

# The Derwentfells Wanderer

[www.derwentfells.com](http://www.derwentfells.com)

## Archaeological investigations near Lanthwaite Green

*Report by Roger Asquith*



*Group members with the full excavation*

Members of the Historic Landscape Group (HLG) of L&DFLHS have recently taken part in archaeological survey and excavation work at the site of a former farmstead on NT land at Peel Place, near Lanthwaite Green. The opportunity arose when United Utilities sponsored an investigation into the negative impact of cable installation works and the archaeological interest of the site. The field in question, adjacent to currently used agricultural buildings at Peel Place, contained ground level indications of a long building and also a range of somewhat enigmatic earthworks. The scope of the investigation, as agreed by the National Trust and undertaken by North Pennine Archaeology Ltd. (NPA), comprised survey work to establish the overall context of the site and putting in two trenches within the long building



*A fine cobbled path through the buildings*

disturbed by electrical services work.

Members of the Society, supervised and guided by NPA staff, contributed more than 20 volunteer days of excavation work, opening up the trenches, exposing/cleaning up the archaeology beneath and duly recording by drawings/photographs. Contrary to expectations 'artefacts' and dating evidence were very sparse, but just below the surface lay relatively intact and impressive foundations and building floors – a variety of cobbled and flagged surfaces, doorways, etc. The planned trenches were in the event extended considerably. Interpretation in terms of dating and understanding the layout, purposes and history will require specific expertise in traditional Lake District buildings - NPA's report will be awaited with interest.



*Jamie Lund, left, advises on a feature*

Census records show Peel Place to have been occupied in 1841, by John Lancaster, a stone mason, and his family, but not inhabited thereafter. Plans of John Marshall's estate and the Tithe Map dating from 1840 - 45 are consistent with the excavated building and the associated farmyard enclosures which now show up as 'earthworks'. Other earthwork features within the small field are yet to be understood. The position of the site just 250 metres to the north of the Romano-British 'homestead' at Lanthwaite Green and the name 'Peel Place' both hint at wider historical associations.

# New project opportunities

## 1. Locals and Tourists



The Society has been invited to work with the Wordsworth Trust and other partners on a project seeking to identify the reactions to influx of gentry tourists of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Much was written by the tourists and guide writers about the local rustic people, but what did the locals think of these tourists in search of the picturesque prospect – all Claude glasses, sketch pads, and racing from one station to the next. They were satirized by their own class, for example in the form of Dr Syntax sketching Derwentwater on horse Grizzle (shown above), but little was written locally.

If you are interested in taking part in a search for the local view, principally in old newspapers, please contact Derek Denman

## 2. Recording our Archive

The L&DFLHS archive is kept by John Hart at Strawberry How, but is little used, partly because its contents are not widely known. John would like help to catalogue the contents, producing both a computer database and a paper catalogue which can be made available. Our website will be upgraded to contain much of the catalogue. Please contact John Hart for further information if you are interested in helping, especially if you have some experience.

## 3. Tarns and Lakes

Kate Rew, published author is swimming all the Lakeland tarns and lakes in order to write a book. She wants to bring every piece of water to life and is seeking tales,

whether they be fact or fiction, folklore, customs, geology; about people, animals and birds. She is particularly interested in Colin Dodgson and Tim Tyson, two Grasmere men who swam 534 tarns by 1959, and seeking more about W Heaton Cooper, who clearly loved swimming. If you can help please contact Kate direct [kate.rew@outdoorswimmingsociety.com](mailto:kate.rew@outdoorswimmingsociety.com) or, if you don't have access to email, please ring Sandra Shaw

## 4. A Century of fatherhood

Testimony Films is making a documentary series for the BBC and the producers want to hear from any fathers who brought up their children in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. They would also be interested in hearing from anyone who was a child during that period. If you are willing to share your experiences, please email [pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com](mailto:pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com) or ring Sandra Shaw if you don't have access to email.

## Visit to Thirlmere Reservoir

Following John Butcher's talk to the Society earlier this year on the Thirlmere aqueduct, John has kindly agreed to show a party round some of the works associated with the scheme. The visit will take place at 2pm on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November. Members will make their own way to the meeting point. The group size is limited to 20, and parking is limited, so car sharing will be necessary. Places will be allocated on a first-come first served basis. To book please phone John Hudson

## Relaunched

The website, **A Vision of Britain Through Time**, which can be found at [www.visionofbritain.org](http://www.visionofbritain.org) has been relaunched. This on-line historical atlas has a wealth of information told in maps, statistics, trends and descriptions. It includes population reports from every census from 1801 – 2001, historic maps and boundaries including the 1<sup>st</sup> OS series. Parliamentary election results since 1833, land use surveys, and travelogues from a range of sources.

## Cumbria Local History Federation Annual Convention 26 September 2009

*Report by John Hudson*

The Society was represented at the convention by Sandra Shaw, John Hart and myself, with Derek Denman present in his capacity of Federation treasurer and acting secretary. A number of societies mounted displays, and ours, which attracted considerable interest, was on the subject of Scott's garage and filling station at High Lorton, which operated between 1921 and 1975.



*John Hart presenting our exhibit at the Convention. [This exhibit can be seen at our November meeting]*

The first plenary session was a presentation by Professor John Beckett, Director and General Editor of the Victoria County History (VCH) project. John described the changing traditions in the production of county histories over three centuries culminating in the publication of a considerable number of volumes of the VCH in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, in the case of Cumberland, only two introductory volumes appeared – the proposed detailed histories of each parish were never produced - and in the case of Westmorland, nothing at all was published. John explained that there is now a move, which is acquiring considerable momentum, to produce the detailed parish histories for the whole of Cumbria.

The second plenary session was a presentation by David Bowcock, Assistant County Archivist, about the new record office currently under construction in Carlisle. The existing facilities at Carlisle

for the storage, conservation and consultation of archives are woefully substandard, and the new facility, which is planned to open next year, will at last give us state of the art facilities.

After lunch a number of workshops were held. The most popular was conducted by our president, Dr Angus Winchester, and gave more detail on the Cumbria VCH project, for which he is the coordinator. Assuming the project goes ahead (some funding issues remain to be resolved), the project will aim to harness the enthusiasm of amateur local historians such as ourselves, and will be an opportunity to contribute to what will be an invaluable resource for historians of Cumbria for generations to come. It is hoped that many members of local history societies across the county will participate, and we shall be hearing more about the ways in which we can get involved in a few months' time.

Another workshop focused on digital techniques for local historians, providing useful information on the methods of making, storing and communicating various kinds of historical records. Other sessions were concerned with deciphering secretary hand, newspapers as a source for social history, and decoding heraldry.

The Convention provided a valuable opportunity to learn what is going on in the world of local history, and to meet members of other societies. If anyone who is not on the LDFLHS committee would like to attend next year, or to become involved in the Federation in any way, please contact me or any committee member.

### **Subscriptions are due**

November 1<sup>st</sup> comes around again and subscriptions are due for the following twelve months. The rates are unchanged.

Unless you have already paid you will find a subscription request with this Wanderer and we would invite you to send a cheque by post if possible. Members may pay at the November meeting, but if doing so please come early, so that the meeting can start on time. Our membership secretary, Anne Asquith, will be pleased to answer any enquiries on subscriptions.

## Our future programme for 2009 and 2010

|                  |   |                  |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| 12 November 2009 | The Cumbrian Chapmen – Chapmen, Pedlars and Hawkers who served the villages of Cumbria 17 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> centuries | Barry McKay      |
| 27 November      | Visit to Thirlmere water take-off facility 2pm  |                  |
| 14 January 2010  | Lakeland Architecture through the Centuries   | Andrew Lowe      |
| 11 Mar           | Personal Names and Cumbrian History   | Angus Winchester |
| 13 May           | Two Keswick Men of Science Geologists; Jonathan Otley (1766 – 1856) and James Clifton Ward (1843 – 1880)                              | Alan Smith       |
| 15 May           | Provisional date for an outing  |                  |
| 10 June          | AGM to be followed by talk to be arranged   |                  |
| 08 July          | Whaling from Whitehaven   | Rob David        |
| 09 Sept          | An Introduction to Industrial Archaeology – Mining and Bridges  | Graham Brooks    |
| 11 November      | The Railway History of West Cumbria   | Peter van Zeller |

Talks are at the Yew Tree Hall at 7.30pm unless stated otherwise. Visitors £2.50. Please note that Lorton Parish Council and the Yew Tree Hall Committee have asked that visitors to the hall DO NOT park at the north-east corner – ie to the left of the door when facing the hall. Many thanks.

### Officers and Committee 2009/10

***President Dr Angus Winchester Financial examiner Les Polley***

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Dr John Hudson<br><i>chairman</i>            | 01946 861555   | Anne Asquith<br><i>membership</i>          | 01900 822969                                    |
| vice-chair<br><i>vacancy</i>                 |  | Sally Birch<br><i>house history</i>        | 01900 85680                                     |
| Sandra Shaw<br><i>secretary and Wanderer</i> | 01900 829812<br><i>Sandra.m.shaw@btopenworld.com</i> | Ted Gilbertson<br><i>talks</i>             | 01900 85482                                     |
| Christopher Thomas<br><i>treasurer</i>       | 01900 822171   | Derek Denman<br><i>Journal and website</i> | 01900 85551<br><i>derekdenman@dsl.pipex.com</i> |
| John Hart<br><i>archive</i>                  | 01900 823534   | John Scrivens                              | 01900 85287                                     |
| Michael Baron                                | 01900 824625   |  |   |

### The Wanderer & The Journal

The next issue of the Wanderer will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010. Please send any short items to the Editor, Sandra Shaw by 10<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The next Journal will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 and articles should be sent to the Editor, Derek Denman by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

The Derwentfells Wanderer is published by the Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society, Pardshaw Hall, Pardshaw, Cockermouth CA13 0SP.