



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Photo Competition:

SNSBI members seem to be inveterate photographers. The photo below, by Chris Lewis, depicts members of the society gathered under an "interesting" sign, while waiting for the coach in the main square at Sandwich, during our memorable trip out as part of the Canterbury Conference in 2011.



Can you come up with something equally entertaining at this year's conference in Athenry? If you can, please send it to me.

The only prize will be publication in the next issue of the newsletter and the 'glory' of appearing in this publication. I wait with interest to see what will appear.

Linda Corrigan (editor)

Newsletter NS. 4 Spring 2012

Welcome to the Spring newsletter for 2012, the 4th in our new series. In this issue there is much news about conferences and projects as well as at least one innovation in the form of a competition (see page 1, column 1). We are still catching up on some conference reports which have not made it into earlier newsletters because of lack of space, but the information is still worthwhile.

*You will notice that the photos at the head of the pages have changed. The originals were never intended to remain fixed for all time. The photos used here and in the earlier issues are simply my own and the variety and geographical distribution are dictated by the limits of my own collection and specific interests. Ideally I would like to reflect the many and varied interests of our members and the wide geographical area that they cover. So, this is where you come in. I challenge you to supply me with 'name' photographs which cover Britain and Ireland, place-names, personal names and any other type of name which takes your interest. If I can build up a bank of photographs, I may be able to rotate them on an annual basis and we may also be able to tie them in with **Nomina**.*

I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter and would ask that you let me know of any information, however small, which might be included in the next issue. I am particularly interested in receiving news of individual members, project updates, publications and future conferences which may be of interest to members.

Linda M. Corrigan (editor)

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2011-12

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Stop Press: last chance to book

Booking for the 2012 SNSBI Conference in Athenry, County Galway (see page 5, column 3) is likely to be closed by the time this newsletter reaches you. However, if you are desperate to join us, you might try contacting the conference organiser to see if there are any cancellations.

However it is not too late for :
The EMASS post-graduate symposium in May (see page 4, column 3)

The Place-names Study day in Dublin in August (see page 6, column 1)

The Welsh Place-Names Society conference in October (see page 6, column 2)



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Conference reports

Report by **Thomas Owen Clancy**, University of Glasgow
Canolfan Canolfan Uwchefrydiau Cymreig a Cheltaidd / The Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies hosted an excellent day forum on **'Place-Names and Medieval Wales'**, on 12th March, 2011, held at the National Library of Wales. It was extremely well-attended, with over 100 attendees, testimony both to the burgeoning interest in place-names in Wales, and to the line-up on offer. A variety of approaches were represented, with **Thomas Charles-Edwards** exploring 'Welsh place-names and the medieval Welsh historian', and **Paul Russell** delving into the Welsh realisation of the practice of *dindshenchas* 'explanatory place-names in the literature of medieval Wales'. **Hywel Wyn Owen** and **Richard Morgan** beat the bounds of the borders, with papers on 'Language and identity in the medieval place-names of Flintshire' and 'Language and place-names in the Middle Marches' respectively, papers full of insight into the complex language-context issues of the Welsh borders. **Oliver Padel** explored connections, and some disconnections, with other Brittonic regions, Cornwall and Brittany; and **David Parsons** set out the stall of future work on 'The Historic Place-Names of Wales'. David and the other hosts from the Canolfan are to be warmly congratulated. It was a rich and productive day, and so successful that they are planning to have another in the spring of 2012. Watch this space.

Report by **Keith Briggs**

A conference on **Power and place in Later Roman and early medieval Europe: interdisciplinary perspectives on governance and civil organization** was held at the **UCL Institute of Archaeology** in November 2011.

The organizers were **Stuart Brookes** and **John Baker**, and one of the announced themes was place-name studies, aiming to tackle questions such as what a toponymic approach can reveal about the origin and the physical and social evolution of assembly sites, and whether different phases of naming can be identified, and to what extent different types of assembly place-name shed light on changing practices. The meeting achieved its interdisciplinary aim very well, but few speakers tackled this toponymic challenge. I spoke on province names with the Latin suffix *-ia*, and **John Baker** included place-name work in his talk on assembly sites. There were several fascinating talks on medieval community assemblies in regions we do not often hear about, such as northern Spain and Estonia.

John Hudson gave a talk on Anglo-Saxon legal assemblies, which raised the question (in my mind, at least) of exactly who or what the *swān* was who attended the *swānimōt* (later *swonesmot*, *swainmot*), the name of a meeting derived from OE *swān-gemōt*. It seems that the word developed from an original sense of 'herdsman' to a specialized use as 'king's forest official', so it's hard to be sure of the exact meaning at any particular time. As is usually the cases at conferences, the real value is the communication which happens in restaurants and bars

between the formal talks, and in emails afterwards. For me (as someone interested in language) it was particularly valuable to meet historians and archaeologists who wanted to know more about the names of the places and institutions they were studying, and I am convinced that organizations such as the SNSBI could benefit from even greater presence at conferences such as this in the future.

Report by **Linda Corrigan**
Yorkshire Place-Names in the Early Middle Ages. SNSBI Autumn Day Conference, 29 October 2011, at The Centre for Medieval Studies, The King's Manor, York.
 Organised by **Matthew Townend**

Many SNSBI members, along with local academics and other interested parties made a large gathering (over 70) in the delightful surroundings of The King's Manor (see photo below) for an excellent day of Yorkshire Place-Names centred papers. The proceedings were also graced by two excellent bookstalls. One provided, as usual, by the indefatigable Sean Tyas and the other by local bookseller, Mark Christodoulou. Both attracted a lot of attention.
 (continued on next page)





SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Yorkshire Place-Names in the Early Middle Ages. (*continued*)

After a welcome from **Matthew Townend**, the day began with a detailed look at 'The *Adventus Saxonem vel Anglorum* in Yorkshire and beyond: the evidence of place-names', by **Thomas Pickles** from the **University of York**. This paper was very heavily biased towards the archaeological and historical record and seemed to imply that these created a chronology and context wherein the place-names could be understood. It seemed to me that more attention to topographical naming patterns might have enhanced both the chronology and the context for the archaeology and the written record, as well as giving insight into settlement and development.

We then moved on to 'Place-Names, settlement sites and territories: the Vale of Pickering and the Yorkshire Wolds' by **Stuart Wrathmell** of the **West Yorkshire Archaeology Service**. This paper involved in-depth discussion of '-thorp' names in this area - particularly interesting in light of the recent publication of '*Thorps in a changing landscape*.' by **Paul Cullen, Richard Jones and David Parsons**. This topic came up again in the final paper of the day given by the authors of this book.

After a splendid lunch, the next topic was 'Gaelic-Scandinavian influence in Yorkshire' from **Fiona Edmonds (University of Cambridge)**. Again, a very interesting paper with much food for thought, almost overwhelmed by Fiona's announcement of a recent hoard find on the Lancashire/Cumbria border. This turned out to be the Silverdale Hoard written up initially in *Current Archaeology*, 264, March

2012. Its importance to understanding of Viking Age Northumbria (including Yorkshire) cannot be overestimated with the find site lying as it does at the seaward end of the route from Leyburn (Yorks) through Hawes, Sedbergh and Kendal to the Irish Sea. A coin found at Silverdale adds to the name-stock with the addition the name of a hitherto unknown king of Northumbria.

Sarah Rees Jones (University of York) then treated us to a paper on 'The -*stræt* names of York and the development of the city'. She informed us, amongst much else, that there are only four -*stræt* names, in York, recorded before 1200 and that all of these are recorded after 1066. This remarkable fact gives a good deal of insight into the linguistic preference for street-naming in early medieval York.

After tea, we were then afforded the insights of the authors of '*Thorps in a changing landscape*', **Paul Cullen (University of the West of England, Bristol)**, **Richard Jones (University of Leicester)** and **David Parsons (University of Wales, Aberystwyth)** to compare and contrast with those of the earlier paper on the Vale of Pickering and the Yorkshire Worlds.

All in all it was an excellent day. Many thanks are due to **Matthew Townend** for organising the event, The Centre for Medieval Studies, The Kings Manor, University of York for their hospitality and **Thomas Clancy (University of Glasgow)** and **Lesley Abrams (University of Oxford)** who along with **Matthew Townend** ably chaired the sessions.

News:

Snippets from the media:

Drawing to your attention any name-related news which may have passed you by.

New Zealand sees no Justice in quirky baby names. **Peter Walker**, *Guardian*, January 6, 2012

Under New Zealand law babies' names cannot be offensive, too long or contain religious references.

You can perhaps understand why officials in New Zealand might think that naming a newborn baby Lucifer is not giving it the fairest start in life. But why, as new statistics show, did they prevent 49 sets of parents from calling their child Justice, a not uncommon name in parts of Africa? Justice was the name most often refused by New Zealand registrars in the 10 years to last June, the country's department for internal affairs said. Next on the list came Princess, with 24 thwarted attempts, King (21) and Prince (20).

Under New Zealand law babies' names cannot be offensive, too long – 100 characters is the limit – or contain religious references, which put paid to six planned little Lucifers. They are also not allowed to be self-declared titles, a clause which accounted for the Justices, lest they be confused for real judges, as well as the mini-royals. The rule also covers spelling variants, meaning Justus and Justice were also turned down. The only other rule breached in the top 10 was that on single-letter names – six parents chose J. *To read the rest of this article please go to:* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/06/new-zealand-justice-baby-names>



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Research Projects & Websites:

Projects:

A noteworthy piece of work which has recently been completed is **The Charters of Thoby Priory, Essex** by **Donna Cliftlands**. It is worth drawing attention to it as a source of local place and personal names as well as its importance in recording the history of a religious house that has hitherto received very little attention. The work was accepted for a PhD from London and awaits publication. So far there are no takers. It seems a pity that such a useful piece of work should not reach a wider audience. Notification by **John Hayward**.

The **Chalice Project** ended in 2011. The Connecting Historical Authorities with Linked Data, Contexts and Entities (Chalice) project helped to create a digital gazetteer of historical place names covering a thousand years of recorded history.

The Language Technology Group at the University of Edinburgh, collaborated with EDINA's Unlock Text place name text mining service, to build text mining tools to extract structured data from volumes of the English Place Name Survey. The corrected digitised text was created by the Centre for Data Digitisation and Analysis at Queen's University, Belfast. The Centre for e-Research at King's College London helped to develop use cases for the data produced during Chalice.

The project's final report is available as a download [JISC Digitisation ... digitisation.jiscinvolve.org/wp/.../2010-place-name-workshop.docx](http://www.jiscinvolve.org/wp/.../2010-place-name-workshop.docx)

There is also a useful website <http://chalice.blogs.edina.ac.uk/2011/07/08/list-of-outcomes-of-the-chalice-project/> which outlines the outcomes of the project,

Websites: *which may have escaped your attention*

<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/msrg/>
This is the website of the **Medieval Settlement Research Group (MSRG)**. The stated aims of the group are:

- To increase public awareness of the subject by spreading information about medieval settlement as widely as possible
 - To publish an annual journal, reporting on the progress of medieval settlement studies
 - To sponsor original research
- To hold regular meetings, lectures, seminars and conferences around the country
- To influence national policy on the excavation and recording of threatened sites
 - To offer advice and information to individuals and organizations conducting research into settlement
- All of which may well hold interest to those particularly interested in place-names.

This year's conference is nearly upon us and booking may have closed by the time you receive this newsletter, but the title will give you a taste of the things on offer:

'Wharram: past, present and future' 23rd-24th March 2012 (The King's Manor, York) For full details, see the University of York's webpage <http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/news-and-events/events/conferences/wharrampastpresentandfuture/>

And another

<http://www.emass.org.uk/>
This is the website of EMASS (see *next column for conference details*) The Early Medieval Archaeology Student Symposium is an interactive forum run for and by graduate research students who focus on the archaeology of the Early Medieval period, roughly the

period between the 4th-12th centuries AD.

EMASS aims to provide a constructive and interdisciplinary forum to facilitate discussion and debate between researchers from different institutions and specialities, in a constructive environment.

Both notifications by **Julia Stanbridge**

Event of possible interest to student members.

Early Medieval Archaeology Student Symposium, 14th-16th May, 2011, **Institute of Archaeology, University College London**.

Registration is now open for the 2012 Early Medieval Archaeology Student Symposium, held at UCL's Institute of Archaeology, which can be obtained by going to the EMASS 2012 website: www.emass.org.uk
EMASS 2012 Call For Papers
Deadline for submission: Friday 9th March 2011 We are pleased to announce the Call For Papers for EMASS 2012. We invite current postgraduate students and early career researchers to propose papers relating to the archaeology of the early medieval period (c. AD 400 – 1200) from Britain, Ireland, and beyond. Papers from international delegates are particularly welcomed. Each paper will be allocated a 20 minute slot, followed by time for discussion. Poster abstracts are also welcome. Abstracts should be a maximum of 250 words, and should be submitted to: info@emass.org.uk

SNSBI Newsletter
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Publications

Please note that this is simply a listing of items of potential interest to members. Listing here does not imply any opinion regarding quality, academic rigour etc. Where appropriate, reviews will appear in **Nomina** in due course.

Recent Publications:

Glenda Carr, *Hen Enwau o Arfon, Llŷn and Eifionydd* (Gwasg y Bwthyn, Caernarfon, 280 pp, £10.95, ISBN 978-1-907424-27-4)

SNSBI readers who have some knowledge of Welsh will be pleased to hear of a new paperback publication which deals with minor names in the area covering south of Caernarfon town and the Llŷn peninsula. Scholarly in content, it deals in highly readable style with the names of many farms, hamlets and landscape features in an area which has seen much cultural interest but little in the way of structured academic research. *Hen Enwau* has already made an impression with favourable reviews. Dr Glenda Carr and her husband Professor Tony Carr are SNSBI members.

Mark Gardiner and Christopher Whittick (eds.) *Accounts and Records of the Manor of Mote in Iden 1442-1551, 1673* (Sussex Record Society vol.92, 2011. ISBN 9780854450749) £20+ p&p. Available from the society

Diarmaid O Muirthe *From the Viking Word-Hoard: A Dictionary of Scandinavian Words in the Languages of Britain and Ireland*, (Four Courts Press Ltd ((30 Mar 2010) ISBN 1846821738), 240pp, £45.00,

Judith Middleton-Stewart (ed.) *Records of the Churchwardens of*

Mildenhall: Collections (1446-1454) and Accounts (1503-1553) (Suffolk Records Society Vol.54, Boydell, 2011. ISBN 9780851155784) £12.50

Journal Articles and adventures in the wider media

Dot Boughton, Gareth Williams and Barry Ager *Viking Hoards: buried wealth of the North West in Current Archaeology*, 264, March, 2012. pp.26-31

Keith Briggs. In East Anglia, the legend of St. Edmund, king and martyr, has been popular for the last 1000 years. The real Edmund is believed to have been killed by the Vikings in 869 at a place called *Hægelsdun*, of which the exact location has long been disputed. If *Hægelsdun* is a real place-name, we then have a toponymic problem which should be susceptible to an attack by the methods of historical linguistics. Rather strangely, this has not been attempted before. Last December I published "Was *Hægelsdun* in Essex? A new site for the martyrdom of Edmund" in the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* XLII, 277-291. In this paper I argue that *Hægelsdun* was the hill of Maldon in Essex (later recorded as *Haillesdon* and similar), and that the battle between Edmund and the Vikings was thus a precursor to the more famous battle of Maldon in 991. This paper created huge media interest (google "briggs Hægelsdun"); though this includes some negative criticism, I take it all as a sign of a healthy and continuing debate. Other SNSBI members who have done research which impacts on popular historical issues might be recommended to publicize their work beyond the academic journals.

Forthcoming events:

Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland
Twenty First Annual Conference
at the **Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, Co. Galway, Ireland,**
from **30 March to 2 April 2012.**



Conference secretary
Liam Ó hAisibéil

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The **programme** is being put together by **Nollaig Ó Muraile** of NUI, Galway and is expected to include:

Duncan Probert: *Personal names and Place-names in Domesday Book*

Caitlin Nic Fhionnlaoich: *Place-names of Gola Island, Co. Donegal*

Pat McKay: *Lough Neagh: place-names and mythology*

Isobel Ryan: *Peig Sayers and Blasket Island place-names*

Cathy Swift: *Linn na ngéinte Éireannacha: Genes of Irish, Vikings and Normans*

Keith Briggs: *Names of Regions with the suffix -ia in Anglia*

Aengus Finnegan: *Names from the shores of Lough Ree*

Thomas Clancy: *Scottish toponymy in transition*

Guto Rhys: *Gleanings from Pictland*

Alison Burns: *Field-names in Scotland*

Nollaig Ó Muraile: *Kings and queens in Irish place-names*

Patrick Hanks & Kay Muhr: *Exchanging Names*

and short project reports from:

Logainm.ie/Placename.ie

Trends in Toponymy

Family Names of the UK



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

More Forthcoming events:

Placenames Workshop: 24–25 August 2012

Theme: **Management and dissemination of toponymic data online.**

Location: The Helix, Dublin City University, Ireland

Fiontar, Dublin City University (DCU) in collaboration with the **Placenames Branch, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**, is organising a Placenames Workshop with the theme: *Management and dissemination of toponymic data online.*

The workshop will focus on three main areas:

1. *Placenames research*
2. *Technical solutions for the management of toponymic data*
3. *Mapping solutions:*
 - *Synchronisation of toponymic data between databases*
 - *Bilingual/multilingual toponymic data*

Confirmed Speakers

Please note this workshop will be held in English. **Helen Kerfoot**, Emeritus Scientist, Natural Resources Canada/Ressources naturelles Canada (Keynote speaker) • **Maria Byrne**, Ordnance Survey Ireland • **Jean-René Côté**, Commission de toponymie du Québec • **Prof. Botolv Helleland**, University of Oslo • **Triin Hinrikus**, Department of Address Data, Estonian Land Board • **Gwyn Jones**, Welsh Language Board • **Dr. Jacob King**, Ainnmean-Àite na h-Alba • **Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig**, The Placenames Branch/ Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, • **Dermot McNally**, Open Street Maps • **Michal Boleslav Měchura**, Fiontar, DCU •

Peadar Morgan, Bòrd na Gàidhlig • **Leif Nilsson**, Institutet för språk och folkminnen/Swedish Institute for Language and Folklore • **Dr. Brian Ó Raghallaigh**, Fiontar, DCU • **Dr. Sirkka Paikkala**, Research Institute for the Languages of Finland • **Annika Palu**, Department of Address Data, Estonian Land Board • **Crystal Sholts**, Google Maps • **EuroGeoNames** (Representative to be confirmed) Registration fees

Early registration (before 01.06.12) €90

Full registration (from 01.06.12) €150 Students €50 For further information or to register online, please see: <http://www.logainm.ie/placenames2012/> or contact Edel Ní Mhuirthile <placenames2012@dcu.ie> or linda@corrigan.demon.co.uk for pdf flyer.

Cymdeithas Enwau Lleoedd Cymru/Welsh Place-Name Society Hywel Wyn Owen

The Society is delighted to be able to use the SNSBI Newsletter to publicize the second WPNS annual day-conference to be held on Saturday 6 October 2012 at the newly opened offices of Glamorgan Archives. Susan Edwards, Glamorgan Archivist, is arranging an exhibition of place-name material held by Glamorgan Archives and a tour of the facilities. Richard Morgan will give paper on the prolific resources available in the Archives for place-name research in Wales generally but with especial reference to south Wales. Other papers will include a joint presentation by Hywel Wyn Owen and Geraint Thomas, a professional photographer, on the names and landscape of lakes in Snowdonia. Mike Headon will talk

on field-naming patterns in the parish of Llandrillo-yn-Rhos, Denbighshire, and Dewi Evans on Welsh place-names in Patagonia. Rhian Parry will review the current place-name projects. The AGM will include an update on the website and the new WPNS circular which will include articles and items prompting an awareness of names in Wales. This session will also inaugurate the Society's first Honorary President, Professor Emeritus Gwynedd Pierce, known to all SNSBI members as a former SNSBI President. Those wishing to become members of WPNS can contact Dr Angharad Fychan at angharad.fychan@googlemail.com Hywel is delighted to report that a number of SNSBI members have already done so and regards this as a valuable aspect of the WPNS profile. Angharad will also be able to provide information on the registration and the cost of the conference as more information becomes available.

Watch this space

SNSBI Autumn Study Day 2012, Chester, details to be announced.

Keep the date

SNSBI Spring Conference 2013, in Glasgow:

Friday 5 April to Monday 8 April 2013, Glasgow Pond Hotel, Great Western Road. You might want to visit this site on your way to Glasgow. Do you know where it is?

