

Kirkby Lonsdale & District Civic Society

Newsletter - Autumn 2014

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Victoria County History

A year ago we reported that the Victoria County History, which began in 1899 with the aim of producing an encyclopaedic record of England's places and people, had at last got round to looking at Cumbria under the editorship of Professor Angus Winchester from Lancaster University. The draft of the Kirkby Lonsdale History was released in August 2013 and runs to nearly 60 pages. The draft History of Casterton (26 pages) followed in January 2014, and most recently the Barbon draft (21 pages) was released in June 2014. The author of all three documents is local historian Emmeline Garnett. All can be viewed at: www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk, and in the Editor's opinion these three documents give an excellent account of each settlement, beginning with

basic geography and geology, and tracing the history of the settlement from earliest times to the present day. The author would be happy to receive comments on, or additions to, the drafts and there is contact link on the website to do this.

In celebration of the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, the Queen re-dedicated the Victoria County History and to mark this occasion, the Victoria County History Cumbria project produced a set of historical data for every village, parish or township in Cumbria - a total of 344 places. These Digests are each a single page summary containing the following core data:

Name of place: status (i.e. whether ancient parish, township or chapelry); parish, ward and historic county in which it lay; modern local government boundary changes

Acreage of administrative unit and extent of common moor or fell, with date of enclosure

Population: overview of number of inhabitants from 1801 to 2001

Landownership: summary of manorial descent (if known); other major estates (if known)

Economic activity other than farming (i.e. mines, quarries, manufacturing, markets etc)

Places of worship both Established Church and nonconformist

Schools and other institutions, such as libraries, almshouses, village halls

These Digests are also available through the above website.

Field at Devil's Bridge



The field bordering the river on the Casterton side of the bridge, has until recently been a wilderness of scrub. Although there was access to the river for canoists, the public footpath running through to the A65 was not usable and the undergrowth contained a lot of Japanese knotweed. Its total neglect gave a very poor image to visitors, in stark contrast to the well-maintained Jubilee Field on the other side of the river.

Thankfully all that has changed. A long time Kirkby Lonsdale resident, with support from the Christopher Robins Trust, has purchased the field, and added a number of picnic benches. The wild undergrowth has

been tamed and the owner ensures the grass is regularly mowed. It is now an attractive area, well used by residents and visitors alike, and a much-improved foreground to our famous bridge.

Change of Use - Barns to Dwellings

In the previous edition we outlined the new NPPF that greatly facilitates barn conversions, and were fearful of their impact, whilst recognizing that the fine detail of how they are interpreted by local planning officers will only emerge over time. Initial decisions from SLDC highlighted the difficulties in implementing this new legislation, with some being refused (for example CU/2014/0004) whilst other similar ones (such as CU/2014/0011) were permitted. However the broad principles are now becoming clearer, and this is our “take” on them:

1. Under the new Permitted Development Order, Class MB (a) and (b), applicants notify the planning authority (SLDC) of their intention to carry out the development.
2. SLDC have to decide whether or not prior approval is required in respect of
 - Transport and highway impacts
 - Noise impacts
 - Contamination risks on the site
 - Flooding risks on the site
 - Whether the location or siting makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for Change of Use
 - Whether prior approval is required as to the design or external appearance of the building
3. The NPPF states that applications must be determined in accordance with development plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
4. It seems then that the various policies of the Adopted South Lakeland Core Strategy, and the Saved Policies of the South Lakeland Local Plan, remain relevant to applications submitted as “notifications” under the Permitted Development Class MB, in other words the Planning Officer has to give regard to landscape and settlement character, appropriate design and so on.

In other words this new NPPF may not be an open door for any agricultural building to be converted to a dwelling, but may allow sensible conditions to be applied. We shall watch with interest to see how things develop.

Planning Enforcement

Bright Green Shop in the Market Square

A number of Members took exception to the discordant colour scheme of one of the businesses in the Market Square, and we reported those concerns to the Enforcement Officer. Following an assessment by the Conservation Officer, SLDC’s Planning Committee authorised “action in respect of Abrahams, to restore the building’s former colour either through the submission of an application for Listed Building consent that would propose a colour scheme for the architectural elements that is more in keeping with the heritage asset significance, or in the absence of an application, direct enforcement action through the service of a Listed Building enforcement notice.” We look forward to seeing the result.

Jewellers on Main St

The multi-light shop window of this listed building was replaced by a single pane without planning permission. Numerous people reported this breach, we had photographs of the original, and eventually the owner was successfully prosecuted, and has undertaken to reinstate a window similar to the original one.

Other Planning Matters

CU/2014/0017, land off A683 in Casterton, Change of Use, Barn to Dwelling.

This is a revision of CU/2014/0004, to which we previously objected. The proposal adopts visibility splays for road safety reasons, but did not address our principal concerns, so we objected again.

Forthcoming Winter Talks

Monday October 13th

“The Restoration of Lowther Castle and Gardens” by Martin Ogle.

Martin has travelled the world, gardening in very diverse climates, and as Head Gardener at Lowther Castle has been involved in the restoration from the early days of the project.

Monday November 10th

“The Commonwealth War Graves Commission” by Admiral Sir John Kerr.

To coincide with the Armistice, a reminder of the work done to honour the memory of fallen service men and women, by a member of the Civic Society who was Vice Chairman of the War Graves Commission for 3 years.

Monday December 8th

“The Will and Inventory of John Bridge of Bradshaw” by Dr Brenda Fox

A fascinating insight into the life of a seventeenth century gentleman gleaned from his will, and a guide to what a typical will of the 1600’s can tell us.

“The Furness and Silverdale Hoards”

The first Winter Talk of the new series on September 8th was by Dot Boughton, working as Finds Liaison Officer for Lancashire, under the auspices of the British Museum. She described in graphic detail the discovery and significance of these two remarkable finds. First, in Easter 2011, 92 silver coins and artefacts now known as the Furness Hoard - among them ingots and one near-complete silver bracelet - were found by a metal detectorist in Furness, the first time that a significant amount of valuable Viking treasure has been recovered from the area.

Such finds do not occur often in the career of specialists such as Dot, but then in September of the same year, a second find - the Silverdale Hoard - was unearthed by a metal detectorist near to the village of Silverdale. It was found in a field that had been regularly swept with a metal detector for many years prior to the find. Most of the pieces were contained in a lead 'pouch', and the survival of this container is, in itself, a rare occurrence that adds significance to the find.



The Silverdale Hoard comprises silver items including arm-rings, coins, ingots and chopped up pieces of silver known. Alongside the lead pouch are a couple of fragments of lead and one silver plated, base metal coin - a contemporary fake! The hoard is believed to date from the same time as the Furness Hoard, circa 905 AD.

The hoard reveals the truly international nature of Viking society - with coins minted as far away as current day Baghdad (Iraq) and the Frankish Kingdom (France), across the channel. It shows, very clearly, the evidence of skilled craftsmanship and - potentially - brings to us the name of an unknown king of Northumbria (Harthacnut) through one small, but very significant coin.

The Silverdale Hoard is on display at Preston Museum until the end of December.

Buildings at Risk Survey - Conservation Area Review

Over the past 12 months, members of the committee have completed a project on behalf of SLDC's Conservation Officer, to survey every building - listed and unlisted - in Kirkby Lonsdale's Conservation Area. The purpose was to identify any buildings at risk of dilapidation (very few), and make a simple assessment of any features of architectural or historical significance in unlisted buildings. A simple 'Article 4' assessment was also made, noting trends in alterations to buildings in the conservation area. A permanent photographic record was made of all the buildings. A very brief comparison of this with a similar record made in 2004 shows the considerable amount of change to the public face of the town, especially the retail premises.

Killington Windfarm

Following SLDC's approval of this scheme, against the advice of its officers, the Secretary of State called in the application and a Public Enquiry was scheduled. The developer, Banks' Renewables, have now withdrawn the application and the Enquiry has been cancelled. However a recent planning application (SL/2014/0744) from Banks' seeks to retain the wind speed anemometer on the Killington site for a further 18 months, so we await further developments.

Feature of the Month

The article on ‘Doorways in Kirkby Lonsdale’ in the Spring edition was well received (it was even reprinted in the ‘Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages’ house magazine), so we wondered whether a short series of articles about other features in the town might be of interest. Suggestions from Members would be most welcome. To start things off, here are some interesting “Roadside Curiosities”:



Address

- 1 Boot Scraper (one of 3) on Main St. The metal bar is gone.
- 2 A wall of ‘water shot’ stone on Main St. the stones being set at a slight angle allow water to drip off, keeping the wall drier.
- 3 The base of a missing Victorian wooden pilaster which once framed the window of ‘The Bath House’ on New Rd.
- 4 Corner of a wall on Fairbank, whose rounded stones are said to have been recovered from the demolished pillar in St Mary’s Church.

<p>Editor: Dr Ken Humphris The views expressed are those of the Editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the Civic Society Committee as a whole. The Editor would be delighted to receive comments or articles from members of the Society for inclusion in the newsletter. Registered Charity No. 502315</p>	<p>Chairman Dr Ken Humphris Lowgill, High Casterton LA6 2SD Tel: 015242 71983</p> <p>Mr Mike Marcznski Tel: 015242 73318</p> <p>Mrs Audrey Phillips Tel: 015242 72514</p> <p>Mr Tom Felix Tel: 015242 72248</p>	<p>Secretary Mrs Sue Pelter Rigmaden Farm House Mansergh LA6 2ET Tel: 015242 76216</p> <p>Miss Pat France Tel: 015242 71740</p> <p>Membership Secretary Mrs Judith Manifold Tel: 015242 73457</p>	<p>Treasurer Mr David Dalgoutte Delph cottage Jingling Lane Kirkby Lonsdale LA6 2AW</p> <p>Peter Stockdale Tel: 015242 76443</p> <p>Mr Mike Kingsbury Tel: 015242 76434</p>
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