

# The Derwentfells Wanderer

May 2017

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

## Lanercost Priory and Holm Cultram Abbey

Our Spring visit on **May 17th** will take us to Lanercost Priory and Holm Cultram Abbey, which were victims of the assault on the monastic wealth of the Catholic Church in the 1530's. Both trace their origins back to a time when Cumbria was fiercely contested between the English Crown and the Scots. Lanercost was in the front line for nearly a century from 1296 and Holm Cultram, by now very wealthy, was plundered several times by invading Scottish armies, most severely by Robert Bruce (who was to mete out the same treatment to Lanercost) in 1319. The English Reformation brought the monastic life there to an end, but the Priory and the Abbey have remained places of Christian worship ever since. Lanercost's story is intimately bound up with the fortunes of the great northern aristocratic families – the Dacres, whose Protestantism won them possession in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, then later their rivals at nearby Naworth, the Howards, who still own the land on which the Priory stands. The Parish Church is substantially their creation today. Much of the structure was rebuilt by Salvin in the 1840s and then developed and decorated in the latter part of the century by George Howard who employed the architect Philip Webb, Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris' Arts and Crafts company to decorate and embellish the interior. The Abbey meanwhile had lost 1600 acres of land and all its substantial wealth in 1538 when the Act dissolving the Greater Monasteries was passed, but its Church was spared, to act both as a Parish Church for the local community and as a refuge from the intermittently marauding Scots. Over the last decade the West Cumbria Archaeological Society has been at work on the site conducting surveys and digs. Extensive



restoration of the Church has taken place after the fire caused by arson in 2007. The arrangements for the visit on **Wednesday, 17 May 2017** are as follows:

9.00	Coach picks up from Lorton (meet at the Tennis Courts)
9.20	Coach picks up from Cockermouth (Boots on Main Street)
10.30	Visit of Lanercost Priory and Church
12.30	Leave for Abbeytown, lunch on arrival
13.45	Talk and guided tour of the Holm Cultram Abbey
14.45	Depart for Cockermouth and Lorton

To reserve a place (limited number available) send a cheque for £20 per person (incl. lunch and coach) payable to LDFLHS, giving your contact details. Please address it to Tim Stanley-Clamp at 3 South Lodge, Simonscales Lane, Cockermouth CA13 9FB. Tel 01900 336542

## SITUATIONS VACANT

You will have seen from the accompanying AGM notice that Anne Asquith is standing down after holding the role of Membership Secretary since 2008. This is a key appointment; vital to the continued running of your Local History Society. Anne has supplied this job description: -

## Wanted now - Membership Secretary

The main requirements of the role are: -

1. Being at the lectures to accept membership renewals and to address any membership enquiries.
2. Delivering cash and cheques to the Treasurer.
3. Access to a computer for inputting membership details and subscriptions. The Society's database is held on Excel. The database is forwarded to committee members as required for communication with members.
4. Attending committee meetings throughout the year (usually 4). If you think you could do this job please have a word with any committee member.

## Future Vacancies – Secretary and Talks Organiser available from June 2018.

It would help the society and anyone thinking of offering to take these roles, if candidates could make themselves known, and possibly join the committee now.

The secretarial role is key to communications within the society and with other organisations. The tasks include preparation for and attendance at committee meetings and annual general meetings. Minutes have to be taken and distributed. To act as the point of contact for the various organisations of which this Society is a member or with which it has dealings. To distribute information within the society. To edit the Wanderer – this role could be separated from that of secretary. Other tasks as required to facilitate the smooth running of the society.

The programme of talks arranged by the Society continues to be very popular with members and visitors alike and is the single most important service the Society provides. The organiser's task is to plan and arrange a series of seven talks each year, to provide an interesting and balanced programme. Additionally, the organiser will publicise and advertise the talks, liaise with the speakers and manage the talks' budget.

Members of the Society should be aware that if these posts remain vacant, the committee for 2017/18 will comprise 5 members, all with full committee tasks.

From 2018/19 that will reduce to 3 members and your current committee considers that it would not be possible to run the society in those circumstances.

## Notice of an Exhibition

The National Trust is holding an exhibition at Wordsworth House, Cockermouth. Entitled *The Word-Hoard: a love letter to our land*, it comprises images by Society members John and Rosamund Macfarlane. Curated by their son, the acclaimed author Robert Macfarlane, it celebrates the natural world and reclaims the language we once used to describe it. It is on until 3 September, runs Saturday to Thursday, 11am – 4pm. The event is free but standard admission charges to the venue apply.

## Transfer of Tasks

When Dr Derek Denman left the committee in 2014, he retained a number of tasks and in April 2015, asked the committee to take over some of his remaining roles. This process continues. Maintenance of the membership database is now managed entirely within the committee. Fiona Lambrick prints address labels, for which we are grateful and a group of committee members now organises the distribution of paper materials. We are greatly assisted by John Hart and Trevor Roberts who hand deliver round Lorton and Cockermouth. In his original letter Derek indicated that he wished to relinquish editorship of the Journal at the end of 2017. Sandra Shaw, editor

## The Journal and the website

Members will read elsewhere that I will finish my role as editor of *The Journal* after issue 60 in August, and that the Committee had decided to take this opportunity to make changes to its printed communications, including ceasing *The Journal* as a regular publication from 2018. I would like to outline the plans for relevant online facilities, but first I wish to thank the Society and its members for their support of *The Journal* and the previous *Newsletter* since 1994, the first 37 issues being edited by the late Michael Grieve, who set a high standard to follow. My thanks also go to the many contributors over the

## Our future programme for the rest of 2017

11 May	North Cumberland People and the Caribbean	Dr Diane Rushworth
<b>Wednesday 07 June</b>	AGM + talk Holme Cultram Abbey: recent archaeological work	Mark Graham
13 July	Cumbrian Minerals	Ian Tyler
14 Sep	A Passionate Sisterhood	Kathleen Jones
Friday 13 October	6 <sup>th</sup> Bernard Bradbury Memorial Lecture: Cocker-mouth's Relationship with the railways 1847 - 1966	Eric Cass Kirkgate Centre Cockermouth
09 November	From barren waste to National Treasurer: how we learned to love the Lake District	Grevel Lindop
11 November	Melbreak Communities coffee morning 10.30 – 12.00 Yew Tree Hall	Assistance please. Offers to secretary.

Talks are at the Yew Tree Hall at 7.30pm unless stated otherwise. We are asked not to park to the left of the entrance (when looking at the hall) as the road is narrow there and can cause problems for passing vehicles. Visitors £3.00.

### Officers and Committee 2016/17

**President: Professor Angus Winchester Financial examiner: Peter Hubbard**

Charles Lambrick <i>Chairman</i>	01900 85710	Anne Asquith <i>Membership</i>	01900 822969
Sandra Shaw <i>Secretary and Wanderer</i>	01900 829812 <i>sandra.m.shaw@btopenworld.com</i>	Tim Stanley-Clamp <i>Outings</i>	01900 336542
Christopher Thomas <i>Treasurer</i>	01900 822171	Richard Easton <i>Talks</i>	01900 85708

The archive is housed at the home of Dr Derek Denman who is willing to assist members with their own research within the archive. He is at 19 Low Road Close, Cocker-mouth CA13 OGU. Please contact him in the first instance at [derekdenman@btinternet.com](mailto:derekdenman@btinternet.com) or by phone on 01900 829097.

### The Wanderer & The Journal

The next issue of the Wanderer will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017. Please send any short items to the Editor, Sandra Shaw by 1<sup>st</sup> October. The next Journal will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017. Please send articles to the Editor, Derek Denman by 7<sup>th</sup> July.

The Wanderer is published by the Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society, Pardshaw Hall, Pardshaw, Cocker-mouth CA13 OSP.  
[www.derwentfells.com](http://www.derwentfells.com)

years, who have made the accumulated Journals a detailed and valuable collection of studies for our area – a significant achievement for a local society and an

important resource. However, there comes a time when the format of a regular paper publication may have fulfilled its role, and other methods can be used to meet the

interest of the members, at reasonable cost, while providing new ways for local research to reach all those who may be interested.

The Society's website, [www.derwentfells.com](http://www.derwentfells.com) was started in January 2003 and I have run it from that time, partly as an up to date programme of the Society's events, but also to contain some of the local history information collected, and the studies made by members over the years. The website contains, most significantly, the complete collection of Journals and Newsletters in downloadable and mostly in searchable form. This online resource has proved of lasting value, at little cost, and is a source of interest and enquiries world-wide. For example, in *Journal 50*, a passing reference was made to the fact that the Beckstones estate, in Thornthwaite, had escheated to the Greenwich Hospital, as lords of the manor, in around 1811. The customary tenant, Hannah Grave, had been convicted of a felony. This mention was sufficient for a descendant of Hannah Grave, in Australia, to make contact in 2016, and to find his roots in Cumberland. Hannah Grave had stolen a sheep at Thornthwaite, was sentenced to death, but had that sentence commuted to transportation.

Similar examples also suggest that the future place for articles on the local history of our area, and perhaps wider, should be online, together with much more from the Society's archive. It is my intention to ensure that the continuing research of our area, previously carried by *The Journal* should in future find a more structured home on [www.derwentfells.com](http://www.derwentfells.com), and elsewhere. There will be more of a separation on the site, between the ongoing programme of the Society and a developing historical resource of the Derwent Fells area. I appreciate the Committee's support for this development by allowing me to take personal responsibility for the continued website, while I undertake to cover the small costs and to provide the

current level of support for the Society and its activities.

While the regular paper Journal will be missed, the ability to publish articles will be continued in a more sustainable manner.

*Derek Denman*  
Editor, Journal and Website.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Bernard Bradbury Memorial Lecture Cockermouth's relationship with the railways 1847 - 1966

To be delivered by Eric Cass  
Friday 13 October 8.00pm  
Kirkgate Centre, Cocker-mouth.  
Tickets £4.50 direct from Kirkgate Centre

This fully illustrated lecture will provide an introduction to the history of the development and subsequent demise of the Cocker-mouth to Workington and the Cocker-mouth, Keswick and Penrith Railways which linked Workington through Cocker-mouth and Keswick to Penrith and beyond.

Some of the details to be covered will include how the railways were financed, the engineers involved, how the line was built, its bridges and stations, the impact on the town of the coming of the railway and of its demise.

The links with other railways in the county of Cumberland and to the North East will be included.



Image of Cocker-mouth Station supplied by Eric Cass