

Newsletter

No.3

February 2012

Welcome to the third CCHT e-newsletter intended to keep you up-to-date with the VCH Cumbria project.

Launch of Jubilee Digests

VCH volunteers met in Penrith on 31st January to find out more about the Jubilee Digests. Over the next 12 months, we aim to produce a Digest for every Cumbrian community for which separate VCH articles will be written: that's around 315 parishes/townships in Cumberland and Westmorland, a further 30 in Furness and Cartmel, together with three more for Sedbergh, Garsdale and Dent.

The Digests not only celebrate the Queen's re-dedication of the VCH, but will form an important resource as a quick reference guide for anyone interested in the county's history.

Using information gathered from a limited set of specified sources, each digest will cover the 'status' of each place (parish, township, chapelry), its acreage, an overview of its population and ownership (manorial descent), economic activity, places of worship and schools. In this way, the Digests will build on the substantial progress volunteers have already made in gathering specific information about institutions in parishes and townships throughout the county.

Since the January meeting, volunteers have signed up to produce digests for 115 places. This means that we are well on the way to meeting our target of launching the first 100 Jubilee Digests on the CCHT website to coincide with the Jubilee celebrations in June!

Digest entries for towns will be more challenging, but Angus Winchester would like to meet with anyone interested in working on them.

We hope that all VCH volunteers will wish to get involved in this. Further information about the Jubilee Digests can be found on the CCHT website.

An Evening with David Starkey

In celebration of the Queen's re-dedication of the Victoria County History, Dr David Starkey, CBE is to give a lecture for CCHT, provisionally titled "Kendal's Real Queen". The lecture, to be followed by buffet supper, will be held at Rheged, nr Penrith, on the evening of Tuesday 6th November 2012.

If you would like to register your interest in attending, so that we can contact you when we have firm details including the cost, please contact Richard Brockington, Hon Secretary, Cumbria County History Trust, Highland Hall, Renwick, Cumbria CA10 1JL. T: 01768 870352: email richard.brockington@mypostoffice.co.uk

Lowther Castle Project

A well-attended meeting at Askham on 20th February, chaired by Bryan Gray, responded enthusiastically to the various opportunities for community involvement in the Lowther Castle project, now rapidly approaching the opening date of many of the planned public facilities. A new society "The Lowther and Askham History Group" is under formation (CCHT member/volunteers Lynn Cole and Jane Penman are both involved). We wish them every success.

Richard Brockington

Training for VCH Volunteers

The development of training for volunteers continues. A second training day on the use of Excel and of on-line historical resources has been arranged for 28th February at Carlisle. It is then intended that further training, building on what has already taken place, will follow, and this is under design. Some palaeography sessions are planned, and details about them will be circulated as soon as possible. In addition, volunteers who are working on the Jubilee Digests have met Sarah Rose for discussion about preparing material for inclusion. Any volunteer with thoughts or ideas about training that they would like to have considered are most welcome to contact me.

Marion McClintock, Coordinator of Training

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A TRIP TO THE ARCHIVES.....

Durham University Library (the Howard of Naworth Collection)

The University Library at Palace Green Durham, adjoining the Cathedral, houses the Howard of Naworth collection, an essential source for VCH Cumbria researchers concerned with the Barony of Gilsland and all townships within it.

Access to the library is free, and registration (usual identification documents) is quick and easy. Before going, thoroughly peruse the four-volume calendar of Cumbrian documents found on the shelves behind the search room desk at Carlisle Archive Centre; and having done so, advise the staff at Durham of your intention to visit and the records you will wish to examine (pg.library@durham.ac.uk). Although somewhat elderly, the Cumbrian calendar is still in use, with the same numbering system, at Durham.

The best procedure, by car, is to use the inexpensive and efficient park-and-ride service. Lap-top computers are allowed, but not cameras, and only loose leaf documents will be photocopyable. The staff are helpful and the document retrieval service prompt. There are excellent cafes in the Cathedral and on the other side of Palace Green.

The library also houses (L+016.94274 CAS) the 6-volume calendar of records at Castle Howard: only a small part of this collection touches Cumbria, but it cannot be ignored. Further work will be necessary to clarify the full range of relevant material, and to establish access for Cumbrian researchers to it. This will take some months: please advise the Volunteer Coordinator of any urgent research needs in the meantime.

Richard Brockington

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