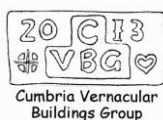


NEWSLETTER No. 40 – SUMMER 2023



1. From the Chairman

- This will be the last Chairman's page that I write for CVBG. As many of you know, I shall be stepping down after ten years, to hand over to someone new. The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 16 September at 2.00pm, in the wonderful setting of England's oldest village hall, Dacre Hall, Lanercost. Once part of the Augustinian Priory, the ruins of which are adjacent and now in the care of English Heritage, it was converted for domestic use after the Dissolution. Please do your very best to attend and vote in the next Chairman and Committee.
- It's that time of year again when we remind you that subscriptions are due at our year-end, July 31. Once again, we are managing to keep the annual cost of belonging to CVBG at what must be amongst the lowest rates for any society in Cumbria, at just £10.00 per person, (the cost of little more than two cups of coffee!), £15.00 for two at the same address and £25 for groups. You as members have always been very prompt at renewing your membership, for which we say a big Thank you. Don't let us down this year.
- The event held at Naworth in April has been written up in a special report, edited by Mike. Almost one third of the membership was present, a record attendance for an event. With contributions from several members, it commemorates a very special day for the group and shows members who were not able to attend what transpired. We hope you enjoy reading it.
- May seemed to race by in a flash, with a historic coronation and several bank holidays. The recent event held in Great Asby, with the help of Keith Cooper, was most enjoyable. It was fully booked, with a waiting list. A handful of members of Great Asby History Group joined us. We looked at two medieval buildings, a monastic grange and an old rectory, both having ecclesiastical connections. The medieval window shown on page * is from The Old Rectory in the village. This is included because several members present said that many of the features pointed out were new to them.
- Lastly, I want to say Thank you to all members and the committee for your loyalty and enthusiasm over the past decade. It has been a pleasure to be in contact with you all, some regular attenders at events, others just on paper or computer. I have made many friends through the group and had a lot of fun. Please continue your interest in our wonderful traditional buildings.

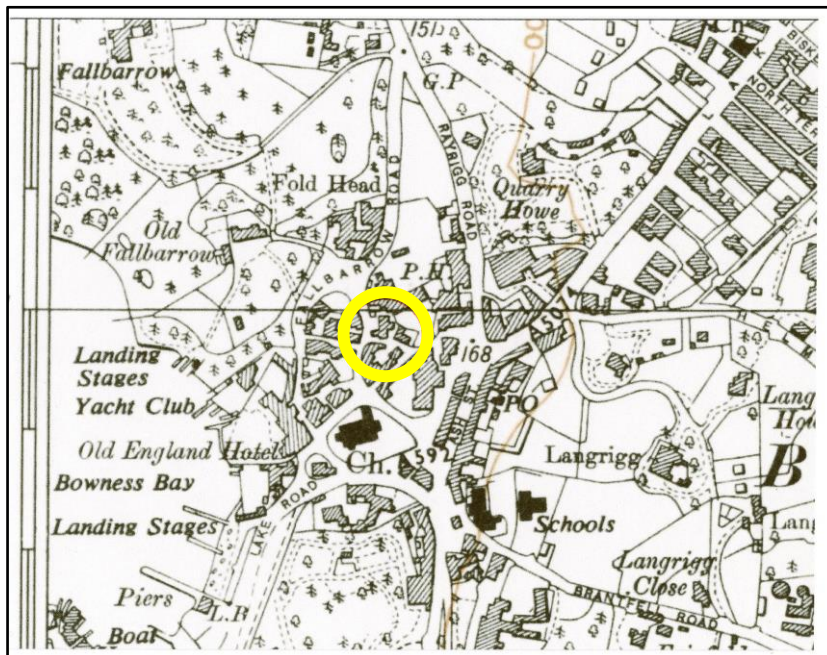
June L Hill

2. Hearth in Bowness by CVBG Member, David Shore

This grade II listed Inn originally served the old port of Bowness. Previously listed as 'New Hall Inn, with attached buildings to the south'; with a date of 17th C., 'altered'.



Possibly originating in 1612, the inn at some stage had a smithy next door. Apparently, the blacksmith got tired of trailing round to the pub for his ale, so he knocked a hole through the wall, so he could be served whilst working.



Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, SD49 NW-A, pub1956, 6" to mile.

Dickens and Thomas Longmire, the Champion Wrestler are said to be associated with the inn. The Good Pub Guide has:- 'Upstairs, there is some noteworthy plasterwork.'

The inverse chimney hood, above the new fireplace inserted into the Inglenook is unusual. It begs the question, 'Where does the smoke go on the floor above?' Perhaps a full room width firehood, as at Holeslack, on the Sizergh estate, visited some 20 years ago. The firehood there at that time served as a walk-in cupboard, used previously for smoking hams etc.

The very busy Landlord said that there is a lot of timber work in the attic, and a series of underfloor flues-under floor heating ?

Overall there is much of interest in the inn, not least of which is the question whether a feature is original or not. For example, the large chimney possibly over sailed the gable wall prior to some alterations, as can be seen from a car park to the rear.

Lowside, Bowness, LA23 3DH - not far from St. Martins Church, in the old port area of Bowness



3. Great Asby Event, 17th June 2023

A group of 33 people, including 6 from Asby History Group, had a very rewarding day in Great Asby looking at two buildings in and near the village. These date from medieval times and are still lived in today; both were built for ecclesiastical institutions but neither serves the church nowadays. Following brief introductions to the role each played in the Middle Ages, we visited the houses to see how they have been adapted over the centuries and what features remain from their earlier fabric.

Introductory talk in the Village Hall, Great Asby - June Hill

We heard of the origin of parishes, rectories, and granges in preparation for visiting the buildings, one 14thC and one 15thC, it was a very stimulating presentation. Preaching crosses predate churches but by the 12th or 13th C a network of parishes covered England (some 8,800 parishes in England by the 1530s) each with a church and defined boundary, parts of a wider ecclesiastical hierarchy. The medieval system included provision of burial grounds, along with many social and administrative responsibilities. A rector was appointed to the benefice of a parish and received the great tithes of parishioners (one tenth of grain from primary crops, wool & wood). The incumbent rector was also responsible for church services, spiritual welfare of parishioners and maintaining the church chancel. Many parishes were appropriated to monasteries or colleges, they kept the great tithes and spent small tithes (from other crops, animals, eggs, and activities such as trade, milling and fisheries) to appoint a vicar to serve in their place. Parishes served by a vicar today must have paid their tithes to a religious institution such as a monastery in the Middle Ages.

The Cistercians developed a system of monastic granges and their outlying farms to be worked by lay brothers, lesser monks and hired labourers. Monasteries were often given land for the 'welfare of souls' giving the benefactor the right to be buried in the abbey church. Our visit is to Asby Grange located on rich pastures at a distance of 80 miles from Byland Abbey in Ryedale, North Yorkshire. A colony of monks of the order of Savigny in Normandy had been established in England in 1124, initially at Tulketh near Preston & then in Furness. A daughter-house was founded in Calder, on the Cumberland coast in 1134 under an abbot, Gerold, but they fled after a Scots invasion of Cumberland & were refused re-entry to Furness. Six moves later they established a permanent home at Byland by 1177. Most wealth was based on wool, sheep's milk used to make cheese and cows' milk which was fed to lambs, the fleeces were exported to the Low Countries abroad until the weaving industry reduced this market in raw fleece. June showed us a model of a medieval farm worker in the mode of dress based on an illustration in the 14thC Luttrell Psalter: in boots, tunic, and hose with belt, knife, and hood.

A rectory was the residence of the rector and sighted near the church. In general, the parson (rector or vicar) would live in a room over the porch often with a hearth. Cumbrian examples were discussed, the church at Burgh by Sands previously had a room above the chancel for the vicar, it still has a defensive tower at the west end with a yett and a first-floor hearth. At Croglin the Rectory

opposite the church is now called 'The Old Pele' & has the remnant of a thin-walled tower-like wing, the top story now removed. Rectors in the Middle Ages lived well, in Asby the rectory was a defensive solar tower with a hall attached, the latter has been replaced. Many rectories became dilapidated during a low period for the Church of England in 18thC and some lay rectors then lived at a great distance. A benevolent fund called Queen Anne's Bounty 1704 supplemented the income of poor clergy. Gilbert's Act of 1782 (Poor Relief Act) provided loans to renovate poorly maintained buildings while others were sold off, many have since been lost however and over 10,000 rectories were sold post the First World War.

Floor plans of the Old Rectory in Asby available include one from the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments publication for Westmorland of 1936, The Medieval Fortified Buildings of Cumbria book by Perriam DR and Robinson J: 1998 and a recent plan resulting from a survey undertaken by Paul Lewis.

Visit to the Old Rectory, Great Asby - led by June Hill

The group were very grateful to Daniella for her hospitable welcome and to be able to view the outside and inside of her home which has a grade II* listing. Our principal interest was in the 14thC solar tower, which is now of two storeys, originally possibly three, it was altered and re-roofed with slates in the 17thC at the time that the hall block was probably re-built. There are also additional 18thC east and west wings and a former coach house. The tower, the north wing, measures 10.2m x 7.2m externally, with walls 1.5m thick but with a south wall thickness of 2m. We viewed the coursed rubble masonry with quoins on a massive plinth, to one side of the east end gable are marks of the roof of an earlier hall building which was more steeply pitched than the present one. There is an original Decorated Gothic 14thC upper window at this east end with two trefoil-headed lights with a quatrefoil between, a two centred head, mullion and transom & with a hoodmould to a pointed arch. A single lower square headed two-light window in this wall with mullioned hoodmould (this one having cavetto mould) and three similar three-light windows on the first floor of the north wall with continuous hoodmould are 19thC.

Entering the staircase hall of the main block of the rectory, we saw ashlar marked plaster which has recently been revealed below the wallpaper. We passed through the kitchen extension of 1834 and then an original doorway with pointed head, chamfered surrounds (this outer door having a hood mould) into a defensive dog-legged passage in the thickness of the wall with a similar doorway opening into the undercroft of the tower. This barrel-vaulted undercroft is not a cellar but would have been for storage, the roof reveals skilled use of wedge-shaped stones in the construction. Two steps are revealed within the wall by the inner doorway perhaps the start of an intra-mural stair to the solar above. There is a stone floor in the undercroft and a recess in one corner, the possible site of a well? A 14thC splayed split window in the middle of the north wall was revealed on removal of a partition in 1983. The inserted 19thC windows reveal the great wall thickness at this level of the tower.

Upstairs on the landing in the west wall of the hall range is a re-set head of a 14thC window with two trefoiled ogee lights & probably from the church. The solar on first floor level of the tower is now accessed directly through the full thickness of the wall and is divided into two rooms. The larger room is lit by the 14thC two-light Gothic window; this is now glazed but is rebated internally for shutters. There is a late 17thC or early 18thC stone fireplace with a moulded shelf.

A large wooden door lock with the initials and date A.P. 1670 (Anne Countess of Pembroke) is now in the care of the church. The lock was probably presented by Lady Anne Clifford to the rector, she is said to have once taken shelter at the rectory from a storm.

This is a well-preserved building with many original features which we appreciated seeing first hand.

Pub lunch at the Three Greyhounds Inn.

A very good buffet lunch was provided at this traditional country pub. The building dates from 1707 and has been a public house since at least the early 1800's.

Its beamed ceiling, stone flagged floor and original iron range fireplace made it an ideal and convenient venue for those attending the well organised day.

John McDowell



Hearth at The Three Greyhounds, Great Asby © John McDowell

Please note, because of a lack of space, another feature for the Great Asby event, with images, will be published in September's newsletter. Together with Part 3 of the Historic Building Doctor by Paul Lewis

4. Moirlanich Longhouse - True Longhouse in Scotland

Moirlanich Longhouse is now in the care of the National Trust for Scotland. Situated at the head of Loch Tay, near Killin, it can be reached from either Crianlarich or Pitlochry.

The last inhabitants left in 1968, but until then it was lived in and farmed as part of a once thriving community. As presented, you see the building as it would have been in the nineteenth century.

It is best described as a byre dwelling, where the livestock (in this case, three milk cows), did not have separate accommodation but were divided from human quarters by a wooden screen. Most importantly, they all used the same single door. The second door you see in the picture with the porch, is a later addition.

Once thatched, this is a cruck-framed building with many features which have been lost in Cumbria, although once common. These include the 'hanging lum' , (a Scots expression for the hole in the roof, for smoke from an open hearth to find its way out), box beds, and a Scotch dresser.

June Hill



CVBG Event – The Ashes – Saturday 8th July

Don't miss out on our next event, bookings still being taken.



The Ashes, Castle Sowerby, near Ivegill. by kind permission of Jen and Richard Arkell.

A fine Grade 11* mid - C16 house, possibly with earlier origins. The house has a wealth of historic features, including, as described by Pevsner 'fine moulded beams in the lower hall of the same pattern as at Scales Hall and Dacre Castle'.

The visit will also include a unique opportunity to see rare C16 wall paintings (grotesques) which have been discovered in the house and painstakingly restored.

There is no cap on numbers for this visit but please let your interest be known to Mike Turner-

Please meet/park in Ivegill Village Hall Car Park, opposite Ivegill School (to the left as you enter, behind the recycling bins), by **1.30** at the latest, then if possible, car share on to The Ashes. Due to the location of the house and the need to drive through a working farmyard, a convoy may be the best way to approach the house. On arrival, ample parking is then available through what will be a clearly marked archway to a huge, cobbled yard.

Please then make your way into the house where refreshments will be available from **1.45**.

It's anticipated that the visit will be over by approximately **4.00pm**.