



Members' Newsletter

**Number 135
Spring 2025**

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"

Northumbrian Language Society

**Annual General Meeting
&
Reed Neet**

Friday 16 May 2025

at the **Waterford Lodge Hotel,
Castle Square, Morpeth, NE61 1YD.**

The AGM will begin at 7pm, to be followed at 8pm by the traditional Pie and Peas Supper, and the Reed Neet.

**See below for tickets
and membership renewal
forms**

NLS Contacts

Chairman & Treasurer

John Davidson

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Dialect

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Newsletter

Situation Vacant

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Our Website

[northumbrianlanguagesociety.
co.uk](http://northumbrianlanguagesociety.co.uk)

Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering

Friday 25th to 27th April

See below for the programme



57th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering



25th–27th April 2025 Programme (details subject to change) Edition 4

Annual festival of Northumberland's music, dialect, crafts, traditions, family events - with Bob Fox & Stu Luckley, Real to Reel, Jez Lowe, Shonaleigh, Voice Male, Ellington Colliery Band, local dance teams, etc.

Before the Gathering: Pop-up Folk Ensemble Music

For advance details/scores: www.phoenixfolk.co.uk/morpeth

Many free events. Prices: adult /school age. Under 5s free. Sorry no card/phone payments – please bring cash/ cheque. Festival office: Fri/Sat - Town Hall; Sun - Chantry front shop

Friday 25th April:

During today performers will visit local care homes

9.30 - 5.00 **CRAFTS EXHIBITION** + refreshments; craft competition entries (rec'd Thur. 24th April 5.30 pm–7 pm), craft displays, stalls, CDs, books, posters, archive photos *Town Hall 50p at door/ accompanied under-12s free*
10.00– 4.00 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Punch & Judy, music, song, history *Market Place, Arcade Free*
10.00 – 4.30 **DANCE WORKSHOPS** 10.00 –11 Historic dances from 17th/18th centuries; 11.30–12.30 Clog (bring flat shoes); 1–2 Maypole; 3–4 Longsword *Town Hall Ballroom £3/£1 at door per session*
11.00 **HAVE A GO BORDER PIPES WORKSHOPS** for beginners - David Faulkner supported by Bagpipe Soc. Limited places, either 11.00–11.40 or 12.20–1.00 *Bagpipe Mus'm £10 advance booking: kim@northumbriana.org.uk*
1.30 – 2.30 **SHANTIES IN THE CHANTRY** Singalong with Ian McKone *Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*
2.00 **OFFICIAL OPENING** of Gathering by the Mayor of Morpeth, Cllr Betty Bawn *Town Hall Exhibition*
2.15–4.00* **TOWN TREASURES** Tours of Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber, civic silver, portraits, etc, with Mayor & councillors as your guides *Town Hall Free (*change of date)*
3.30 – 4.30 **DULCIMER SESSION** Sing/play-along (any instrument) with Sandie & Ken Hudson - slow & steady arrangements for guitar, hammered & Appalachian mountain dulcimers *Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*
4.30– 5.30 **FAMILY STORIES** with Jim Grant *Library Free*
7.30 – 9.45 **VOICE MALE** Concert for the choir's 25th birthday with special guests Werca's Folk MC David Wilson *Methodist Church £12/£6 ticket*
8.00 **SINGAROUND** led by Sam Dodds *Black & Grey Coach House Free (donations welcome)*
8.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*

Saturday 26th April: 9–4 Park & Ride from County Hall

9.30 – 4.30 **CRAFTS EXHIBITION** as Friday *Town Hall*
9.45–10.30 **FAMILY STORIES** - Shonaleigh *Library Free*
10.00– 4.00 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Punch & Judy, music, Ellington Colliery Band, local morris, clog and rapper teams *Market Place, Park, Bakehse Millenn Green*
10.00 – 4.00 **MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY** history, stories & music. Arranged with Landmark Trust *Free*
10.00 – 10.45 **MEET THE NORTHUMBRIAN PIPERS** Drop-in to hear the small pipes *Bagpipe Museum Free*
10.00 – 10.50 **POP-UP FOLK ENSEMBLE** Prepare for tonight's concert spot (see above) *St Robt's Hall (donations)*
10.15 **RING O' BELLS**; Clock Tower tours from 12 approx
11.00 **PROCESSION** Gadgy's Welcome at Market Place
12.00– 4.00 **STORYTELLER'S GARDEN** Stories & music for 25th birthday *Old Bakehouse Yard Millenn Green Free*

12.00 – 1.15 **JEZ LOWE** songsmith & novelist with Life Writing – Songs & Stories *St Robt's Ch Hall £6/£3 ticket*
12.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*
12.00 - 3.00 **SINGAROUND** *Joiners Arms (donations)*
12.00–1.00 **CLOG DANCE GET-TOGETHER** Demos & chat led by Lynette and Sue *Town Hall Ballroom £2/£1.50*

Saturday Competitions: Passport ticket for entrants/audience £2.00/£1.50 includes free entry to Exhibition. Doors open 30 minutes before times stated below to allow entrants to register. NB NO CLOG DANCE competitions – see 12.00 Ballroom slot

1.45* **SPEAKING & WRITING:** dialect, stories, results of pre-judged written items-deadline 22 Mar.*St Robt's Hall(*new time)*

1.45* **NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES & LOWLAND/ BORDER /HALF-LONG PIPES** *Chantry Bagpipe Museum (*new time)*

2.00 **BANDS, ACCORDIONS, FIDDLES, OTHER INSTRUMENTS, DUETS** *St. James Centre, Wellway (new venue)*

3.30* **SINGING** *Town Hall (*NB change to last year's time)*

1.30 – 2.30 **FAMILY SHOW** silly song spots from Ken Patterson and Jim Eldon *Town Hall Ballroom £3/£1 at door*

4.00 - 5.00 **MORPETH POETRY GROUP** heritage characters in costume & verse *St Robt's Ch Hall £3/£1 at door*

4.00 - 6.00 **SLOW & STEADY** session led by BITS NE for beginners & intermediate players *White Swan (donations)*

4.00 – 5.15 **BORDER PIPES CONCERT** David Faulkner with Iain Gelston & Matt Seattle *Bagp Mus'm £5/£2 ticket*

6.00*– 7.30 **WINNERS' CONCERT** 2024 winners + Pop-up Ensemble *Town Hall Ballroom £9/£5 ticket (*new time)*

8.00 – 9.15 **BOB FOX & STU LUCKLEY** Special reunion concert by legendary duo *Town Hall Ballrm £15/£8 ticket*

8.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*

8.00 **NORTHUMBRIAN & BORDER PIPING SESSION** *Conservative Club, Newgate Street Free (donations)*

8.30 – 11.00 **BARN DANCE** Real to Reel Ceilidh Band + Hexham Village Mummers, Hadrian Clog. Bring own drinks *Town Hall Corn Exchange £9/£5 ticket (new venue)*

Sunday 27th April: Sorry, no Sunday Crafts Exhibition this year

10.00–4.00 **MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY** as Saturday
10.30 – 2.30 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Punch & Judy, musicians, maypole dancing *Market Place*

10.30 – 12.30 **MORPETH HERITAGE WALK** guided by James Boyd from Chantry c. 2 miles - limited places, book in advance via 01670 513308 *Free (donations)*

11.00 – 12.00 **BAGPIPE ALLSORTS** sharing session for all pipes led by David Faulkner *Bagp Mus'm £3/£1 at door*

11.15 – 12.30 **CHURCH SERVICE** with dialect hymns & readings from Gathering performers *St James Church*

12.00 - 3.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile Free*

12.30–1.30 **THE MYTH OF MORPETH** Shonaleigh retells her Millennium project story *Bagpipe Mus'm £5/£2 ticket*

1.00 – 1.50 **WHERE IS MY BOY TONIGHT?** Megan Wisdom and Mossy Christian's show on the East Coast Fishing Industry *St James Centre £5/£2 at door*

2.00 – 3.00 **DROP-IN DULCIMER WORKSHOP** Nonsuch Dulcimer Club 'Come and Try' session on hammered and mountain dulcimers *Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*

2.15 – 3.15 **NORTHUMBRIAN RANTERS** The county's youth folk ensemble *St James Centre £5/£2 at door*

4.00–5.00 **DAVID HALDANE** Illustrated talk by celebrated Morpeth-based cartoonist *St James Centre £5/£2 at door*

M.N.G.Committee, part of Morpeth Antiquarian Society, Reg. Charity no. 507640, reserves the right to alter event details.

DETAILS/UPDATES: www.northumbriana.org.uk QUERIES: 01670 513308 TICKETS: Morpeth TIC 01670 623455

Can you fib, tell porkies, spin a web of deceit?



Then you should enter for
the Morpeth Gathering

Hoafy Trophy!

The rules require: a tall tale, judged for convincing delivery, use of memory, depth of deception and audience amazement; Northumbrian theme or setting; preferably to include Northumbrian dialect; up to 5 minutes (including any introduction)

The competition is in memory
of the late Terry Common.



Saturday
26th April
1.45 pm

St Robert's Church Hall,
Oldgate, Morpeth NE61 1QF

Competitions ticket £2.00/£1.50
needed for entrants &
audience members

Dialect session from 1.45pm includes
Northumbrian Speech & Storytelling
competitions, plus dialect recitations
and presentation of writing awards

Tickets/programmes: Chantry TIC,
Bridge Street, Morpeth NE61 1PD
01670 623455
Queries 01670 513308
www.northumbriana.org.uk

2025

**MORPETH
NORTHUMBRIAN
GATHERING**



JTB25

Terry Common was a great tale teller. He could keep a straight face when telling the tallest whoppas! He entertained us at many a Reed Neet with his quirky view on life. One of my favourites was 'The Gannins' which I reproduce below.

Ony Northumbrian ill tell ye the three main things tae avoid in life. A heed gannin, a side gannin ind a back gannin. Perhaps aah shud say nearly ah'l these gannin's are usually associated with drink, "alcohol".

Lets start with the back gannin, eet usually occurs maist frequently. Noo the back gannin can happen while standin still lookin perfectly sober but may be helped along whe tiredness or perhaps a hearty laugh. Basicly eet is an involuntary backward movement which increases in pace until the body hits an unmovable object ind faals doon. Aah yince knew a man whe wis enjoyin hesel dancing in a tent it a dance efter the local show, he tueb a back gannin in disappeared completely thro the side iv the marquee. Aah div'nt knaa how far he travelled afore he fell ower but he was unhurt. Strangely, whe gannins folk usually end up unhurt. Alcohol?

Now the side gannin. 90% iv side gannin's occur when the person is in motion but not managing tae keep in a strite line. Sometimes ye think ye are gan tae walk intae something. Whe a step tae yin side, ye can build up an excessive pace, the end result be'in similar tae a back gannin, except ye land on yor side, left or right dependin which way ye set off. Now this actually happened tae me. Aah felt the side gannin comin on but aah knew aah wis fenent the garden gate, so if aah gan ah'l bump into the gate. "Nae bother". Aye aah tueb the side gannin right enough but there wis nae gate, handn't been fer the last 20 years. Me owen hoose tae! Aah landed it the front door, but at least strite into the hoose. Dangerous things side gannin's. Alcohol?

Finally, the heed gannin. This yin is potentially the maist dangerous. The feet start tae gan faster than the brain can menage. Then the heed gits thrust for'ard so the leadin part iv the body is the face ind heed, the feet canna gan fast enough tae keep up whe eet. When encounterin' the immovable object in this situation the heed or face taks the brunt of eet. This can sometimes be painful! Ye can ownly hope that the immovable object in this situation contains a soft spot. A freend iv mine tueb a heed gannin yin night efter a dart match, ind ran into a low waal. Eet wis jist the wrang, (or right) height for him. He's hands couldn't reach the grund in front iv him nor his feet it the back, so he wis stuck on top iv the waal like a poke iv tatties. A few cad hours yin February night afore he finally rowled off. A bit mair speed ind he wud iv been ower the waal ind intiva rose bed. Thet cud hev been sair! But no, he cam tae nae harm. Alcohol? But try tae steer clear iv the gannin's, they can be dangerous.

Northumbrian Language Society

Subscription Renewal/Application Form

(Subscriptions are due on the 1st of April every year)

Individual Members: £12

Joint members: £18

Concessions: £8

(unwaged adults, and young people under 18)

Name:

Address:

.....

Postcode: **Phone:**

Email:

(giving us your email address helps us to keep postage costs down, and it makes it possible for us to contact you quickly)

NB: Please note that your membership details will be held on a computer database for Northumbrian Language Society use only, and will not be made available to any other organisation without your consent.

**Please make cheques/postal orders payable to
“Northumbrian Language Society”**

Please return this form to :

**Mr John Davidson
10 Burnhouse Road, Wooler,
Northumberland, NE71 6EE**

OR

Alternatively you can pay by BACS

We bank with Lloyds

Sort Code: 30-90-89

Account number: 52777968

If you are a UK taxpayer, and you would like to help us by making your membership subscription bigger, at no extra cost to yourself, why not fill in the Gift Aid form overleaf and return it to the Treasurer?

Charity Gift Aid Declaration

Please fill in this form and return it to the Northumbrian Language Society Treasurer, John Davidson at his address overleaf.

Boost your donation (your membership subscription) by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity (Northumbrian Language Society) from the tax you pay during the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation, you must tick this box

☐

I want to Gift Aid my donation (your membership subscription) of £..... and any donation I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to the Northumbrian Language Society.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My details: Title: First name or initials:

Surname:

Full Home Address:

.....

Postcode: Date:

Please notify the Northumbrian Language Society if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address, or do not pay sufficient tax on your Income and/or Capital Gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher rate, or additional rate, and you want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return, or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your Tax Code.

All your contributions go to support the work of the Society in promoting Northumbrian prose, poetry, song, music and dance. We publish a regular members' Newsletter, books, CDs and other merchandise. We provide speakers and put on events like the Reed Neet and the Yule Meet. We sponsor dialect competitions at the Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering, and work with children and teachers in schools.

For more information on the work of the Society, please visit our website at www.northumbrianlanguagesociety.co.uk

Reed Neet Ticket Application Form

(return this part of the form with your payment)

Date: Friday 16 May 2025 at 8pm

**Venue: Waterford Lodge Hotel,
Castle Square, Morpeth, NE61 1YD**

(There is car parking behind the Hotel and over the road at Goose Hill)

Tickets: £12

(including stotty cyek, pie & pea supper and entertainment)

Name:

Address:

Postcode: **Phone:**

(in case we need to contact you urgently about this event)

No. of tickets required: **Meat Pie:** **Vegetarian Pie:**

Please return this form with your cheque to:

**Mr John Davidson,
10 Burnhouse Road, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6EE
OR**

**Pay by BACS and email your requirements to him at
iamnlstreasurer@gmail.com
(See the subscription renewal form above for bank details)**

NB: Closing date for ticket applications is Friday 9 May
(Phone John Davidson on 01668 281462 for late applications or queries)

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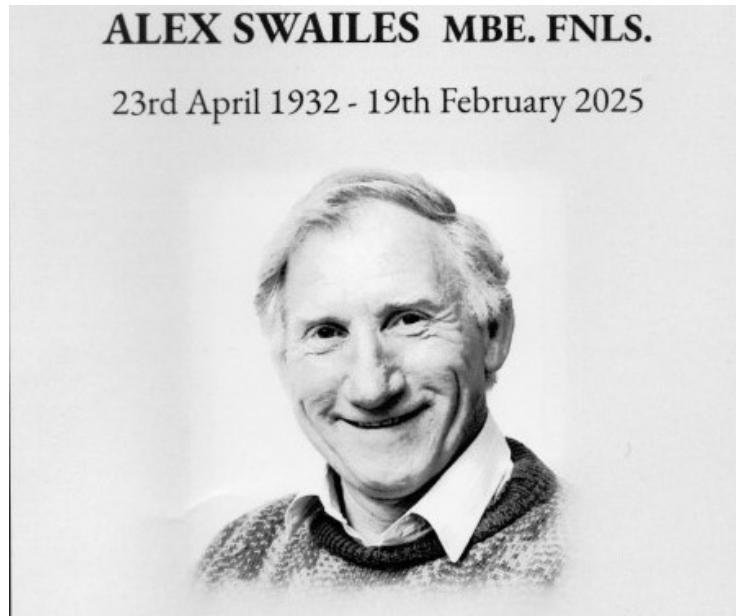
Reed Neet Ticket

(Please cut out and keep this part of the form - it's your ticket!)

Number of suppers ordered: **Meat:** **Vegetarian:**

Friday 16 May 2025, at 8pm

(Preceded by the NLS AGM at 7pm in the same venue)



It was with great sadness that we announced the passing of Alex Swailes in the last newsletter. He and his surviving wife, Anne, have been long-standing members of the society and great supporters of it. Alex will be remembered for many things by many people – as was evidenced by the variety of attendees at the funeral near Felton. He was a stalwart in Rotary, the Operatic Society and the caravanning fraternity as well as having had a very successful career in education – especially with troubled boys. He had a large family who revered him. But to us he will be remembered particularly as the Morpeth Gadgy - a role he made all his own. For all he wasn't a tall man he had a giant personality! He sang and spoke with great gusto and enthusiasm and we were well entertained at many a Reed Neet supper with Alex's anecdotes and singing. He will be much missed. Our thoughts go out to Anne and his wider family and friends. There won't be another!

Below are some of the tributes posted on Facebook (where there are many more).

Jean Scott-Smith, Lakeland Dialect Society: So sorry to hear that news. Alex was life and soul of the party at the dialect gatherings in the past. He will have left a great legacy of Northumbrian traditions.

Simon Cox, Rugby Club and formerly GMDT: Really sorry to hear sad news re Alex, thanks for letting me know. A larger than life character, he will be greatly missed by Morpeth & Northumberland community, my sincere condolences to his family.

Liz Elliott, NLS: Very sad news. He was such a great character and lovely person.

Ray Alexander, Actor (who referred to Alex as Sir Gadgy): Many many condolences to Anne and the family.

Stuart Lawson, Past Chairman of the NLS: I was fortunate to have known Alex over quite a few years and be in his joyful company so often. I valued his views and support when I was on the Committee. I'm sure many others would say the same.

You can use the links below to hear Alex sing on YouTube the two songs played at his funeral:

My Cheviot Hills

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CfBcyoHcOo>

Northumberland Alone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAK1ePzGkRA>



AT LAST!

(Apologies to Sunderland fans but at least you won the FA Cup in 1973!)

The Geordie National Anthem is well known so I give you the first verse and chorus below. Fred Reed parodied it with a version to the same tune that I print at its side.

Aa went to Blaydon Races, 'twas on the ninth of Joon,
Eiteen hundred an' sixty-two, on a summer's afternoon;
Aa tyuk the 'bus frae Balmbr's, an' she wis heavy laden,
Away we went 'lang Collin'wood Street, that's on the road
to Blaydon.

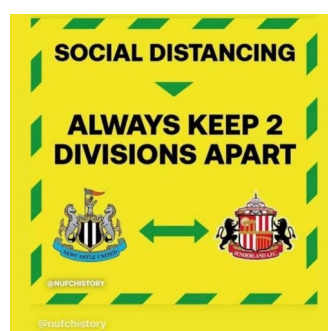
Chorus:

Ah me lads, ye shudda seen wi gannin',
We pass'd the foaks along the road just as they wor stannin';
Thor wis lots o' lads an' lassies there, aal wi' smiling faces,
Gannin' along the Scotswood Road, to see the Blaydon Races.

Wi dandered roond bi Gallowget
When us went ti the Toon
Nineteen hundred 'n' sivinty eight
On a Saterda efterneun
Skinheads, yakkers, lud-brained louts,
The tousled haired disgraces,
Aa' gannin' in ti St. James' park
Ti show wor brazen faces

Oh, me lads, ye shud hev hord us yellin'
Offensive blue 'n' blasphemous
An' crude abeun the tellin'.
A bunch of hooligans ti blare
Aall wi' brazen faces
Ti mek folks wundor what the future
O' the human race is.

A joke from the Covid era



‘TIS THE SEASON

Spring in Redesdale

Ye can tell it's Spring i' Redesdale bi the caad o'eerly dawn,
The droopin' u' the daffidil, the rind upon the lawn;
An aad yowe in the dyke-back hes jist dropt hor lamb – still born,
Yin fine Spring morn.

It mun be Spring in Redesdale 'co the wind is in the east,
The feor u' the staggors on the lean an' hungered beast;
O Hypermagnesaemia! - ti say the varry least,
It's Spring's greet feast.

The wintor's past in Redesdale whin the weeds begin to graa,
An' start ti push thor ugly heids up thru' an inch u' snaa;
But wheor the hell the grass hes gone, Aa'm buggored if Aa knaa,
Spring flooers an' aa'.

That time u' yeor in Redesdale whin it's ower the wellie tops,
The glaur an' clarts is ivvorywheor, an' sleet an, slush an' slops:
"If this gaans on much langor, thore'll be some gey puir crops!"
Unless Spring stops.

Ye'll knaa it's Spring in Redesdale 'cos ye'll nivvor see the sun,
The farmor's buits is leakin', hes collie winnit run:
The corbies laff thor heids off 'cos thore's wattor in hes gun;
The Spring hes sprung.

They caal it Spring in Redesdale whin the sky is grey an' caad,
Thore's nee milk at the gimmors, an' the calves are skittored bad;
The cuddy's got the colic, an' hes heid is hingin sad,
As Spring takes haad.

Aa love the Spring in Redesdale when the lark begins ti sing -
She leps up fra the soggy bent on wet bedraggit wing:
A weak apologetic cough comes oot the puir wee thing -
Her song u' Spring.

A sign u' Spring in Redesdale's whin the frost'll lift bi noon:
The swally's fleein sooth agin, she come a month ower soon:
Aa've nivvor heord the cuckoo yit – darsay he'll come in June,
Wi' hes Spring tune.

It's Spring aalreet in Redesdale when the hens begin ti lay
Them shapeless things that hev nee shell – the far end u' the hay;
Wor bones an' joints feel February, the calendar sez May -
Spring's on hor way.

It's aalways Spring in Redesdale whin the wintor's getting worse,
An' folks describe the weathor wi' an agricultural corse;
She torn them inti cynics like the writor u' this vorse -
It's Spring, of course,
In bonnie Redesdale.

Robert Allen

Wintaa Blues

Wat a Wintaa this hes been,
Nowt t'brighten up the scene,
Feet a-tingle, fingaas numb,
Ivvrybody leukin glum,
Aal o' plishur tornin sour -
Bonny blessin when it's ower.

Rotten weather not eneuf,
Uther things t'myek life tough;
Strikin is in fashun noo,
Nivvor mind the why or hoo;
Inconvenience day be day -
Surely thor's a diff'rent way.

Gazin oot at snow an' ice,
Thinkin sadly 'twad be nice
If these dismal days war past,
Spring, then Summaa at last;
Mebbe when the Wintaa goes,
It'll end them uthor woes.

Ellen Thompson

Spring

Noo when Aa sleep sumtimes me sowl awakes
And frum the little deith in song will fly
Inta celestial leit that throbs and quakes
Ower high plateaux aneath a wide, wide sky.
And theor are poplars high of Lombardy,
And silvor grasses flaantin in the breeze,
The little soonds aall soft in symphony
Amang the jubilation of the trees,
And aall the flashin grasses doon the hill.
And coontless buttercups that glint and glow.
Aa gaze doon wi' a warm supornal thrill
On spring's explosion hoyed about balaa.

H Stanners

Spring

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Fred Reed
Bord Sang

At six bi mi waatch
Uvva Munda morn
In I misty morky mizzle,
Yon bord's I maatch
Furra Klaxon horn
Uz it greets thi April drizzle,
Wi "Peepity-peep!
Cum sing thi Spring!
Sit up, git up, yi sluggaad!"
Aa'm burrawin deep,
Furra a feynil fling,
An' ye, fond bord, be buggaad!
Fu thi Spring's strang brew,
Fi thi baiorns, nat huz,
Whee's nat uz spreya
Uz wi yoosta wuz;
Un' thin forbye,
Aa've tekkin thi flu,
Sa hadaway ye,
Wid ya jiyz ub Sprig,
Un' hoy um roond vree
Ti di yung un' trig -
Aa waant nee peepity-peep the day;
Yi meygth caal agin -
ut Midsummer, say.

H Stanners

EASTER

Why's Easter Gud

Us divvent gan te chorch as much today
As wunce wi did, in orlier times. We waatch
Telly instead, mebbies, or gan a waalk
Ti exorcise wor grew. Yet when it's grey
And dismal, an' wi feel a sowt o' need
Whey then, wi canna idly sit an' scratch
Wor aarse frunt u' sum feyor like a whipped doug.
Wi must up an' deein summit gud.
Isn't it funny that in Russia noo
Chorches is fyuller thun they are at hyem
(An' yet sum sez as Russians hev nee God)?
Weel, seun it'll be Eastor, when wor kids
Dee Hitchy-Dabbor, an' mair gan te chorch
Thun at most uthor times. An' why, yi ax?
Weel, Aa canna tell yi 'ceptin yor heart
Waarms ti thi thowt that God luvs aal uv us,
An' shows His luv bi givin us His Sun.

Afraid ti dee? Whey, man, He deed fa' us,
An' neebody cud kill HIM or His luv -
That's worth rememborin at Eastor-time;
That's worth as weel a visit ti sum chorch.
Eاستor, yi knaa, 's not ownly choc'lit eggs
An' holeedays fa' bairns an' Hot Cross Buns;
Eاستor's a hope us needs across thi yeors,
That luv keeps gannin, spite o' tee much hate,
An peace is bettor thun distrust an' waar,
An' joy is sumthin aal uv us disorve.
Tyek me hand, bruthor. See Aa divvent caor
Whaat yi bilieves, whaat cullor yor skin is,
Or if yi speak diff'rint to fowks up heor -
We's aal the syame in mony ways, an' that's
See gud ti knaa. It myeks this Eastor-time
Happy an' hopeful fa' the whole damn wawld.

People ain't whaat thi aare: theor whaat us mek gyem.
Divvent think tee much uv 'em shuvin
An' croodin uthors oot – give oot mair luvin!

Alan C Brown

Commended in the 1979 Gathering Novice Verse Writing Competition

Newcastle

GAFFER'S CRACK

Wot fettle thi day, hinnies? Aam just champion hevvin finished anither Nooslettor but, by, Aa'm sore needin sum help heor! Iz theor ennybody oot theor can help uz, Pleeeeeezzzze!! Ger in tuch if yer willin ti try. I have another plea for help. If you are coming to the Reed Neet will you please consider offering one of the toasts or replies to the stotty or the Bard. It's a night to enjoy so you can make up anything appropriate to entertain.

We are also looking for new trustees for the Executive committee after the sad loss of Alex Swailes. We usually meet in Morpeth every two months and they rarely last more than two hours. Please consider helping the current trustees spread the load of running the Society – even if it's just your voice giving advice on the direction it takes. If you have any Internet skills you could even help from home with the website. I am not tech savvy so whilst the committee members can supply content, it is more of a chore trying to load it up onto the Net!

This the annual mail out newsletter to encourage you all to support your Society for another year. Noe the Dialect Festival is over we are moving on to our next project which is to re-publish Bob Bolam's fantastic dialect version of popular fairy tales along with Roland Bibby's collection of Bogles, Brownies & Brags.

It's not often I get to meet members in person which is why events like the Reed Neet and the Festival are such a treat. However, I spoke at some length to Geoffrey Ridley on the phone and enjoyed his reminiscences of the early days of the Society as he was a founder member. A Canadian member, Margaret Rousseau, was over in Northumberland and my wife and I met up with her in Beadnell recently with her husband, Will. It was lovely to connect and hear how the Society helps to keep her in touch with her roots and remind her Mam reach 100 without forgetting where she came from. Feel free to share your memories with us as many exile members enjoy hearing what's happening at home.

I recently saw a film of 'Billy Elliot – The Musical' and was impressed at how true to our region it was. Whilst the dialect was Geordie rather than North Durham it gave a genuine flavour of the region and the calamity to the Easington community with the closing of the mine. Much fun was made of the difficulty those outside of the North East have in understanding a yakkor in full flow!

I must finish with an apology to any Makem fans for the dig at Sunderland on page 8. To start with, the two teams are no longer two leagues apart, I'm pleased to say. We wish Sunderland well in their push to the Premier League as the North east deserves two (r more) teams in the top flight. So we wish you well in the play-offs.