

HUME CASTLE & VILLAGE —
as it used to be in 1900

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Lord Lieutenant of Berwickshire.

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Kimmerghame, Duns.

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53 Newtown Street, Duns.

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The President

The appointment of our President to be a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in the 1988 Queen's Birthday Honours List has brought very considerable pleasure to the Society. We take great pride in this especial mark of Royal esteem to Sir William Swan who has been our President since 1976 and who, in this penultimate year as Lord Lieutenant of Berwickshire, is also President of the Berwickshire Naturalists Club.

Chairman's Report

The 1987 Annual General Meeting was held in the Tea Room at Abbey St Bathans by kind permission of Mr John Dobie, who addressed the meeting on his several most interesting enterprises at the Abbey.

Since the A.G.M. your Executive Committee has met in Duns on four occasions. The main subjects discussed are given below in no particular order.

Mouth Bridge

Following the publication of the 1987 Newsletter, the Convener of Borders Region wrote to our President to say that he found the comments contained therein regarding Mouth Bridge to be 'unjust and offensive'. A reply was sent inviting the Convener to visit the site and see for himself, as it was presumed that he had never been there. To date this invitation has not been taken up.

Meanwhile, a second Public Local Inquiry was held in Duns on 19th October 1987 to inquire into the validity of Borders Region's determination to block up this ancient Right of Way for pedestrian use. Your Society, much supported by The Scottish Civic Trust, the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland, the local branch of the National Farmers Union and by a larger number of local inhabitants, opposed this determination. To date, eight months later, the transcript of the Inquiry proceedings has yet to be

received by the Society for checking - a necessary prerequisite before The Reporter can submit his findings to the Secretary of State. The Society is extremely grateful for the considerable assistance given in the production of its case by Professor A.W. Hendry of Edinburgh University and by Mr Brian Foot, a Traffic Consultant, also of Edinburgh.

Cockburnspath By-pass

As mentioned in the 1987 Newsletter, your Society wrote to the Secretary of State asking for a Public Local Inquiry into the proposed route of this by-pass in view of the considerable local feeling which it had stirred up. This objective having been achieved, and in the knowledge that there were over one hundred objectors to the Scottish Office proposals, including Borders Region and A.P.R.S., your Society decided not to become further involved. In the event, the Inquiry ran for almost two weeks in May and the result is awaited.

Lamberton Toll

The prospect of getting something positive done for the Border crossing on the A1 at Lamberton Toll, for which this Society has campaigned for several years, does not appear to have advanced very far in the last twelve months, despite the commissioning of a Consultant's Report. Indeed, it is understood that the road works, due to start in October, have now been further postponed.

Polwarth Thorn

Throughout the life of this Society, the historic Thorn has been protected by the good offices of the Marchmont Estate on whose land it lay. When, earlier this year, the area of old Polwarth village, which includes the Thorn, was put on the market for sale, your Society took action to apply to the Borders Region for a Tree Preservation Order to be placed on the Thorn. News that the Planning and Development Committee had agreed this request was received in April.

Meanwhile, it has been decided to further delay the erection of the direction signs to the Thorn and the explanatory plaque until such time as the future of the area is more certain.

The plaque, which was commissioned by the Society some time ago, bears the following inscription:

The Polwarth Thorn

Polwarth (from the Gaelic 'pol' and Cambro-British 'pul' meaning 'muddy', and Saxon 'worth' or 'warth' meaning 'village' or farmstead) gets a first mention in the title of Sir Adam de Polwarth who married Eva, sister of Alexander Seaton of Wintoun in the reign of Alexander II (1214-49). In the reign of Robert II (1371-90) their descendant, Sir Patrick de Polwarth, had an only daughter, Elizabeth, who brought Polwarth and the lands beyond as a Dower to Sir John Sinclair of Herdmanston.

Their grandson in turn had only daughters, Marion and Margaret, on whom devolved Kimmerghame and Polwarth, respectively. The heiresses wished to marry the brothers George and Patrick Hume of Wedderburn, but were opposed by their uncle Sir William Sinclair, who confined them to Herdmanston whence they were rescued by their prospective bridegrooms. The double wedding took place in Polwarth Kirk and the festivals afterwards included dancing round the Polwarth Thorn. This is the first historical instance of a custom which certainly lasted 300 years, and may have had very ancient beginnings. The last couple who danced round the Thorn at their wedding fifty years before left the village at Whitsun 1854.

Whatever its origins are, or its supposed luck bringing qualities, Polwarth on the Green was famous for its thorn and celebrated in songs and poems, the best known being that of Allan Ramsay who acknowledged that he had used the melody and the first two lines of something much older.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Polwarth still had 288 inhabitants living in the thatched cottages scattered round the green. It had been noted for its shoemakers, who tanned their hides in the Swarden burn, and doubtless sold their wares at the twice yearly fair held in honour of St Mungo, patron of the nearby Church.

The three verses of Allan Ramsay's 'Polwarth, on the Green' complete the plaque.

Cove

A watching brief has been held on the vexed problem of the closure of the road to Cove Harbour and discussion on the subject has included correspondence with our local M.P.

Road-side Verges

In response to a request from a member, assurances were sought from Borders Region Roads Department that the cutting of grass on road-side verges this Summer would be controlled with sensitivity towards the conservation of young trees, wild flowers and wild life. Such an assurance was given, and members are asked to report any lapses that they may observe.

Wallace Statue, Dryburgh

Your Society was invited by Borders Region to attend a meeting on site to inspect this statue of Sir William Wallace at Dryburgh. Mr David Mylne, one of the Society's architects, attended. The condition of the statue, which was constructed by John Smith of Darnick for the Earl of Buchan, is causing concern and the Saltire Society will shortly be launching an appeal for the £20,000 or thereby required for its restoration.

Whitelaw Toll House

After several years of encouragement to the Scottish National Trust, who own the house, to restore it to a realistically sellable condition, this Society has now

come reluctantly to the conclusion that the building has reached such a decrepit condition that it should be demolished and the site returned to agriculture. This view has been passed to the Scottish National Trust.

Keep Berwickshire Tidy

The 1987 winner of the Keep Berwickshire Tidy Trophy was Duns, and the Trophy was presented by Mrs Swan, the wife of our President, at a well attended ceremony held at Southfield, Duns, in November. Runners up in 1987 were: Greenlaw and Hume, with Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth third.

Judging in 1988 was completed in April and the results were as follows:-

- 1st Duns,
- 2nd Coldstream,
- 3rd Chirnside,
- 4th Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl, and Preston.

Mr Jim Ingoldsby, who is responsible for all the arrangements for this competition, has contributed a separate article on K.B.T. for this Newsletter.

Duns Show 1988

The Society intends to mount a small exhibit as in previous years at the Berwickshire Agricultural Show on 6th August. By Kind arrangement with the N.F.U., this will be sited in their marquee.

Other Societies

Your Society has maintained close touch during the year with the following like-minded Societies:

The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland :
A.P.R.S. has been involved in both the Local Public Inquiries already mentioned and in June they held a Council meeting at Thirlestane Castle which was attended by the Chairman on behalf of the Society.

A most successful joint meeting between A.P.R.S. and the Society took place at Mitchell's Hotel, Chirnside on 27th April when a competition, entitled 'Know your Berwickshire ?' was held. This involved the identification of fifty projected slides of the County taken and well shown by Rainy Brown of Kelso; Mr David Mylne was the winner.

Some seventy people attended this enjoyable event and over £100 accrued to the funds of each Society. If members wonder why they were not asked, the answer is that recruitment of new members to each Society was the aim and so non-members were invited and quite a few new recruits were gained.

With Sponsorship from Calor Gas, A.P.R.S. run an 'Eyebright' Award, which was started in March 1987. The scheme attracted 68 entries from all over Scotland, five of which were from Berwickshire:

Whiteadder footbridge at Abbey St Bathans,
Country Walk at Coldstream,
Outlook Point at St Abbs Head,
The Bantry, Eyemouth,
Station Yard, Eyemouth.

The winner was Rumbling Bridge Gorge in Central Region. It is hoped to run a similar event in the future and any member who would like to suggest an entry is asked to inform the Society.

The Scottish Civic Trust : Their Technical Director, Mr John Gerrard, attended the Mouth Bridge Inquiry in October and was most supportive of our case.

Their 1988 Conference was held in Galashiels in April, when they were addressed by our President in his capacity as Chairman of Rural Forum. This society was invited to make a fifteen minute presentation, which was illustrated by some of Mr Douglas Hugonin's excellent slides and was well received.

Hume Castle

Last, but by no means least, your Society has been involved in negotiations with various departments of the Scottish Office regarding the restoration, with the invaluable help of C.H. Dexter Ltd., of Hume Castle. A lease of the Castle and surrounding land is in process of being arranged and work by an M.S.C. team began in May. This, the most important venture that your Society has so far undertaken, is covered by a separate article in this Newsletter by Mr David Mylne, the project architect.

Annual General Meeting 1988

Through the kind permission of the Sue Ryder Foundation, and with arrangements made by Mr David Mylne, the project architect at Marchmont, this year's A.G.M. will be held in the Music Room at Marchmont House at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, 26th July.



EYEMOUTH MUSEUM

— OUR VISITORS WRITE —
'Brilliant' — 'Fantastic' —
'Terrific' — 'Well worth a visit'
COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF
TEL. EYEMOUTH 50678

Eyemouth Museum

Once again Summer (!) is with us and the Museum is open. Since last year we have lost our M.S.C. Team. We are very grateful to the M.S.C. for supporting us for so many years, and, most particularly, to the many Team Members who have worked so hard to set up the Museum and run it in the period for 1980 to September last year.

We were lucky to secure the services of Jack Ellis as Voluntary Curator, to take over from the M.S.C. Team. He worked very hard over the winter to maintain the exhibits, and to get the Museum ready to open at Easter. It must be realised that running a museum is a continuous effort, and work is required even when it is not open to the public to conserve and maintain the building and exhibits. We are very grateful for all the hard work Jack and his helpers put in to keep the Museum going over the winter months.

Sadly, he has found that he is not able to continue as Voluntary Curator, but Joyce Veitch, who was a member of the M.S.C. Team until recently, has agreed to hold the fort while waiting to resume her studies in Edinburgh in September. We could not have found a better person to run the Museum albeit only temporarily.

This does not solve the long term future of the Museum, and we desperately need more volunteers to join the team, and someone to take over the leadership next September.

In the meantime, the Museum flourishes. All the exhibits have been cleaned and conserved since last year, and some new ones added. The season has opened with an excellent exhibition of pictures by Alastair Buchanan, the well-known Marine Artist. This will be followed by other exciting and interesting exhibitions by Margaret Morrison and Derek Jones.

Lt Col Simon Furness

Keep Berwickshire Tidy

The Keep Berwickshire Tidy Campaign was inaugurated in H.M. The Queen's Silver Jubilee year, 1977, under the sponsorship of Berwickshire Civic Society and Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service. The campaign was based on Community Council areas, of which there are 21 in Berwickshire. The purpose was to make

all residents aware of the need to participate in an effort to keep Berwickshire in the forefront of the cleanliness league throughout the country. The 12th campaign has now been completed and there is no doubt that over the years a high standard has been attained. Berwickshire and Argyll are designated the two cleanest counties in Scotland.

The campaign is conducted by a clean-up of all areas; the removal of rubbish from unauthorised dumps and the clearance of blackspots and other eyesores. Assistance in this is given by the Environmental Services Department of Berwickshire District Council which supplies men and vehicles. During the past two years help has also been given by Community Service personnel.

Following the clean-up a panel of twelve judges, acting in six groups of two, inspect the Community Council areas and assess the overall picture in each area, marking the areas accordingly. The area obtaining the highest marks is awarded a trophy and certificate and the runners-up a certificate each year.

The 12th campaign was completed in April as it has been found advantageous to have the clean-up early in the year before road verges, etc. are overgrown. The judges commented on the profusion of daffodils on many of our roadsides and the shows of spring flowers in many gardens. High standards were attained in all areas and all were awarded high marks by the judges.

Berwickshire is maintaining its foremost place in the country and the K.B.T. campaign has played a large part in this achievement.

Jim Ingoldsby

British Summer Time

As 1992 approaches pressure is building up for there to be a Standard European Time base. To realise this would seem to imply that the United Kingdom will have to adopt the European system.

This would mean that the standard time throughout the United Kingdom would be G.M.T. plus one hour throughout the Winter, and G.M.T. plus two hours in the Summer (i.e. B.S.T. in the Winter and Double Summer Time in the Summer as applied during the last War).

In order that the Society may be able to present a consensus opinion on this vexed subject, those attending the A.G.M. on 26th July will be asked to say which of the following options they prefer:-

Option A: Status Quo - B.S.T. to remain, starting in March and ending in October.

Option B: B.S.T. to coincide with the start of European Summer Time (EST) on the 4th Sunday in March and end on the same date as the end of EST on the 4th Sunday in September; (instead of one month later).

Option C: BST to be extended to cover Winter period as well as Summer period i.e. Continental Time.

Option D: BST to be extended to cover Winter period and Double Summer Time to be introduced to coincide with EST.

Opinions from those members who cannot attend the A.G.M. will be gratefully received.

The Mystery of Foul Ford

At one time there used to be a widely-travelled road over the North Moor from Greenlaw to Longformacus. This road branched off to the N.W. from the present Duns road at the entry to Greenlaw Dean Farm, crossed Greenlaw Moor, traversed the Duns to Westruther road just to the east of Kettleshiel Farm, ultimately joining the Clockmill to Longformacus road at Dronesiel. The stone ballast which made up its surface can still be traced.

This road traversed a marshy section of the moor near Kettleshiel known as the Foul Ford and it was here at this spot that a grim, even supernatural tragedy was enacted - an eerie story, not of hoary antiquity for it took place during the early years of the 19th Century.

A certain John Neale was then the Blacksmith at Longformacus and by repute he was a morose and hard-drinking character. One day he travelled to Greenlaw to attend the funeral of his sister. After the burial, and following the custom of those days an adjournment was made to the Public House. Here Neale remained until late in the evening and darkness was falling as he set out on his lonely walk to Longformacus. It was near midnight when his wife heard someone scrabbling at the door. This was followed by a dull thud and on opening the door, to her horror, she found Neale lying there unconscious. On his being brought into the house the family were struck by the wild look of terror on his face. His body was rigid, his eyes wide and staring, his teeth clenched. The local doctor was called but after examining Neale confessed to be at a complete loss. Sometime later the Minister of the Parish was sent for. As he engaged in prayer Neale suddenly sat up and recognising the Minister ordered all but he to leave the room. When, after a short while, the family was readmitted all Neale would say before he died was that they should never pass the Foul Ford after dark.

As can be well imagined, this sudden death and the mystery which surrounded it caused a great sensation in Longformacus. However, with the passage of the years the memory faded from people's minds. A son, Henry Neale, succeeded to his father's business. Although a rough spoken man he was by no means dissipated. Henry one day some few years after his father's death had occasion to go to Kelso. After transacting his business there he came by Greenlaw on his way home. Here he called on his friend James Richardson who was a church officer and grave digger. After Neale had taken his tea, Richardson accompanied him to the top of the hill out of Greenlaw. When Neale made to go by the turnpike road - the present road heading towards

Polwarth - Richardson asked him where he was going. Neale reminded him of his father's admonition that he was never to go by Foul Ford at night. On being assured by Richardson that he still had plenty of time before nightfall Neale said that he would risk it. He was never seen alive again and the next day his body was found at Foul Ford. His body showed no trace of violence but on his face was a look of utter terror.

Neale's death and the mystery surrounding it caused a great sensation in Longformacus and the Minister, who was still living, thought that he would now be justified in relating the story told to him by Neale's father on his deathbed those many years before. The story was to the effect that on his way home from the funeral and as he was nearing Foul Ford he saw what appeared to him to be a dark object approaching from the direction of Kyles Hill. When it assumed an outline he saw what he thought was a hearse drawn by four horses. There was no driver, but when it came closer he was horrified to see the figure of the corpse which he had seen that day buried in Greenlaw and by her side another whom he shuddered to describe as the Evil One. They urged him to join the cavalcade. This he refused to do and, terrified, he fled to be hotly pursued by this ghastly apparition until he reached Foul Ford when they vanished.

Before their disappearance, however, they uttered a threat to Neale to the effect that the first member of his family to pass that way after dark would be taken. Neale remembered no more or of how he reached his home until the Minister's prayers roused him.

For many a long year thereafter the Foul Ford was a place of ill-omen and there were few acquainted with the story who cared to pass that way alone after dark. Today the road which Neale took is unused and overgrown with heather. Mr John Spottiswood had a stone obelisk erected on the spot where Neale's body was found. Here it still stands on the lonely moorland, a little known reminder to us of a macabre and mysterious tragedy.

Douglas Hugonin

Hume Castle

Members may recall the article that appeared in last year's newsletter which set out briefly the process whereby the Berwickshire Civic Society agreed to accept the responsibility for organising the renovation of Hume Castle. At the risk of being repetitive the subject has justifiably to be aired again this year because work has now started on site. That's why the cover features Hume Castle again.

It is interesting that this year's A.G.M. is to be held in Marchmont House, which was built about 1755 by the 3rd Earl of Marchmont, to the design of William Adam. The house is currently enjoying renovation and conversion. Here at Hume we are involved with the same Lord Marchmont by sponsoring the programme of repair to the Castle for the rebuilding of which he was responsible in 1786. The portrait of the aforementioned 3rd Earl of Marchmont has recently been well reported in the local press.

If you go to Hume from Tuesdays to Fridays inclusive you will now find the Manpower Services Commission team at work at the Castle under the guidance of the supervisor, Jim Melville, and team leader Eric Peden. These two have a team of a driver/handyman and seven project-workers. For their "bothy" they have a rather smart and well equipped mobile home (ex. Berwick Holiday Centre) of which they are duly proud. When the weather prevents working outside they can enjoy the gas fire and they have a small cooker and fridge for their meal breaks. The beds are safely in store to allow the larger bedroom to be the office and the smaller bunkroom makes a useful cloakroom for the "Wellies" and other protective clothing. A "portaloo" which was won in our President's recent Chirnside church auction sale, is in the process of being connected up.

We are indebted to our co-sponsors, C.H. Dexter, Ltd., who have been very involved in the recruiting and interviewing of the applicants. Personnel Officer, Bill Ross, has given freely of his time, experience and skill. The whole M.S.C. team were initially provided with two very useful days of safety-at-work and first-aid training by Mr. Perry, Safety Officer at Dexters.

The Borders Region M.S.C. staff under their manager, John Denholm, have been very supportive at all stages, as have also the personnel at the Kelso Job Centre, manageress Mrs Amos.

Since Hume stands within the Kelso postal area it was logical that we should aim to recruit our team from that area, relying on the town's Job Centre to produce the necessary recruits. The results have been highly successful. The team is now collected each morning in Kelso which makes the logistics of getting them to and from work very straightforward and economical. For its transportation the project owns and runs a mini-bus, which is a very serviceable second-hand vehicle. Having previously only ferried crews to and from the terminal building to their aircraft at Edinburgh airport it is in excellent condition. It now also carries a lot of the team's materials for forming the new paths, steps and gates, etc., with which they are currently involved.

Access to the Castle is currently being denied since the whole purpose of the team's activities is to make the place safe again for the public. However, members of the Civic Society will be made welcome by Mr Melville and his team, if they visit the site and show interest and concern in the project. You will find a happy group working with enthusiasm to prolong the active life of this unique view point and making it safe again for access by the public under the joint sponsorship of this Society and C.H. Dexter, Ltd.

You may know of the political uncertainties that currently beset the M.S.C. and its activities. The Commission will cease to exist on Friday, 2nd September. It is anticipated that projects such as ours at Hume will be allowed to continue under the aegis of the Adult Training Executive (?) from Monday 5th September. But nothing is very definite. Our team have had to be recruited in this unsatisfactory state of uncertainty, knowing that their wage structure will then change and probably to their disadvantage. Because of this awkward transitional phase in the organisation of such projects we are deliberately not

getting involved in scaffolding, etc., until the situation settles down.

We have to remember that each member had to have been unemployed for at least a year to be eligible for a place on the team. Perhaps unwittingly this Society has adopted a new and thoroughly worthwhile role of job creation. It is quite the most important and significant effort with which this Society has yet become associated and it certainly deserves your support.

N.B. The team at Hume could use a strimmer. Does any Member of the Society have one that they might lend or donate to the project? We have mechanical expertise on site to put back into good working order a broken piece of such equipment. (Please contact David Mylne, architect, 43 Market Square, Duns - Tel 82352).

David Mylne

Origin and Progress of the Society

The initiative for the creation of the Civic Society began in 1970 when Major Askew, then Convener of the Berwickshire County Council, asked Earl Haig to 'go into the possibility of starting a Civic Society which might help to preserve some of our old villages and cottages which are becoming dilapidated, and which might help to keep an eye on planning proposals which might effect the landscape and our environment generally'.

After an informal meeting had been held at Bemersyde in October 1970, the inaugural meeting of the Society took place in Duns Volunteer Hall on 16th March 1971 under Lord Haig's Chairmanship, and in the presence of Lord Muirshiel, then (and still) Chairman of The Scottish Civic Trust. There were 52 members by April of that year and 105 by October. Liaison with the County Council was reported to be 'excellent'.

Lord Haig remained Chairman until 1973, when Sir Robert McEwen of Marchmont took his place. He in turn was succeeded by Major Adam Lothian, who remained in office until the present Chairman took over in 1981. During the tenure of these four Chairmen there have been only two Honorary Secretaries : Mrs David Swan until 1983 and Mrs Douglas Hugonin ever since.

Our first Newsletter was produced in 1973, when the main topics were the restoration of the Old Toll and Marriage House at Lamberton Toll and the projected plans for a power station at Torness. Now fifteen years on, the former has long disappeared but the latter is very much with us, together with its line of giant pylons which the Society tried so hard to deflect from the Merse of Berwickshire at a Public Inquiry at Haddington in 1983.

This set-back apart, the Society has done much for Berwickshire in its short history, not least in the vetting of Planning Applications, which are submitted to us by the Planning Department of Borders Region. Last year our Architects dealt with thirty-two of these, but this year the number has reduced to the following:

<u>Application</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Date</u>
1. New garage Sinclairhill (retrospective)	S. Kellet	March '87
2. Poultry Units - Orange Lane and Crosshall, Eccles	Hamish Morrison	April '87
3. Replacement windows - 2 Court House Pl, Coldstream	L Thirlaway	May '87
4. New Dwellinghouse - Blythbank, Duns	J.C. Campbell	July '87
5. Change of use - out- buildings to dwellinghouse - Berrywell, Duns	Sandra Walker	July '87

6	Demolition of workshop and erection of houses - East High Street, Greenlaw	G. & J. Waddell	July '87
7	Erection of 3 dwelling- houses - Birgham	Prof. H. Morris	Aug '87
8	Erection of masts etc - Dunglass Viaduct, Co'path	British Rail	Oct '87
9	Alterations to Houndwood House		Nov '87
10	Sheltered Housing, Lennel House	Snr Care Consultants Ltd	Dec '87
11	Alterations - Nisbet Stables	D. Prentice	Mar '88
12	Alterations - Commercial Inn, Coldstream	G. Spratt	Mar '88
13	Extension to 84 High St, Coldstream		Apr '88
14	Removal of Chippendale overmantle, with portrait of 3rd Earl of Marchmont, from Marchmont House.	Trustees of Marchmont Estate	June '88

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