

# BOROUGHBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER SPRING 2017

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### SPRING PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10TH

THE HISTORY OF PRINTING - CHARLES LUBELSKI

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH

COACHING MEMORIES - ERIC HOULDER

TUESDAY, MARCH 14TH

OLD POSTCARDS - TONY SHEPHERD

TUESDAY, APRIL 11TH

PRECARIOUS FORTUNES - IAN TOWNSEND

(A STORY BASED ON AN INCIDENT FROM VICTORIAN HARROGATE INVOLVING A YOUNG LADY WHO INHERITED A FORTUNE WHICH TRANSFORMED HER LIFE)

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN BOROUGHBRIDGE LIBRARY JUBILEE SUITE AT 7.30

ALL WELCOME: MEMBERS FREE; VISITORS AND GUESTS £3.00



## NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to the spring newsletter. I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and enjoyed some quality time with friends and family. With spring still several weeks away we have some interesting speakers lined up (thanks to David Barley) who will help to lighten a few more dark Tuesday evenings for us.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Jackie Akers and John Winn to the committee. John will take over as minute taker from Anne Padden. Anne has performed this role with great efficiency and dedication over the years and she will continue to contribute as a committee member. I also give thanks to Marjorie Ashworth who has now stepped down from the committee. Marjorie was chair of the society for a period and we are grateful for all she did during her time in office. I still recall how welcome Marjorie made me feel as a new member!

We are still keen to hear from anyone who is interested in volunteering to replace Christine Tasker as treasurer.

Initially, this would involve supporting Christine to 'learn the ropes'. We do not need an individual with specific skills associated with finance, we just need a willing person prepared to give a little time to organising the society's financial affairs. Do please talk to Christine (or me) if you are willing to consider taking on the role.

Under Mike Tasker's leadership our book project continues to evolve. As previously stated, writing a history of Boroughbridge is a major undertaking, but with so many people each writing a section the contribution already submitted are growing steadily. Mike will continue to update us on progress through newsletters and at society meetings. See page 12 of this edition for an update.

Thank you to all members for your continued interest and support.

Happy New Year,

Peter Fleming, Chairman

### Have you visited our website yet?

<http://www.boroughbridgehistory.co.uk>

For access to the members' area please request a password by using the 'Contact Us' facility on the site.

## Boroughbridge and District Historical Society

*An active and friendly North Yorkshire group*



## Annual General Meeting Updates

At the AGM in October we conducted the business of the society with relevant reports from the treasurer and secretary and new committee members were voted in (see page 2). As well as updates on the website from David Bellwood and the book project from Mike Tasker we were entertained with a very engaging talk about Bee Keeping Through the Ages by Barry Green.

At the meeting a point of order was raised about the secretary's report from 2015 not being tabled. Linda Dooks has provided this below:

### Secretary's Report Sept 2014 to October 2015 AGM

We have had another very busy and rewarding year and firstly, I would like to thank everyone for the support they have given the society, particularly when I have had to spend so much time with the Dog Kennel Lane Project.

The Dog Kennel Lane project is progressing nicely and we were very pleased with the Launch exhibition and the numbers attending.

The Proposed Heritage trail for the Dog Kennel Lane project was walked by over thirty people as part of the Boroughbridge Walkers are Welcome Easter Walking festival.

We had given several slide shows including ones at Kirby Hill WI and Helperby. and attended with our displays The Boroughbridge Plot to Plate event, Village life at Kirby Hill, the Health and Wellbeing Display organised by North Yorkshire Library and the Aldborough and Boroughbridge show.

There were some IT concerns during the year, over the lap top and the projector, but these had been resolved and it was suggested that we may be able to enlist some help and work with the pupils from the Boroughbridge High school in the future. Peter had suggested we start a contingency fund for renewal of equipment.

Our first application for funding from the Bradford Building society had not been successful.

We had being asked to support the YoreVision Heritage Lottery Young roots application, which in principal we had been happy to do.

We had received some correspondence from the family of Archie White and the contact had been put in touch with Harrogate District Council because as part of the national commemoration ceremonies for the First World War, Boroughbridge was to have a ceremony in 2016 to erect a paving slab in honour of Archie White receiving the Victoria Cross.

Finally, I would like to especially thank John and Peter for stepping into the breach now that Marjorie has stood down and thank you all once again for supporting the society.



### Treasurer's Report

Christine Tasker tabled a detailed treasurer's report at the AGM. The society is financially in good health. In brief summary income for 2015-2016 was £1345.69 and expenditure was £910.14. This means we currently hold a reserve of £1496.

## ***Village Dance Music in the Dales***

### **Bob Ellis**

At our September meeting we were given an excellent talk by Bob Ellis. Bob runs the Dales Villages Music Project based at Hawes Countryside Museum. The aim of the project is to create an archive of Dales music by pulling together various collections and recordings. They now have notations for around 150 tunes. Bob is passionate about the project and wants to ensure the music continues to be played not just preserved.

Although the Dales can claim some unique tunes the area was by no means isolated and so music in the Dales was influenced by what was popular in other areas. There is nothing uniquely local to the Dales pre C19th that has survived. However, we know that unlike the rest of Europe in England a tradition developed in the localities of music that was more than simplified court music. In 1651 John Playford published a book of dance tunes which was reprinted eighteen times over the next eighty years, showing the popularity of dance music.

For centuries dance music would have been played on instruments such as bagpipes, bombards, lutes, fiddles and shawms. A tabor would have provided the beat. However, the C19th saw the introduction of new instruments like the piano accordion and concertina. In St Mary's Church, Beverley, the Minstrels' Pillar has carvings which show musicians playing.

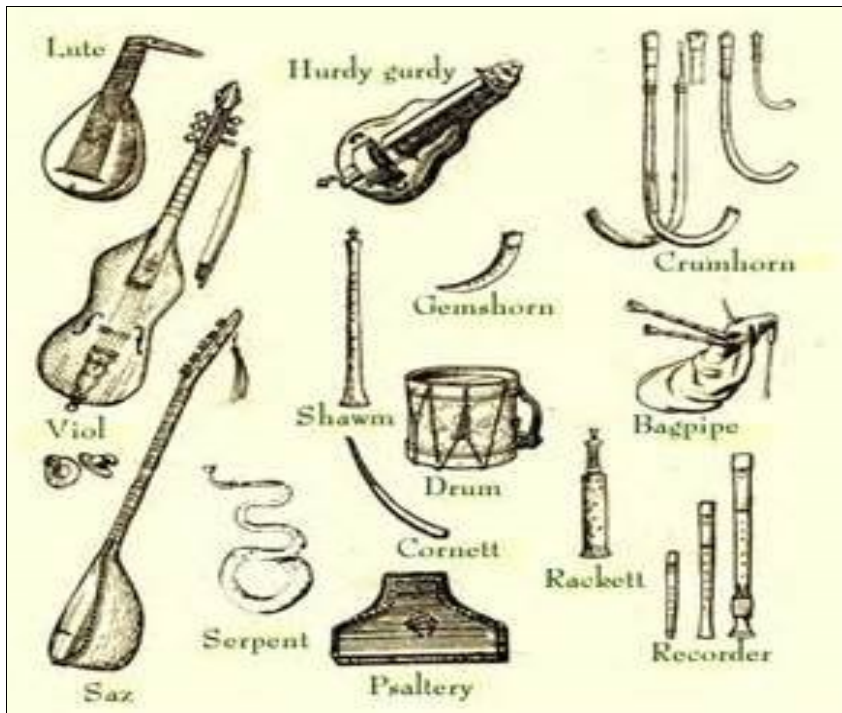


However, not everyone approved. Puritans discouraged dancing calling in 'the devil's procession'. They attempted to eradicate dancing but with the restoration of Charles II (1660) many village maypoles were erected once again.

In Yorkshire morris dancing was strong. As well as brooms, swords were used and at its height of popularity ninety villages boasted sword dancers. After World War I the Womens' Institute helped to keep dancing alive by resurrecting it in many villages. From our own area the tune books of Joshua Jackson of South Stainley and Lawrence Headley of Helperby have survived, showing influences from as far afield as London and Scotland (probably through drovers' tunes). Some place names bore witness to the dancing culture, for example in Leyburn there was Minstrels' Court (now Nicholson's Yard).

Not all musicians could play music and many did day jobs also. Records show road building, nail making and coal selling as examples of day jobs done by minstrels. Sometimes playing music ran through the generations as with the Beresford family of Wharfedale. Thanks to the work of the project a book of tunes is to be published this year (2017) which will help to achieve Bob's aim of keeping the music alive.





Instruments Used in the Middle Ages



Morris Dancing Kept Alive in Yorkshire

## ***The Battle of Myton***

### **Louise Whittaker**

In November Louise Whittaker from the Battlefields Trust joined us to talk about the Battle of Myton. The battle is sometimes called the White Battle because of the number of clergy involved. It took place on 20 September 1319 and was one of many battles associated with Scottish independence.



In April 1318, Berwick-upon-Tweed, the last Scottish-claimed stronghold still in the hands of the English, was captured by Sir James Douglas and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, two of King Robert Bruce's most able commanders. Ever since his defeat at Bannockburn in 1314, Edward II had been preoccupied by an ongoing political struggle with his senior barons, headed by Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. Repeated Scottish raids deep into the north of England had effectively been ignored: but the loss of Berwick was something different. Once the most important port in Scotland, it had been in English hands since 1296; during which time its defences had been greatly strengthened. News of its capture had a sobering effect on Edward and his magnates.

Vigorous assaults were made on Berwick by land and sea, but Walter, the High Steward of Scotland, ably assisted by John Crabb, a military engineer, conducted an effective defence, beating back all attacks. However, he could not be expected to hold out indefinitely. King Robert had no intention of risking a direct attack on the powerful English army which, in the words of John Barbour, 'might well turn to folly'. Instead, Douglas and Moray were ordered on yet another large-scale diversionary raid into Yorkshire, intended to draw off the besiegers. They came with a large force of mounted infantry.

The Scots seemingly had news of the queen's whereabouts, and the rumour soon spread that one of the aims of their raid was to take her captive. As King Robert advanced towards York, she was hurriedly taken out of the city by water, finally gaining refuge further south in Nottingham. Yorkshire itself was virtually undefended and the raiders had an uninterrupted passage from place to place. William Melton, the Archbishop of York, set about mustering an army, which included a large number of men in holy orders. While the force was led by some men of standing, including John Hotham, Chancellor of England, and Nicholas Fleming, Mayor of York, it had very few men-at-arms or professional fighting men. From the gates of York, Melton's host marched out to face the battle-hardened schiltrons. The outcome is described in the *Brut or the Chronicles of England*, the fullest contemporary source for the battle:

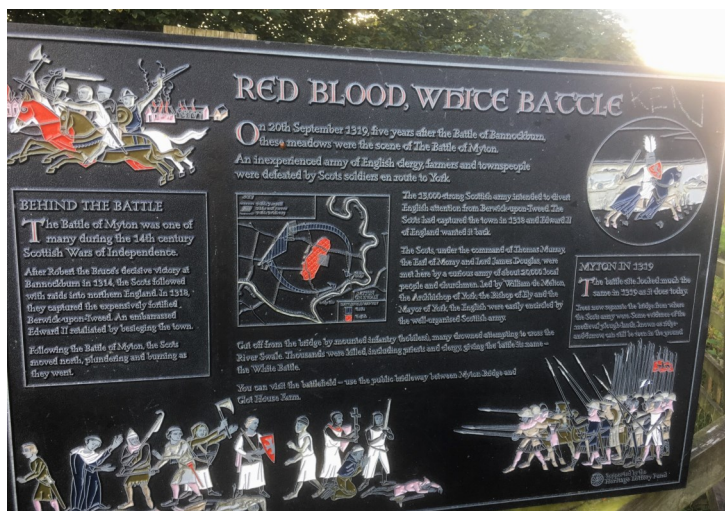
*The Scots went over the water of Solway...and come into England, and robbed and destroyed all they might and spared no manner of thing until they come to York. And when the Englishmen at last heard of this thing, all that might travel-as well as monks and priests and friars and canons and seculars-come and meet with the Scots at Myton-on-Swale, the 12th day of October. Alas! What sorrow for the English husbandmen that knew nothing of war, they were quelled and drenched in the River Swale. And their holinesses, Sir William Melton, Archbishop of York, and the Abbot of Selby and their steeds, fled, and come to York. And that was their own folly that they had mischance, for they passed the water of Swale; and the Scots set fire to three stacks of hay; and the smoke of the fire was so huge that the Englishmen might not see the Scots. And when the Englishmen were gone over the water, so come the Scots with their wings in manner of a shield, and come toward the Englishmen in a rush; and the Englishmen fled, for they lacked any men of arms...and the Scots hobelars went between the bridge and the Englishmen. And when the great host had them met, the Englishmen almost all were slain. And he that might wend over the water was saved; but many were drenched. Alas, for sorrow! for there was slain many men of religion, and seculars, and also priests and clerks; and with much sorrow the Archbishop escaped; and therefore the Scots called it 'the White Battle'.*



So many clerics were slain in the encounter that it became known as the 'Chapter of Myton'. Barbour gives the English loss as 1,000 killed, including 300 priests, but the contemporary English Lanercost Chronicle says that 4,000 Englishmen were killed by the Scots, while another 1,000 were drowned in the River Swale. Nicholas Fleming was hacked to pieces.

The Chapter of Myton had the effect that Bruce was looking for. At Berwick it caused a serious split in the army between those like the king and the southerners, who wished to continue the siege, and those like Lancaster and the northerners, who were anxious about their homes and property. Edward's army effectively split apart: Lancaster refused to remain and the siege had to be abandoned.

The campaign had been another fiasco, leaving England more divided than ever. It was widely rumoured that Lancaster was guilty of treason, as the raiders appeared to exempt his lands from destruction. Hugh Despenser, the king's new favourite, even alleged that it was Lancaster who had told the Scots of the queen's presence in York. To make matters worse, no sooner had the royal army disbanded than Douglas came back over the border and carried out a destructive raid into Cumberland and Westmorland. Edward had little choice but to ask Robert for a truce, which was granted shortly before Christmas.



A plaque next to Myton Bridge commemorates the battle.

The bridge provides access to the site of the battlefield



## Grace & Glory 500 Year Anniversary of the Reformation

**Tim Chester**

In December Tim Chester provided us with a most erudite lecture on the Reformation. Tim has written two books on the subject and his account of events generated much discussion and many questions.

The Protestant Reformation is a term used to describe a series of events that happened in the 16th century in the Christian Church. Because of corruption in the Catholic Church, some people saw a need to change the way it worked.

People like Erasmus, Thomas More, Huldrych Zwingli, Martin Luther and John Calvin saw this corruption, and acted to stop it. This led to a schism in the church, into Catholics and a number of Protestant churches. The date 1517 is often quoted as the start of the Reformation as this was the year in which Luther pinned his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg, thus challenging the position of the Catholic church.



Depiction of selling indulgences from circa 1530

One of the main corruptions was the way the Church raised money by selling indulgences, which were believed to reduce the time a soul spent in purgatory (a time of undergoing purification) before entering heaven.

Luther chose to follow his conscience based on his direct reading of the scriptures. This was something only highly educated people could do as the vast majority of people could not read and all sermons in the church were given in Latin. The Church had lost prestige and once criticisms became public the flood gates of protest opened. Many people turned to Protestantism and new denominations became established over time.

In England, Henry VIII (defender of the faith) broke with the Catholic Church in order to have his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled.

Henry's break with Rome ushered in a period of religious upheaval in England, with burnings at the stake for papists. It is difficult to know for sure what ordinary people made of the changes, certainly in many parts of the country, including Yorkshire, notable families continued to follow Catholicism, often hiding priests in secret parts of their grand houses. Ripley Castle, for example, had a 'priest room' hidden from sight.

Protestant denominations have multiplied in different forms, especially in Protestant countries. Catholic countries such as Spain and Mexico for a long time forbade Protestants to immigrate, and Protestant countries sometimes forbade Catholics. Protestants became especially influential in the United States





Martin Luther

## Vulcan Bomber XH 558 (part 2) - John Whitehouse

Having left the account of the visit to Vulcan bomber XH 558 at Robin Hood airport somewhat hastily in the last newsletter I implied that further details of XH558's operational career and highlights might follow. An abbreviated timeline for XH558 could read as follows

Sept. 1954: Order placed for XH558, the twelfth of a 17 ship batch

May 1960: First flight of XH558

July 1960: First uprated Vulcan B Mk 2, XH558, to enter RAF squadron service

1960–1973: Service with 230 operational conversion unit and 101 squadron at Finningley and Waddington.

XH558's role in 101 sqn was that of a quick reaction bomber to counter with nuclear guided missile, BlueSteel, any nuclear strike threat from the Soviets. After the introduction of Polaris submarines in 1969 the Vulcan was gradually adapted to a low-level tactical role until the arrival in 1979 of the Panavia Tornado fighter-bomber into NATO service

Aug. 1973: One of 9 Vulcans to be converted to the Maritime Radar Reconnaissance role to form 27 sqn at RAF Scampton. The aircraft was fitted with a more powerful radar system and protective paint finish to reduce the effects of salty sea spray. Soviet naval activity was intense in the seas around the UK and the ability of the Vulcan to radar-plot every vessel simultaneously in the maritime approaches was invaluable to the defence of the realm against incursions by hostile warships. These Vulcans also monitored the fall-out from foreign nuclear tests, e.g. French and Russian, so that their strength could be assessed by military intelligence

1982: 27 sqn disbanded. XH558 was converted to a K2 tanker for in-flight refuelling. Assigned to 50 sqn the Vulcan K2s; would have remained in UK airspace fuelling English Electric Lightning fighters rushing to intercept Russian intruder aircraft.

1984: The Vulcan was withdrawn from service but XH558 was deployed to the Vulcan Display Flight until 1992 being the last Vulcan in RAF service

2008: Returned to flight with the Vulcan to the Sky Trust.

2010: Celebration of XH558's 50th anniversary.

The highlight of Vulcan service and the sole campaign conducted in a war scenario was the Black Buck series of raids on the Argentinian forces in the Falkland Islands. Black Buck 1 was the most spectacular attack and reaped the majority of the propaganda benefit. The objective was to put Port Stanley air-strip out of action thereby denying the enemy easy landing of stores and reinforcements. Also the basing of high performance jets to support the enemy's occupation would be rendered impossible.



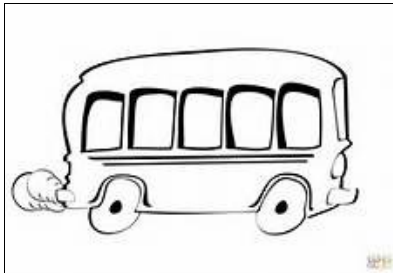
As will be well known the attack by Flt Lt Withers, an Australian pilot serving with the RAF, succeeded in placing a stick of 21x 1000 lb bombs diagonally across the runway scoring one direct hit on it and a second hit on workshop facilities. Despite the limited result of the attack: the propaganda and strategic effects were huge. No worthwhile strategic aviation assets could be placed on Falkland and because of the implied threat to the Argentinian mainland (which was closer to Ascension Island than Falkland) Argentinian fast jet squadrons were tied up on defensive duties around Buenos Aires. A game-changer then! Some facts pertaining to this raid show the complex nature of such an exercise. Five Vulcans were selected to be converted into non nuclear low level attack aircraft. Precision bombing with iron bombs, navigation over vast tracts of featureless ocean and in-flight refuelling were just some of the basic skills that had to be relearned. Conversion of radar sets and altering the bomb-bay to take non-nuclear weapons were part of the extensive reordering required. Eleven Handley Page Victor tankers were to fuel the single attack Vulcan. A total fuel uplift of 244,000 gals was involved of which 17,000 gals was used by the Vulcan. The Victors cruise altitude was 30,000 feet, the Vulcan preferred 40,000 feet which resulted in higher fuel consumption as the formation flew at the lower height. The Vulcan's mission mileage was a tad under 8k while the time elapsed was 2 minutes over 16 hours. The longest bombing run ever undertaken. It is unlikely to be equalled.

## Possible Visit for Society Members

After the successful visit to see the Vulcan at Doncaster last year is anyone interested in visiting the Cold War Bunker at York and/or the Holgate Windmill, which are both situated off Acomb Road, York, within a few minutes of each other.

Please let Linda know at the January meeting or contact [linda.dooks@btinternet.com](mailto:linda.dooks@btinternet.com) and we will see what can be arranged, and when we can go.

Thanks Linda







## Book Project Update – Mike Tasker

As the “History of Boroughbridge” Book Project gains momentum it becomes ever clearer that the town does have a fascinating and periodically exciting history, with new facts and stories constantly emerging. It is full of surprises, and very rewarding to uncover, or re-discover things which have been hidden and forgotten for many years.

A draft outline of the topics to be covered in the book has been established, and we have 23 volunteers re-searching and writing up the different areas. At this stage the topics envisaged are as follows;-

1. Early history – the Three Arrows, Isurium Brigantum, Norman Town, Battle of Boroughbridge etc
2. Civil Administration – Board of Guardians, Town Council
3. Law and Order - Police, Courts, Legal Profession
4. Churches – Anglican, Non-conformist
5. Transport – Water, Road, Rail
6. Trade and Industry – corn mills, boat building, brick making, candle making, etc
7. Banking
8. Education - Schools
9. Parliamentary Electoral history
- 10 Health – Medical Service, Community Care
11. Veterinary Service
12. Postal Service
13. Pubs and Hostelries
14. Infrastructure - running water and sewage disposal, gas, electricity, Fire Service, telecommunications
15. Farming – A&B Show, Auction Mart, Sadler’s Farm, Agricultural Services
16. Sport – Football, Cricket, Tennis, Badminton.
17. Entertainment – Drama, Music
18. Military – WW1, WW2, Korea
19. Flooding
20. Family Histories
21. Population data, statistics

Some of these topics are well known and covered with publications already written, others need considerable research and study. Some subjects have not been previously tackled at all. We have made a good start, with some articles already well advanced, but there is much research and writing still ahead of us. The target date for publishing has been notionally set for Spring 2018. A regular update meeting is now taking place on the first Friday of the Month in the Jubilee Room above the Library, where status will be reviewed and where articles from the Historical Society Archives can be accessed for research. Anyone who may have a story or other contribution to make would be more than welcome to come to these meetings.

