddesfeld Hall at 7.45pm

August	No Meeting	
7 Sept	Bede and the Theory of Everything	Lady Canon Michelle Brown
5 Oct	Putting Ladies on a Pedestal	M Peagam

First Monday of the Month

Suzanne 01429 882250

NORTHUMBERLAND & DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



Check out the following website for details of:

**NDFHS
Branch Meetings held at:**

Blyth	Belmont, Durham
Consett	Hexham
London	Newcastle
Wansbeck	North Tyneside
South Tyneside	

<https://www.ndfhs.org.uk/events/>

R A B Y

Castle, Park & Gardens

Recipes, Remedies & Raby

Friday 21st August

Join our Archivist for a fascinating exploration of historic recipe and receipt books, uncovering unusual and inventive food dishes, medicinal remedies and plant knowledge that shaped life at Raby Castle.



Powering the Past | Technology at Raby

Sunday 6th September

A tour of Raby Castle exploring the technologies that transformed daily life through the centuries, from transport and communication, to labour-saving innovations and household conveniences.



The Rebels of Raby

Saturday 10th October

Raby's history is far from peaceful, and in this new talk, Raby's Curator will explore how the castle's residents were drawn into some of the most turbulent political moments in English history.



Haunted Raby: Ghost Walk Tour

24th October - 1st November

Join us at dusk for a special torchlit tour of Raby Castle. Find out from our guides about the unexplained phenomenon and reported hauntings witnessed over centuries at the castle.



Castle Encounters

Join a member of our Curation and Archives team every Tuesday - Friday at 2pm for a closer look at the fascinating stories hidden within the castle's historic collections.



Visit our website for more information and ticket booking | www.raby.co.uk/whats-on
Scan the QR code to sign up to our newsletter and receive event updates and exclusive promotions directly in your inbox!

DEFIANT

County Durham, The Miners Strike, and its Legacy

Lonely Tower Film & Media

The premiere of this powerful documentary was held at Redhills, Durham Miners' Hall, on Sunday 6 July – a fitting venue for such an emotive and thought-provoking film about the 1984/85 miners' strike.

Told through the voices of local people who lived through the events, the documentary captures the many experiences and perspectives of those directly affected by the strike. It explores themes of community, hardship, resilience and the unwavering pride that characterised mining communities during one of the most significant periods in their history.

The film also highlights the lasting impact of the strike, acknowledging that the story cannot be told without recognising the pit closures that followed and the profound social and economic consequences they brought to local communities. Through personal testimonies, it offers a moving reflection on both the struggle and the enduring legacy of the mining industry across the region.

Another Lonely Tower success!! Well done to Marie and Mark

There are several screenings of the film taking place around the area over the coming weeks



Contact Lonely Tower
E: contact@lonelytower.co.uk
M: 07580291488

The following is a link to a preview of the film:
[DEFIANT - County Durham, The Miners' Strike and its Legacy \(NEW TRAIL 001\)](#)

LAUNCH OF NEW BOOK—UNDERDOGS

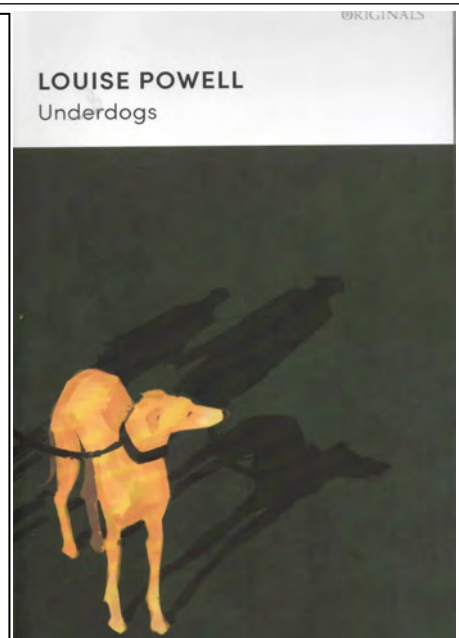
by
**Award Winning Author and Playwright
Dr Louise Powell**

Louise is the author of UNDERDOGS, a literary fiction novel published by the JM Originals imprint of John Murray Press on 2 July 2026.

She is an award-winning working-class writer and socially-engaged practitioner who works across forms, including prose, plays, podcasts, poetry, creative non-fiction and research projects. She has experience in public speaking, creative writing facilitation, and project management.

A domestically and internationally published scholar, she has a PhD in English from Sheffield Hallam University and holds a Greyhound Board of Great Britain Professional Greyhound Trainer's License.

<https://louisepowell.co.uk/>



SEEKING STORIES OF HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERING 1977—1997

A researcher at Newcastle University is looking to hear from people across County Durham, (including Stockton and Hartlepool) Cumberland and Northumberland who volunteered in a range of area, in local hospitals covering the above dates.

This oral history project explores the experiences of those who gave up their time to support healthcare in any way. If you were involved in volunteering or know someone who was, your memories could make a valuable contribution to understanding the role of volunteers in our region's hospitals during a period of major changes. If you'd like to take part or share information, please contact:

Lily Tidman, Newcastle University E:L.Tidman2@newcastle.ac.uk T:07977326960

Wiðowinde Bindweed



Exploring the
culture, history and language
of Anglo-Saxon England

Issue 218 · Summer 2026



The Discovery of a Lost Cross

Also inside

The Laws of King Edmund
Hagena and Guthhere
Wareham: an Anglo-Saxon town
Oxford St Michael's Church
The Winner of the Cædmon Prize

The lost Carlton/Thorpe Cross

by Bernard Taylor

Thorpe Thewles is a small village in the south of Durham County, close to Stockton-on-Tees. The Thorpe Thewles History Group (TTHG) is a very active group which has run a number of fascinating projects in recent years.

In 2010, members of the group came across a reference in two land charters from about 1199 to a cross and a standing stone in the vicinity of the village. It was at first thought that this lost cross was probably a medieval boundary cross or a preaching cross. But where was this cross situated?

David Woodman, in his excellent book about Athelstan, tells us about how land grants were described in boundary clauses as 'diplomas':

The boundary clause usually begins at the northernmost part of the estate in question and follows the circuit clockwise, noting prominent features of the landscape as it goes, until it returns to the same starting point.

This clockwise, or sunwise, circuit was what we found in our translation of the Egerton Charter from the original Latin:

At Crokedflattes 4 acres, at the cross towards the south 3 and a half acres, on the east side of the cross 1 acre, at Hundeflat half an acre.... At Scrogimedene 1 acre

The TTHG carried out field name surveys of the local area and were able to identify at least 3 field names mentioned in the charter of 1199. Unfortunately, the group could not pinpoint the location of the cross, but they were able to identify the wider area where it would have stood. We have been doing further work on field names and topographical features, with reference to translations from Middle English, and are starting to narrow down the possible location of the cross. Detective work over the centuries can be so exciting!

The TTHG put out a local appeal for any knowledge of such a cross. Weeks and months passed with no response. Quite out of the blue, the group were contacted by Maureen Pinkney who had lived in the adjacent village of

Carlton. She directed us to a garden rockery in Carlton.

Amazingly, over a period of a few weeks, three sculpted stones, clearly early medieval in appearance, were retrieved from the rockery with the kind permission of the owner.



The first stone to be discovered.

After talking to local residents, we established that one of the stones had been supporting part of a 'gin gang', a horse-powered rotary mill. This stone has had a small iron plate inserted, which would have been part of the gin gang mechanism. Gin gangs were in common use from about 1850, often used to grind corn or animal fodder.

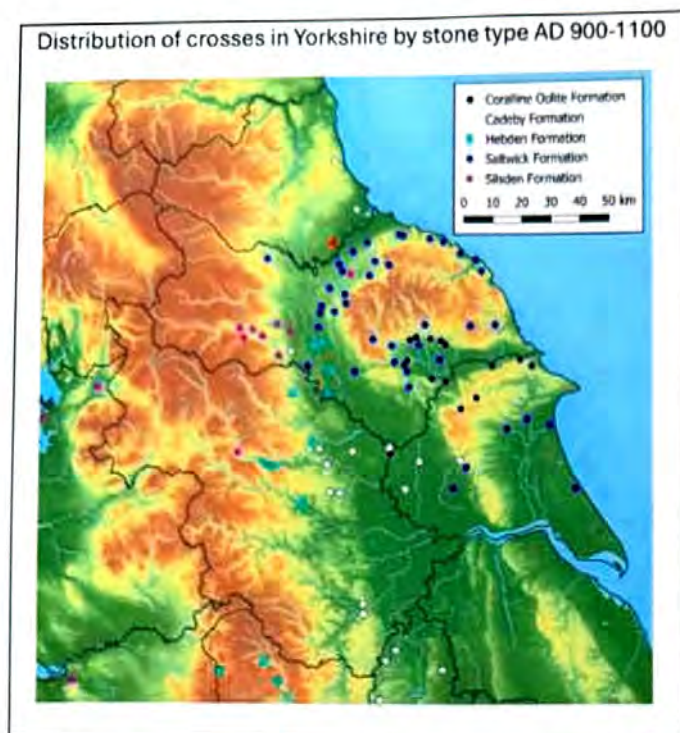
As part of a Heritage Lottery Grant, the TTHG approached the Archaeology Department of Durham University for advice. Professor Sarah Semple led a team which took the stones back to their labs for further analysis. The team scanned the stones, carried out a geological analysis and investigated the sculptural design features of the stones. We were told that the "Thorpe Cross" was of national importance and would be included in the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture (CASSS).



One of the stones arriving at Durham University

Geologists identified the stone as Permian Magnesian Limestone from the Cadeby Formation, which extends in a band from Durham to Nottingham in the south. Whilst

crosses of this sort are not uncommon in the North-East and Yorkshire, the map below shows almost no crosses made from this stone in the River Tees valley.



Map: Durham University

The stones were scanned by a hand-held laser device, which enabled us to have a 3D printed replica made. The scanner output also enabled us to enhance the depth of the sculpted designs for better analysis of the design.



Alexander Jansen of Durham University scanning the stones

The replica cross is being used as part of our educational outreach activities with local school children. We are also intending that it will be used with local art groups and as an inspiration for creative writing groups.

The replica was created by the Middlesbrough company

Outline Prototype Services (Outline PS) who are specialists in a wide range of 3D printing services. We visited their offices a number of times in the course of the project, so that we had agreement on what the final replica would look like. The final product has a surface that looks like real stone. This replica is made of three sections that slot together and fit onto a motorised turntable.



Louis from Outline PS with the replica cross shaft and turntable

Here (picture right) we can clearly see that the three actual stones fit together to form a complete shaft. At the top there is a panel of interlace, a continuous pattern, which is a tidy pattern with a very good finish. This was probably made using some kind of template.



The middle and lower sections show a serpent or dragon with two ribbon-like strands of the body, which come together at the neck. This beast has open jaws and a tongue which splits and loops away to each side. There seems to be an ear.

In the triangular space above the ribbon body is a triquetra. Other spaces are filled with an S-shaped pattern and with 'pellets'.

A triquetra is a continuous line with three loops or arcs.

They occur in illuminated manuscripts such as the Book of Kells and have been taken to be representations of the Trinity.



The left-hand side (picture left) is very worn, presumably after use in the gin gang. The middle of the right-hand side shows deliberate breakage and chiselling, as well as evidence of a small rectangular metal plate which was part of the gin gang mechanism.

On the right-hand side we again see the snout and jaws of the serpent. A tongue emerges and bifurcates, curving upwards to the corners of the shaft. These tongues then connect with the tongues on the other faces of the shaft. There is evidence of another S-shaped filler to the right of the beast.



In the middle (picture left) we see damage to the shaft created by chiselling and the insertion of the metal plate associated with the gin gang.

At the top there is still a clear part of a panel of interlace visible. The left-hand edge shows decoration with roll-moulding.

Although damaged, we can see the bifurcating tongue emerging from the mouth of the beast and looping towards the corners of the shaft.

In all views, the very bottom of the shaft seems to keep its original surface. This suggests that it is the base of the shaft, once set in a socketed stone base.

Professor Semple and her team noted that the interlace and the ring knots have a lot in common with other free-standing crosses and cross fragments, putting the Carlton/Thorpe Cross safely within the 10th century as part

of an expanding Anglo-Scandinavian sculptural output.



The break at the top of the shaft (picture left) is much older than the relatively clean breaks between the separate stones. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the shaft may have been broken up in the 1960s. The shaft may well have sported a cross head, but we have no evidence of this. Professor Sarah Semple has suggested that it may have had a crosshead, similar to the cross at Brompton, and stood just over 2 metres high.

We can only speculate that it was damaged during a period of iconoclasm, for

instance during the Civil War. There is a story, mentioned by local farmer John Hall, that Parliamentary troops fired a canon at nearby Blakeston Hall, a Royalist centre. Perhaps some Parliamentary zealot took the opportunity to smash the head off the cross at the same time. We may never know.

And can the cross be linked to any 10th century historical figures in the North?

Raegnald, or Ragnall, was one of the grandsons of Ivar who fought a battle at Corbridge in 918 against Ealdred of Bamburgh and Constantine II of Scotland. After his victory, he marched south and took York in 919. Raegnald died in 921 and may have promoted a pagan resurgence. The History of St Cuthbert describes Raegnald as 'pagan' and 'accursed', with his followers sometimes getting their just desserts after insulting Christians.

Raegnald apparently occupied lands between the Tyne and the Tees, giving the estates from Castle Eden (Iodene) to Billingham to one of his followers, Scula. As Simeon says:

... Scula, obtained possession of the district from Iodene as far as Billingham, and distressed the miserable inhabitants with heavy and intolerable tributes.

Thorpe Thewles would be within this area. Perhaps the cross was a gift from Raegnald to Scula, confirming the gift of land. But this is speculation. The dating of the cross makes this plausible, but we will probably never know.

The TTHG is putting the stones into temporary storage with Tees Archaeology but is looking for a local museum where they can be put on permanent display. The replica cross will be available for educational purposes. For further information about seeing the cross, contact the Thorpe Thewles History Group at <https://thorpe-thewles.org.uk/>

Members of the group are keen to continue their detective work and see if we can pinpoint the original site of the cross. When the weather improves, we intend to contact

local farmers to see if we can identify some of the topographical features mentioned in the Egerton Charter. We will be looking for a small boundary valley, for a knoll associated with frogs (a pond perhaps?) and for a narrow valley which is almost a fissure. Wish us luck!

References

The First King of England by David Woodman
The Corpus : <https://chacklepie.com/ascorpus/catindex.php>
Middle English Compendium
<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary>
A History of the Church of Durham by Simeon of Durham
Outline Prototype Services: <https://www.outlineps.co.uk/>

With thanks to: This Anglo Saxon interest group's website:



www.tha-engliscan-gesithas.org.uk



Local History Prize Essay Competition 2027

Thanks to a bequest from the late John Packett, the **Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society** is able to offer a first prize of **£250** for the best new local history essay, plus another prize of **£50** for an essay that shows promise. The prize is open to non-members as well as members.

Entries from professional historians are not accepted, in order to give amateurs and beginners a better chance. Why not have a go?

Fancy seeing your name in print?
Even if you don't win the £250, your essay might be suitable to be included in our journal Cleveland History to be read by hundreds!

What are we looking for?

Newly-written essays on local history topics relating to any part of Teesside, or the Cleveland district.

Who can enter?

Anyone except professional historians

When is the closing date?

31st March 2027

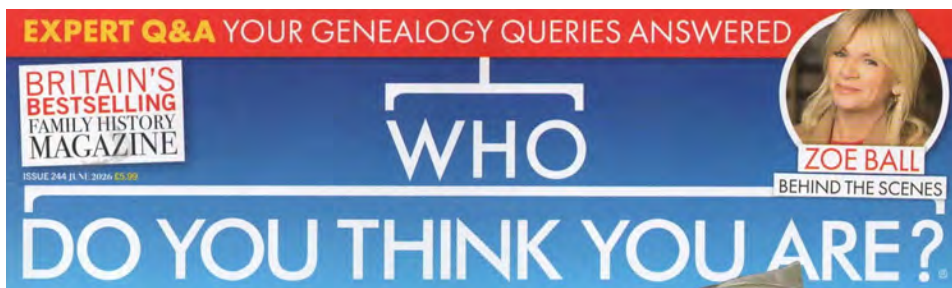
Where can you find more details?

Visit the Cleveland & Teesside Local History Society website at ctlhs.co.uk & click on **Local History Prize**

Still not sure if your subject will be suitable?

Contact our Secretary through our website.

Don't forget the £50 for an entry that shows promise!



Article in the June edition of Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine

focusing on



Volume 30 Issue 3

Wheatley Hill History Club

July 2026

Article in the Latest Edition of Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine

YOUR PROJECTS

WHEATLEY WONDER

Rosemary Collins finds out how a history club in a deprived County Durham village is building community pride

Wheatley Hill in County Durham is a village that was centred on its coal mine, which opened in 1869 and closed in 1968. Despite this proud industrial history the village is struggling today, with high rates of poor health, crime and unemployment. Indeed, it was ranked as more deprived than 63 per cent of neighbourhoods in the Government's English Indices of Deprivation 2025. However, the Wheatley Hill History Club is determined to be a bright spot for the village's

It's a village with major social problems and a typical story of villages in East Durham—left behind in terms of infrastructure and facilities and yet our club keeps growing

first meeting, and then we've grown from there. Now we have 60 members."

The club holds a monthly talk at

Wheatley Hill History Club is determined to be a bright spot for village community and heritage

the Victoria Cross before being killed in the First World War. Margaret says that the meetings provide a valuable social outlet: "Over the past few months people have been coming earlier to strike up conversations with friends and those they've just met."

The club's website at wheatley-hill.org.uk holds historic

Meetings provide a valuable social outlet that people look forward to

trade unionist and chair of Durham County Council as well as the namesake of Peterlee new town.

"The project was designed specifically for primary



Members work on the club's contribution to a Durham County Council art project

schools, and delivered through the medium of drama." Margaret says. "Year 5 pupils from six primary schools across the area took part in an immersive learning experience, working in their own schools with a professional actor from the Mad Alice Theatre Company, alongside a scriptwriter."

Together, they explored and retold the story of Peter Lee in their own words. The work culminated in a full production staged at The Lubetkin Theatre in Peterlee, attended by every child who participated."

Five history club members have become published authors in recent years

Our club proves that creativity and community spirit can flourish anywhere

Our Seaside (2025), a book about seaside resorts in County Durham such as Crimdon. "In the

1940's and 1950's when there was no money to go anywhere else, people would go to Crimdon" Margaret says. "It had a huge caravan park, and lots of people went holidaying in the static caravans or camping. The memories that Frances dug up when she was doing her book were remarkable."

Attracting younger people is a challenge

dwindling because we do attract an elderly demographic and they didn't want to come out at that time. Since we've started to open at 11am our membership has increased, but just with retired people or those not in work. It doesn't seem

Wheatley Hill History Club is a source of inspiration and pride proving that creativity and community spirit can flourish anywhere



DURHAM MINERS HALL

Join Us for Redhills Sundays!

Looking for something fun, affordable and different
to do with the family this summer?

REDHILLS SUNDAYS

Every Sunday | 11am – 2pm

Tickets: Pay what you feel

Launching Sunday 26th July.

Join us every Sunday from 11am – 2pm for a warm welcome at Redhills.

Explore Durham's historic Miners' Hall, discover our latest exhibitions, enjoy family-friendly creative activities, and relax with drinks, snacks and seasonal lunch offers from our café. Children can uncover the stories of Redhills with our explorer backpacks, while everyone can enjoy volunteer-led talks and short film screenings throughout the day.

Entry is free, with a pay-what-you-feel donation.

Visitors can also stay throughout the afternoon for a programme of ticketed events, including our popular guided tours of Redhills, inspiring talks, brass band concerts, folk and contemporary music performances, film screenings and special events celebrating the culture, heritage and creativity of the Durham Coalfield.



Hartlepool Headland Local History Group

Drop In Sessions are held
Second Tuesday of the month
11.30am—3.30pm

Headland Baptist Church
Baptism Street
HARTLEPOOL TS24 0QN

21 Sept	The Co-op in Hartlepool Over the years	F Wilson
19 Oct	The Significance of The Poppy	P Jones
Nov	Business Meeting—Members Only	



Meetings are held on the
Third Monday of the month
6.45pm—9.00pm



COXHOE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

MEETINGS HELD THURSDAYS 7.00pm
St Andrew's Church Hall, Church Street

No Meeting in August

3 Sept	A cup final and then banned for life The Story of a Womens Football Team	M Peagam
1 Oct	First Impressions	C Dean

Website:

coxhoehistory.org.uk

Contact:

Jack Turton: 0191 3770771
Barbara Leo: barbaraleo88@gmail.com

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

Durham Postcard, Cigarette Card & Stamp Fair

Bowburn Community Centre DH6 5AT

Disabled Access

10.00am—3.00pm

Entrance £1.00

Accompanied children FREE

SATURDAY
21 November



Free Valuations

TEESDALE RECORD SOCIETY 2026 Programme

Guided Walk around Middleton-in-Teesdale
Lorne Tallentire

5 August 6.00pm Cotherstone Village Hall or
6.30pm at the fountain, Middleton-in-Teesdale

Indoor Meetings

2 Sept	Bonny Teasdale A Radio programme From 1949 Read by members of the Castle Players	M Bettison
7 Oct	The History of No 81 MU RAF Bowes Moor	P Ryan

Meetings held in
Cotherstone Village Hall DL12 9PN
7.30pm

Further information:

E: teesdalerecordsociety1@gmail.com
M: 07816327209

Framwellgate Moor & Pity Me Local History Group 2026 Meetings

framlochistsoc@gmail.com

24 Sept	To be confirmed
22 Oct	To be confirmed

Meetings will be on a Thursday
(usually the last Thursday of the month)
Framwellgate Moor Community Centre DH1 5BL
Please use the rear door from the car park

Doors 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start
Teas and coffees after the talk



Norman Cornish Coming Home Exhibition



Image: Berriman's Chip Van, Norman Cornish Limited

The Bob Abley Art Gallery
Open 10am - 4pm, Monday - Saturday

Town Hall, High Street, Spennymoor,
County Durham, DL16 6DG



 [heart_of_spennymoor](#)

 [Heart of Spennymoor](#)



SPENNYMOOR
TOWN COUNCIL



NORMAN CORNISH: A LIFE IN SKETCHBOOKS

26 June 2026 – 3 January 2027

Step inside Norman Cornish's creative world in this intimate exhibition of framed works and the sketches that shaped them.



Image: Salvin Street, Norman Cornish Limited

Open daily 10-5pm*
The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle,
County Durham, DL12 8NP

* closed 25 Dec, 26 Dec and 1 Jan.
Winter opening hours: 10:30am - 4pm, November - February
Registered Charity no. 1079639



TSLHS TALKS

*Meetings are held at St. David's Church Hall,
Tudhoe Lane on the fourth Monday of each
month at 7.00 for 7.30 p.m.*

Visitors welcome - usually £4 at the door.
Annual Membership - £20

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

September 28th Keith Simpson
St. Marys Church, Staindrop

October 26th (AGM) Archie Mackay
**The first draft of local history: the role of
Community Newspapers**



Tudhoe & Spennymoor
Local History Society will be at
CELEBRATE SPENNYMOOR
Saturday 5th September 2026
TOWN HALL 10am – 4pm.
www.durhamweb.org.uk/tslhs



All meetings are held in
Shincliffe Church Hall

Starting at 19.3
2026 Programme

14 Sept	The Elusive Tythe Barn	S Bryan
	The Hunt for the Chapel of Ease	T Hancock
19 Oct	Civil Servants in Hotpants	G Harrison
	the Carlisle Experiment	

Contact & Website Details
E: contact@SLHS.uk
W: www.sls.uk

BOWBURN LOCAL HISTORY GROUP **2026 MEETINGS**

All meetings will normally be held on the
2nd Monday of the month

Bowburn Community Centre, Durham Road DH6 5AT

10 Aug	AGM at 6.00pm followed by Open Evening at 7.00pm
14 Sept	7.00pm Bowburn's Shops and Pubs Mike Syre
12 Oct	7.00pm A Treasure of Memories: Durham Advertiser images 1934-1961 Julian Harrop

<https://www.bowburnhistory.co.uk/>

City of Durham Trust

**"The City of Durham Trust will hold its AGM at
Redhills"**

at 2.00 pm on Saturday 26 September

**It will also present its Architectural Award to Redhills for
their fantastic restoration and extension**

Andrew McIntyre, Redhills CEO, will speak about their project

BRANCEPETH ARCHIVE AND HISTORY GROUP

2026 Programme

Friday 18 Sept **David Hughes**

"Sir George Cayley"

A pioneer of aeronautical engineering,
sometimes referred to as
"the father of aviation"

**Come prepared to make paper planes -
It should be fun evening!**

HOWDEN-LE-WEAR HISTORY SOCIETY

2026 Programme

Meetings held 3rd Monday of the month
7.00pm
Howden-le-Wear Village Hall

17 Aug	A Northallerton Victorian Railway Disaster	D Kidd
21 Sept	Women's Institute	C Stockdale
19 Oct	Mining in Howden-le Wear	T Parkin

Members £2
Non Members £3

For more information:
howdenlewearhistorysociety@gmail.com

Just 5 Minutes - Exploring the broader impacts of war

By Simon Green

Luminary Photography CIC

We are all familiar with the official histories of war: maps, statistics, strategies, and battlefield memorials, but official history often misses the true human reality of conflict, the 'ripple effect' that alters families, identity, and communities for generations.

We are at the very beginning of a new project called '**Just 5 Minutes**'. We have recently had our initial project enquiry accepted by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and we are now building our full application.

The Heart of the Project: Bridging the Empathy Gap

Britain has always been a country that provided harbour to those fleeing the worst atrocities, from the Kindertransport in WWII, Asians expelled from Uganda by Idi Amin, to modern Balkans, Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan conflicts. Because generations of British people have grown up in peace, the direct, everyday reality of war is something many of us have never had to face. This gap in shared experience can make it harder to empathise with those escaping modern conflict zones, contributing to a more polarised public conversation about new arrivals in our communities.

'**Just 5 Minutes**' wants to restore some of that empathy by showing that the trauma of war is universal. We want to unite people through the common *shared human experience*, showing that the pain and resilience of a families fleeing modern day impact is deeply connected to the historical experience of our own region.

The North East of England has always borne a heavy burden of conflict, with heavy bombing across both World Wars, traditionally one of the main areas for the UK's military intake, it now has one of the highest veteran populations in the country. War shapes our local identity, whether we recognise it or not.

By capturing these stories, we aim to build a bridge of understanding and tolerance between long-standing local communities and our newer migrant populations. We want to create a long lasting and continuously growing archive of experiences that reminds everybody of the real impact of war.

Unrecognised Trauma of Women in Conflict

A central part of '*Just 5 Minutes*' is to redefine what it means to be impacted by conflict, with a specific focus on the massive, often silent contributions and sacrifices of women. History and contemporary media alike often overlook the distinct, unrecognised trauma carried by women who not only serve, but those who support the home front during times of crisis, and those left to rebuild lives in the aftermath. The lack of female names on war memorials for example, shows how few of their stories are told.

We are actively seeking to document the stories of:

- **The Home Front:** The women who hold society together during times of national or global crisis, working in essential industries, enduring systemic exhaustion, and carrying the immense psychological burden of protecting and raising families alone.
- **The Ripple Effect:** The trauma that does not end when conflicts technically conclude. Women are historically and consistently left to absorb the generational impact of war at home, managing the unvarnished realities of partners returning with severe, untreated mental health challenges, or navigating the deep grief of catastrophic family loss.
- **Modern Conflicts & Military Families:** The direct parallels we see today in those arriving from active conflict zones, bearing the heavy burdens of displacement, cultural dislocation, and psychological survival. This trauma is equally reflected in women soldiers who serve an increasing role in frontline warfare, but also the modern wives, partners, children and families of serving military personnel, whose unique mental health struggles and systemic isolation still go largely unrecognised.

Expanding the Circle of Stories

We are gathering multi-dimensional narratives that span generations and modern history, exploring conflict from every angle:

Generational: We want to interview those who never saw a battlefield but still live with the psychological footprint of their ancestors' experiences. This includes individuals who engaged with conflict in vital, non-traditional roles, such as aid workers and community leaders.

Modern Echoes & The Troubles: We are explicitly exploring the deep, generational trauma of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Our focus encompasses the veterans who comprise a significant portion of mental health statistics, as well as the families caught in the crossfire across the North of England (such as those impacted by the Manchester bombings). To anchor this, a North East-based Northern Irish Methodist Minister is ready to share his powerful perspective.

Global: We aim to show how paths cross globally by connecting diverse perspectives around shared history. For example, we are bringing together the stories of the Bosnian War through the voices of local veterans, a former Durham police officer who became an aid worker, a journalist who covered the conflict, and a Bosnian refugee who came to the North East as a child, creating a profound, 360-degree view of a single historical moment.

A Lasting Legacy

Our ultimate vision extends far beyond the lifecycle of this initial project. We intend for this archive to grow indefinitely, serving as a permanent, living record as the long-term human consequences of today's modern conflicts continue to unfold.

A call to CDFHH

This will be a co-created project, and we need the unique knowledge of the organisations in the Forum to bring these hidden histories to light. We are looking for collaboration in three major ways:

Stories: We want to meet individuals and families with stories that span generations, particularly the experiences of women, children and refugees supported by letters, diaries, photographs, and personal items.

Archives: We want to team up with the organisations in the forum who hold established archives. Not just large organisations, but groups that hold personal stories of the experience of war. We need your resources to help us research, verify, and add historical weight to the deeply personal stories we are uncovering.

Venues: We need spaces, community centres, local history rooms and other spaces, to host storytelling events, workshops, discussions, and temporary exhibitions that bring different parts of our community together.

If you believe, as we do, that history should be a tool for empathy, tolerance, and community healing, please reach out to us.

If you can offer a letter of support for our funding bid, a lead on a story, or access to an archive, or put us in contact with people with interesting stories about the broader impact of war, let's work together to ensure that the real, human cost of war is never forgot

Contact:

Simon Green - Managing Director, Luminary Photography CIC

simon@luminary.org.uk

07766705261

www.luminary.org.uk

Simon Green is an accomplished photographer, filmmaker and educator with over 30 years of experience practicing and teaching in the creative industries. As a military veteran he experienced the realities of war firsthand. Simon is the managing director of Luminary Photography CIC a community organisation delivering photography training and projects, using photography to support individuals with physical and mental health challenges



heritage open days

County Durham Libraries

Book Collection Tour

Wednesday 16th September

10.00am - 12.00pm

Places are limited

Adults only Booking required

Visit County Durham Libraries headquarters and book collection. Hear about the social history of the public library service, the Dewey decimal system and all the services offered by County Durham Libraries. Enjoy a behind the scenes tour to discover how that book you reserved ends up at your local branch and browse the shelves of the largest publicly owned book collection in the North-East.

Booking opens 9.00am Monday 27th July and closes 5pm Friday 11th September

To book your place, please phone 03000 263774 or email libraryoutreach@durham.gov.uk

Find out more:



www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Sevenhills, Unit 1, Greenhills Business Park, Enterprise Way,
Brennynmôr, Durham, DA1 5 6JH



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In partnership with



National Trust





County Durham Libraries

September is Heritage Month

Nigel Humes - Travellers in Time

Chester-le-Street, the Great North Road and the History of England

Saturday 5th **10.30am** **Chester-le-Street Library**
03000 269512 chesterlest.lib@durham.gov.uk

The Story - People in the Pages - exhibition and talk

Stories about the people from Seaham and tips for family history research

Wednesday 9th **10.30am** **Seaham Library**
03000 262510 seaham.lib@durham.gov.uk

Paul Heatherington - Did Giants Build Consett?

Thursday 10th **5.30pm** **Consett Library**
03000 269513 consett.lib@durham.gov.uk

David Butler - Gibside in the Derwent Valley

Monday 14th **10.15am** **Annfield Plain Library**
03000 269511 annfieldplain.lib@durham.gov.uk

Joanna Bailey - Disreputable:

How a Victorian lass from Crook broke the rules-and got away with it!

Friday 18th **10.30am** **Wolsingham Library**
03000 269533 wolsingham.lib@durham.gov.uk

Jane Gulliford Lowes - How to Write Your Family History

Thursday 24th **5.30pm** **Belmont Library**
03000 269500 belmont.lib@durham.gov.uk

Gary Bankhead - Roman River Wear

Saturday 26th **10.30m** **Durham Clayport Library**
03000 265524 DurhamClayportLibrary@durham.gov.uk

Please contact the hosting library to book your free place

Places are limited

The Weardale Museum Summer 2026 Newsletter



What is happening at High House Chapel ?

**Meet the team managing the restoration
of the chapel, see what is happening
and hear about our vision for the future
of The Weardale Museum.**

**Friday 7th August 12.00-5.00 and
Saturday 8th August 10.00-4.00**

St John's Chapel Town Hall



THE ROADS OF ROMAN BRITAIN

ROMAN ROADS RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

July 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Best SatNav that Romano-Britons Never Had: Digital Britannia

If only they had possessed the massive data bank of **Digital Britannia** to power their Satnavs, no Roman would ever have got lost on Britannia's roads! The Roman Road Research Association (RRRA) is delighted to announce publication of this first fully up-to-date, digital map of Roman roads in Britain. It is freely available (under Copyright) on the RRRA website, **romanroads.org**. Specifically, it can be found at <https://roadsofromanbritain.org/digital-britannia/overview.html>.

The map is very much the personal achievement of RRRA Chairman, Mike Haken, who has been recognised with the **Britannia Award 2026**, the Roman Society's prestigious award for this remarkable work, and for his unwavering championship of Roman road research since the RRRA's inception in 2015.

Roman roads have long fascinated the British public, and many still underlie today's highways. Hundreds of miles of superbly engineered road have, however, long since disappeared – apparently without trace – in the two millennia since the Empire abandoned these shores.

Widespread publicity attended the publication, some months ago, of *Itiner-e*, a digital map of roads across the empire. This was a remarkable achievement welcomed by the RRRA. However, for Britain the data utilised is more than half a century out of date, not reflecting the enormous advances of modern research and Lidar technology. This is where **Digital Britannia** shines, presenting scholarship's most up-to-date knowledge.

The first beta version already allows free download of the data into GIS packages and Google Earth Pro. Later versions will also allow download into Google Maps. Clicking on sections of road reveals supporting

GROUP MEMBERS 2026

Annfield Plain Local History Group 2nd Monday of the month 10.00 Annfield Plain Library E: Suzanne.green@durham.gov.uk	Architectural Archaeological Soc of Durham & Northumberland 2.30pm Second Saturday in month Elvet Riverside DH1 3JT www.aasdn.org.uk/	Bowburn Local History Society 2nd Monday in Month 7.00pm Bowburn Community Centre DH6 5AT Www.bowburnhistory.co.uk
Brancepeth Archives & History Group First Saturday in month 9am—1pm Brancepetharchive@outlook.com 17vivienne@gmail.com	Chester-le-Street Heritage First Wednesday in month 7.00pm Lambton Arms www.chesterlestreetheritage.org	Cleveland Family History Society See Website for Zoom meetings https://clevelandfhs.org.uk/meetings/
Cleveland & Teesside LHS Saturday mornings Sept-Apr 10.30am Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough See www.ctlhs.co.uk for dates	Coxhoe Local History Group First Thursday in month 7.00pm St Andrew's Church Hall DH6 4DD coxhoehistory@gmail.com www.coxhoehistory.co.uk/	Crook & District Local History Soc Fourth Monday in month 7.00pm for 7.30pm Meth Church Hall, Dawson Street Dennis Scarr 07745018272
Darlington Historical Society Quaker Meeting House, Skinnergate 3rd Wed of month 7.30pm borofan45@hotmail.co.uk	Framwellgate Moor & Pity Me LHS Framwellgate Moor Community Centre Some Thursday Evenings 7.30pm E: FramLocHistSoc@gmail.com	Hartlepool Headland LHS Third Monday in month 6.45 – 9.00pm Headland Baptist Church TS24 0QN eileen.manners@ntlworld.com
Hetton Local & Natural History Last Monday in month 7.00pm Hetton & Eppleton Com Hall DH5 5HR www.hettonlocalhistory.org.uk/	Howden-le-Wear LHG 2nd Monday in Month 7.00pm Village Hall	Lanchester Local History First Friday in month 7.00pm Lanchester Com Centre DH7 OJQ www.durhamweb.org.uk/historyforum/ cdfhhlanchester
Middleton St George Local History Third Thursday of month 7.30pm Community Centre DL2 1JG www.msglocalhistory.wordpress.com	Newcastle Antiquaries Last Wednesday in month Check website for details events@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk	NE Vernacular Architecture First Saturday in month Mar-Oct Guided walks etc various times & places throughout the region https://northeastvernaculararchitecturegroup.wordpress.com/
Northumberland & Durham FHS See website for individual group meetings https://www.ndfhs.org.uk/events/	Peterlee Local History Group https://peterleehistory.co.uk/ E: flossienoah@gmail.com	Sedgefield Local History First Monday in month 7.45pm Ceddesfeld Hall, TS21 2AE 01740 620912
Shincliffe Local History Society Third Monday in Month 7.30pm Shincliffe Church Hall E: contact@SLHS.uk W: www.slhs.uk	Teesdale Record Society First Wednesday in month 7.30pm Cotherstone Village Hall DL12 9PG https://www.teesdalerecordsociety.org.uk/	Thorpe Thewles History Group Contact below for meeting dates 1.30pm Grindon Parish Hall TS21 3JN www.thorpe-thewles.org.uk
Tudhoe & Spennymoor LHS Fourth Monday in month 7.30pm St David's Church Hall DL16 6LL www.durhamweb.org.uk/tslhs/	Wheatley Hill History Club Last Wed in month Mar-Nov 11.00am Wheatley House DH6 3JX www.wheatley-hill.org.uk	BEAMISH MUSEUM *NEW MEMBERS* W: Home - Beamish Museum T: 0191 370 4000 E: museum@beamish.org.uk

Specific Interest Groups

Altogether Archaeology E: altogether.archaeology@gmail.com W: Altogetherrchaeology.org	Auckland Project https://aucklandproject.org enquiries@aucklandproject.org	City of Durham Trust E: trust@durhamcity.org W: https://durhamcity.org/
DAFT www.thedaft.org.uk/	Durham County Council Archaeology Department archaeology@durham.gov.uk	Durham County Local History Soc www.durhamweb.org.uk/dclhs
Durham Victoria County History Trust s.m.hingley@durham.ac.uk	The Fitzhugh Library Open 10.30—2.30 Mon & Tues www.thefitzhughlibrary.co.uk	Friends of St Cuthberts Church, Billingham stcuthbertschurch845ad@hotmail.com
Friends of Windomora www.friendsofwindomora.com E: juddrichard@1976@gmail.com	History of Consett Steelworks www.historyofconsettsteelworks.com/ juddrichard1976@gmail.com	Memories of Leadgate www.memoriesofleadgate.com/ juddrichard1976@gmail.com
North East War Memorials Project dahall52@aol.com https://www.newmp.org.uk/	North East Methodist Society northeastmethodisthistory.weebly.com	Picture the Past Postcard Collector g.l.naim@btopenworld.com
Raby Castle www.raby.co.uk	The Story www.thestorydurham.org/	Sunderland Volunteer Life Brigade admin@sunvlb.com
Tees Archaeology https://teesarchaeology.com/ teesarchaeology@hartlepool.gov.uk	Weardale Museum www.weardalemuseum.org.uk info@weardalemuseum.org.uk	Wheatley Hill Heritage Society https://wheatleyhillheritage.org.uk E: history.club2@btinternet.com