

ON Monday 15th October when the subject was the NW Sound Archive members had an interesting introduction to the archive and its organisation. This was illustrated by extracts from their many recordings some much more affecting than a written record or report. Afterwards the merits of recording history in this way were discussed and examples of issues such as progress in farming, rural depopulation were put forward as possible areas for future recordings.

BOOK REVIEW "NOWHERE BETTER THAN HOME" Judy Nixon

JENNY Palmer's book, "Nowhere better than Home", is a book of memories and a delightful read, sometimes funny and occasionally sad.

As a child living in Twiston, on a farm which had belonged to her family for four hundred years and still does, she describes the starkly hard-working life on the farm. Twiston had no electricity until 1956 and naturally, no washing machines, household gadgets or television and boasted an outside lavatory placed strategically over a nearby stream. Childhood in the 1950's was a life of adventure, with the fields and becks a play-ground, few toys after the war, so imagination was stimulated by this lifestyle, making a knowledge of local wildlife & plants inevitable.

The village school at Downham was a two mile trek over the fields. The indomitable Miss Barton was the head teacher and well remembered by her ex-pupils. Jenny recalls many tales of schooldays in Downham, where all local children formed friendships which have, in some cases, lasted into adulthood, thereby binding the community together. The children dispersed when they went on to various secondary schools, Jenny to Clitheroe Grammar School, which in those days had separate buildings for girls and boys. She was desperate to spread her wings and explore the wider world, which she did by studying at Reading University and travelling widely.

The book can be obtained from Jenny directly, at the modest price of £4.99; her phone number is 445619

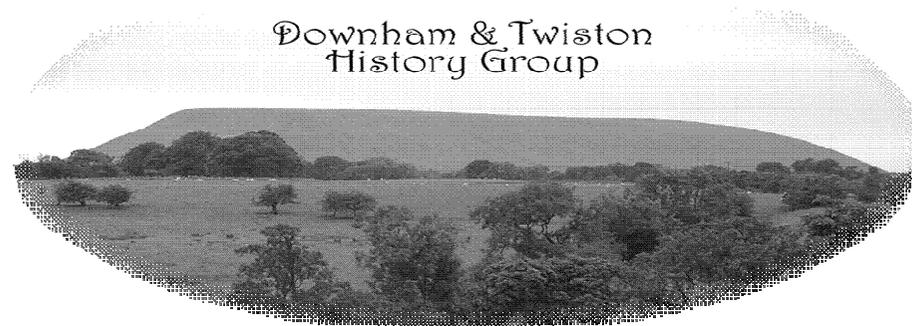
These memories of times gone by are essential to be kept alive as we can appreciate some of the good things about modern life whilst admiring the endurance and friendly community spirit of the past.

Jenny lived in London for many years and after retiring, returned to her roots in Twiston where she now follows many interests, joining local clubs and writing. She can observe her childhood home from her cottage nearby.

HISTORY GROUP Project

WE have received a memoir of time spent in Downham as a World War Two evacuee. Ten year old Alan Whelan (1929 to 2009) from Manchester arrived in Downham within a few days of the declaration of war in late summer 1939. He stayed with the Coulston family for fourteen months and records really good memories of his time with them.

History group members would like to interview anyone who has memories of this time or whose parents told them about the time the fifteen evacuees were here. We would like to add to the story which Alan told. Anyone not usually involved in the History group who would like a copy of the memoir will find it on the Downham Village Website, follow the History Group link, or please ask Gill or Tom and we will send you one by email or a paper copy.



NEWSLETTER Number 5 - December, 2012

Elizabeth Wrigley 1950 - 2012

The Parish and History Group were in a state of shock and disbelief on receiving the sad news of our group leader Elizabeth Wrigley's sudden illness and untimely death on Thursday 25th January at the early age of 62. Her funeral on Thursday 2nd February at 12 noon at St. Leonard's was a standing room only event and measure of the high regard in which Elizabeth was held and the broad range of her interests. Our group decided to go ahead with the arrangements that Elizabeth had put in train.

UPDATE on Downham & Twiston History Group

Our group had an interesting evening at Clitheroe Library for the August, 2011 meeting. Sue Holden, who is well known in the reference library, had prepared a Downham and Twiston theme which included many photographs, maps, scrapbooks and news cuttings – all set out in the meeting room for us to peruse. The evening opened with a short talk about some of the old and rare items that the library has in its collection and how they preserve these delicate relics. We wore cotton gloves to handle the old documents which included a rare 17th century book.

Sue had also set up the microfilm units with pieces about Downham from old copies of the Clitheroe Advertiser & Times and a computer switched on with access to the historians' website 'Ancestry'.

We concluded the evening with a look in the dungeons in the basement of the building. Sue went to great lengths to provide information relevant to our group – it was a top class meeting and also a reminder that our libraries are a treasure trove of free information & education. EW

AT THEIR September meeting members were privileged to be shown Downham Hall by Lord and Lady Clitheroe. After an introductory talk about the building and the Asshetons by Lord Clitheroe, the party split into two groups for a tour of the principal rooms with explanations of the main contents and decoration. Pictures and photographs displayed in the hall told the story of the main events in the history of the family and house.

NB A couple of years ago, or so, our historian Elizabeth Wrigley wrote a short history of Billy and Elsie Barker called "The Family at the White House". This reminder was apt in September following the death of Mrs Elsie Barker.



WITH the centenary display out again in Church throughout October 2011, it seemed a fitting place to have our history group meeting. 18 people turned out on a wet and windy evening to hear about the different eras of church history, using the pictures to illustrate the story of St Leonard's re-buildings and developments. The registers and silver (which is not stored in the church) were brought out for the meeting.

We also discussed progress with the Benevolent Society Banner which has been on display in the Assheton Chapel since June. Vivian Lochhead of the People's Museum in Salford, recently assessed the condition of the banner and has advised the parish on conservation.

NOVEMBER 2011 MEETING

THE topic 'A Bit of Old Chatburn' brought 26 people to the November meeting of the Downham & Twiston history group including many visitors from Chatburn. We took a walk around the top part of Chatburn in pictures which led to discussions on two old schools and four Wesleyan meeting places including three custom built chapels. An old picture of the tollgate at toll bar corner reflected life on local turnpike roads in the mid 1800s. EW

Part 2 of Chatburn history was scheduled for Monday 20th February but sadly, did not take place. The next meeting on Monday 9th January 2012 will be on the topic of the Downham Benevolent Society, founded in 1785.

Downham Benevolent Society, an early Friendly Society begun in 1785 by a group of handloom weavers, was the topic for the January meeting. Many locals will have seen the society's banner which was on display in the church during autumn.

Made of silk with gold and silver leaf paint, its age and condition are a cause for concern: recently a conservator from the People's Museum in Salford came to look at the banner and advise on repair and storage conditions. Details of the Benevolent Society, often referred to locally as the 'old sick club', can be seen in the rule book and register, kept in the Lancashire Record Office, copies of which are in the possession of the Group. EW.

OUR meeting on Monday 20th February was saddened as members remembered with gratitude the work of the late Liz Wrigley, founder and driving force of the Group.

Our speaker, arranged at short notice, Jenny Palmer gave an interesting presentation on how to find the history of your house and the people who lived there. She distributed a booklet that outlines the main points made in her talk.

Two members provided refreshments and a short discussion took place on the future. Members agreed that we should carry on with arrangements much as laid down by Liz, with a mix of group work and outside presentations.

AT our March, meeting on 26th the speaker Mr Brian Stott gave an interesting illustrated talk about Rimington, touching on the Village buildings, characters and occupations. Brian very kindly came at fairly short notice because of the gap left by Elizabeth and the general inability of other members to step in with the same depth of knowledge.

At the April 23rd meeting the speaker was Mrs Marion Hutchinson, her topic "Grindleton", Marion introduced members to a concept which many had not heard of— Landscape History—

the study of the way in which humanity has changed the physical appearance of the environment was first recognised as a separate area of study following the publication of *The Making of the English Landscape* by W.G.Hoskins, in 1955. It uses evidence and approaches from other disciplines including archaeology, architecture, ecology, aerial photography and local history.

In Grindleton, Marion's chosen area of study, members were given a slide show of features, many of which could be dated and some which begged more questions than they answered. These ranged from ditches, strip field-systems which showed up when the land was flooded or covered in snow, wall remnants, tree plantings, retaining banks, remains of pack-horse roads and other features. Most interesting was the series of landmarks which defined the long-lost flax industry. Embankments, ponds and small sluices to control the flow of water are still quite clearly visible. Some speculation about the roofless buildings at the junction between the Chatburn Road and the Waddington to Sawley Road, ended a most fascinating discussion.

ON 16th May, at 7.30 pm Members of the Group attended Barley Village Hall for the meeting of Pendle Forest History Group, when the topic was The Lancashire Witches 1612 to 2012 by Robert Poole of Lancaster University. Professor Pool gave an enthusiastic rendering of the witches story which was equally enthusiastically received by a large audience with a detailed questions and answers session. The talk was illustrated by slides made from very imaginative and artistic line drawings.

JUNE 18th. saw a return to the group by Sue Holden, County Community Heritage manager, who for many years headed our own Clitheroe library Local History section, gave us a most interesting presentation on Clitheroe shops over the years. We saw how many 19th Century terraces were built with corner shops, windows onto two streets, as an integral part of planning. Later in that century, in years of hardship due to the cotton famine, several Co-operative shops opened in different parts of the town. The area was well provided for, with Grocers, Butchers, Fishmongers, Haberdashers, Cloggers, Shoemakers, and more. The talk was illustrated with some fine photographs from the library archive, and extracts from Trades Directories, invoices and billheads, as well maps showing the growth of the town. These provoked interesting comments and recollections from some members

AN Open Meeting of the History Group held at the Village Hall Monday 10th September at 7.30 pm was a full-house event. A presentation by Dorothy Bradbury, an old friend of Edwin and Joyce Jackson, was based on information and pictures from the collection of Edwin Jackson.

Starting with a view of the East window at Whalley Parish Church showing the coats of arms of local families, she wove her knowledge of heraldry and facts about the locality into the ancestry of the Preston family and their lineage up to the twentieth century. Dorothy's clarity and interesting exposition held the audience for over an hour, after which the group members served refreshments. Gill Cragg thanked Dorothy, and her son David, who assisted with the technology, and Lady Clitheroe presented Dorothy with flowers on behalf of the group and the Jackson family. Edwin Jackson thanked everyone for attending