

Northumbrian Language Society

Annual General Meeting, 5th May 2012 - Executive Committee Report

Introduction - the Executive Committee has met on a number of occasions in the last year to deal with the normal business of the Society. Details of the projects we have been involved in are given later in this report. The Society is a member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), which means we get advice and support in our role as a charity. The finances are in a sound state, and details will be in the Treasurer's report.

Annual Calendar - our main activities are the language competitions at the Morpeth Gathering which is held the weekend after Easter, the Reed Neet held at the beginning of May, the Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture in October, and the Yule Meet early in December. In addition, members of the Society gives talks on the language to local groups, and some members also enter some of the competitions organised by other heritage organisations, such as the Rothbury Festival.

Dictionary - work on this project is proceeding slowly. Work has been held up because the Chairman had a hip replacement operation in January. However, he promises that the next draft will go out for some more consultation and discussion before the next AGM!

National Dialect Day - We were represented by several of our members at last year's event in Louth in Lincolnshire. The event is being held in the north-east this year.

The main activities will be on Saturday 20th October in Morpeth Town Hall.

It will be an all-day event, with our Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture in the morning, dialect competitions in the afternoon, and a dialect concert in the evening. In addition, there may be a musical concert on the Friday evening, and we will be holding a Dialect Church Service on the Sunday morning.

We hope that as many members as possible, plus their families and friends, will support this event.

Other Events - We have not been able to attend as many local heritage and history days during the last twelve months, because our dwindling band of volunteers is getting smaller. We just cannot attend everything we think we should. The time and effort it takes is proving more and more difficult to manage.

Part of the problem has to do with the increasing age of our members, and our failure to attract new, younger supporters. But part of the problem has to do with the very short notice we often get to attend something. This is particularly the case with events organised by big organisations based in the south who fail to realise the distances and time-scales involved in putting something on here in the north.

However, on a brighter note, we were able to help Barter Books and our President, Katrina Porteous, put together a dialect tea-towel, and a poster, which have proved to be very popular. Katrina supplied the words, and Barter Books organised the design and production. We supplied some advice, and have sold all the ones we agreed to sell!

Sad News - It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of several members during the last year. Mrs Fiona MacDonald of Morpeth, Professor Peacock of Kidlington in Oxfordshire, and Terry Common, also of Morpeth. They will all be missed, and our thoughts and sympathies go to their families.

Thanks - the Northumbrian Language Society is a voluntary organisation. We have no premises, or machinery, and we do not employ any staff. Everything is done by volunteers, and we would like to thank all the Executive members for their support and work over the last year, and to the many members of the Society who have supported our activities. In particular, we would like to thank Julia Wood, who has retired from the Committee because of increasing poor health. Julia has been a loyal member and supporter for many years, and we are sorry she has had to retire.