

WELCOME TO THE E-NEWSLETTER

FOR THE

NORTHUMBERLAND & DURHAM

FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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It was very enjoyable to hold a Trustees meeting face to face again and that we are all starting to emerge, albeit cautiously, from a long period of not meeting as normal. As usual, everyone has been busy carrying out their various roles and settling into the new premises. Visitors to our Library & Research Centre are still rather sparse which is not surprising, as remarked on in the first sentence. Oh! How we have missed our overseas members coming in to research after journeying across oceans and through the air, perhaps, next year will be better for travelling. The cafe' on the ground floor of MEA House is now open. A reminder the **AGM will take place on Tuesday 26 October, 2pm, MEA House Auditorium (ground floor)**

Those of you who wish for some support or breaking down of "brick walls" should remember that you can sign up to North_East Ancestors, the Forum, join by going to the front page of the website and clicking on Forum, or send requests for research through e-mail.

The appeal for more volunteers for roles is still being made if people do not come forward those roles will be left if the time cannot be found to carry them out.

The Editor of our Journal would welcome any articles to include in our forthcoming Winter Journal or future Journals.

Wills Project

The Archives and Special Collections on Palace Green are now open again and the project leader is continuing to access the wills.

The latest CD to be released is:

PL_14 **Easington Ward:** covering the parishes of Bishopwearmouth, Dalton le Dale, Herrington, Hetton, Houghton le Spring, Kelloe, Monkwearmouth, Newbottle, Penshaw, Rainton, Ryhope, Seaham, Silksworth, Sunderland and Whitburn. 54,504 names: £10.00

WILL - John Forster, Parish of Brancepeth dated 20 February 1758

Brother **William Forster** my housing in Sunderland on condition that he shall not marry without the consent of his brothers and sisters. Brother **Thomas Forster** my pew in Sunderland Church – condition that is my brother **Ralph Forster** should stand in need of subsistence I then in such case give and devise the said pew to him. Sister **Sarah Forster** the yearly interest of Fifty Pounds. I give Fifty pounds to my brother **Francis Forster**. Sister **Margaret Forster** Two Guineas to my niece One Guinea. I give my School House at Brandon to my brother **Francis Forster** I give my books and instruments to the use of my brother to be preserved in the Family.

Branches

Alnwick - 2 Nov 2021, Northumberland in WW2, Speaker: Neil Storey

7 Dec 2021, Crossing the Border, Speakers: David Welsh & Mike Barker

Durham/Belmont

20 Oct 2021, Turning my Family Story into a Book, Speaker: Margaret Headley

17 Nov 2021, Glass making in the North East, Speaker: Georgia Smithson

Blyth

20 Oct 2021, Rescue from the Sea, Speaker: Barry Mead

17 Nov 2021, To be announced

21 Dec 2021, Joy at Christmas, Speaker: Alison Thorburn

London

Saturday, 6 Nov 2021, 2.30pm Brief informal meeting to be held online,tba. Branch members will continue to hold brief informal meetings online whilst their usual venue in London is temporarily unavailable.

Newcastle

6 Nov 2021, Well known visitors to Newcastle over the centuries, Speaker: Anthea Lang

North Tyneside

2 Nov 2021, DNA & Your family tree, Speaker: John Heckles

South Tyneside –

20 Oct 2021, 1849 South Shields Lifeboat Disaster – Loss of the Providence and the involvement of the Burn family, Speaker: Ann Franklin

Tynedale

11 Nov 2021, Members' Forum "Brick Walls and how to break through them

9 Dec 2021, Xmas – The Mayflower Society, Speaker: Greg Geissler (to be confirmed)

Wansbeck Branch

3 Nov 2021, Difficulties in tracing my Irish Ancestors, Speaker: Michael Murphy

1 Dec 2021, Members' Forum – earliest memories of Christmas

Know your Parish - WARK – XXX111, Vol. 18 Summer 1993 - J K Brown

Wark in Tynedale, through which flows the North Tyne, is set in one of the loveliest parts of the County of Northumberland. The name Wark is derived from the old English “Weore”, meaning fortification.

Wark did not become a parish until 1811, when it was separated from the large parish of Simonburn, which at that time was the largest parish in the country, much too large to administer to the needs of the people.

Originally Wark was a Roman settlement, which was sited near the largest ford across the river. Much later in 788 “the just and pious King” Alfwald of Northumbria was murdered, here at Wark. For nine years he had upheld the Christian way of life among his people, but on his death their standards lowered.

The Normans came and built a ‘Motte and Bailey’ Castle and then in 1159 North Tynedale, which included Wark, came under the Scottish crown and Scottish Kings held their courts. The ‘Motte and Bailey’, ‘the hill of meeting’, close by the river was doubtless the spot where the courts were held. Proceedings of the courts for the years 1279 and 1293 have been discovered in the Tower of London and the rolls give a curious picture of the manners and customs of the age. The clergy seem to have been little better than the lawless people among whom they dwelt and one such example is in the records of the case of Beatrice Quitefield (Whitefield). Beatrice summoned Thomas the archdeacon of Northumberland, his chaplain and other churchmen for robbery and other felonies. All appeared at the court with the exception of the Archdeacon who provided letters from the Bishop proving Beatrice had been excommunicated and her evidence was not accepted. In the reign of Edward 1, in 1293 North Tynedale reverted to the English crown and it remained so until James 1, in 1603, granted it to the Earl of Suffolk, who later sold it to Francis the 1st Earl of Derwentwater. After the execution of James, the 3rd Earl, the estates in 1731 were entrusted to the Greenwich Hospital. After the formation of the new parish of Wark, the Church of St Michael was erected in 1815 and the first service to be held there was in the year 1818. The church is a plain but neat edifice in early English style with a square tower and unlike so many of the older Northumbrian churches has a very small chancel. Within the churchyard is buried Abel Chapman (1851-1929) whose home was at Houxy. Abel Chapman was a foremost naturalist, traveller and a writer of outstanding merit. Many of his big game trophies and most of his natural history specimens are now on show at the Hancock Museum (Great North Museum), Newcastle. Apart from the main village of the parish of Wark, there are few townships. There is Warksburn which includes the tiny hamlet of Rosesbower. The name Rosesbower is derived from the Anglo Saxon ‘dwelling place’. Perched on the Crag overlooking the Warksburn is the ancient Pele Tower or Bower which is the home of Anthony Milburn, the head of the Milburn clan, Rosesbower today is a moderated farmstead with holiday letting accommodation, sited within a short distance of the Tower. Latterford is the other hamlet alongside the Warksburn. The other two townships have the unattractive names of High and Low Shitlington, or Shotlynton as it was originally named, was formerly the seat of the Algoods. In 1528 however, the laird was William Charlton head of a branch of the powerful Charltons. William, like almost everyone else of that ilk, was a notorious freebooter, a sheep and cattle stealer, a border reiver of no mean repute. He was slain whilst returning from his last raid into County Durham, by Thomas Errington and his body was later hung in chains at Hexham,

A reminder:

The deadline for submission of items for inclusion in the newsletter will be the 1st day of January, April, July and October.

Items must be in the form of WORD, RTF or ODT file, to be attached to an e-mail and sent to:

ndfhsnews@ndfhs.org.uk