



Names Places People

SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Spring conference excursion



Congregation of SNSBIans



Alloway auld Kirk



The Brig o' Doon, where poor Meg lost her tail in Burns' Tam o' Shanter

photographs by Katrin McClure

Newsletter NS. 7 Autumn 2013

During Linda's absence on her Antipodean adventure, it is my privilege, for one edition, and one edition only, to step into her shoes as editor. Her notes and comprehensive lists of instructions have made the task as easy as it possibly could be, though nonetheless daunting, and any shortcomings are entirely mine.

Anyone attending the Glasgow conference could not fail to be impressed and heartened by the number of young researchers at work in the field of onomastics, and reports on some of their activities and areas of interest are included in these pages, together with a dually-authored report of the conference itself, and news of coming events. Circulars for the coming Autumn one-day conference and next year's Spring conference are also enclosed: time to reserve your places and mark up your diaries.

Linda will be back in harness for the next issue, when we can look forward, we hope, to being regaled with tales of her (onomastic?) experiences Down Under.

| *Kate Hardcastle*

CHARITY NO. 0177455

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:
2013-14

President:

Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Vice-Presidents:

Prof Hywel Wyn Owen
Peter McClure

Hon. Secretary:

Emily Pennifold

Hon. Treasurer:

Julia Stanbridge

Membership Secretary:

Kate Hardcastle

Newsletter Editor:

Linda Corrigan

Nomina Editors:

John Baker
Jayne Carroll
Keith Briggs

Webmaster:

Committee:

Prof Thomas Clancy
Simon Draper
Prof Carole Hough
David Parsons
Paul Tempan
Veronica Smart
Prof Diana Whaley

The new banner photograph (Werwolf) above was provided by Keith Briggs; he came across the sign on a visit to Solingen, and the incidental (Olde Wyche) on page 7 was sent in by Pam Combes.

SNSBI Newsletter

Contact details

Phone: 01565 654014

email:

linda@corrigan.demon.co.uk



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

SNSBI Spring Conference, 5-8 April 2013, at Pond Hotel, Glasgow

After dinner on Friday Carole Hough (Glasgow) welcomed delegates and then handed over to the postgraduates who had attended a pre-conference postgraduate workshop (see page 5). This was attended by students from, amongst other places, Denmark, Wales, England and Scotland; it included discussion groups and, earlier that day, a place-name walk led by Peter Drummond (PG Glasgow) through part of his study-area (along the Antonine Wall at Croy).

Saturday morning consisted of two sessions, each of three papers. It began with a presentation by John Baker, Jayne Carroll, and David Parsons, on the AHRC-funded project 'The place-names of Shropshire'. Launched in January of this year, it is a four-year project to bring to completion a long-term study of Shropshire place-names begun by the late Margaret Gelling, and is a collaborative venture between the Institute for Name-Studies at the University of Nottingham and the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (www.nottingham.ac.uk/ins/projects/shropshire/index.aspx). This was followed by Emily Penniford on 'Analysing nineteenth-century field-names in the Anglo-Welsh borderland', a numerical analysis of field-names in Radnorshire and Oswestry designed to gain a deeper

understanding of the linguistic situation in these areas in the mid-19th century. The pre-coffee session ended with Paul Tempan's 'Bryantang and Bootown: Cumbrian (English) names in East Ulster'.

In the first of three papers on personal names in the following session, Patrick Hanks and Matthew Hammond spoke on 'Black's *Surnames of Scotland* and the FaNUK [Family Names of the United Kingdom] database'. While Black remains by far the best reference work for Scottish family names, it is almost 70 years old (published in 1946) and is in much need of revision, a process being undertaken by medieval historian Matthew Hammond, whose work on Scottish prosopography of the 12th and 13th century, and with PoMS (The People of Medieval Scotland) database (www.poms.ac.uk), places him in a unique position to undertake such revision. For more information on FaNUK, see www1.uwe.ac.uk/cahe/research/bristolcentreforlinguistics/fanuk.aspx.

Aengus Finnegan's '*Mac Carrghamhna*: a vanished Westmeath surname?' followed the historical and linguistic evolution of the name from its earliest occurrence in 12th-century annals, though its apparent disappearance after the mid 17th century, to the present day and its possible guises. While there is evidence that in the early 19th century, in Kilkenny West, the surname was

anglicized as Caulfield, *Mac Carrghamhna*, once the name of the lords of Cuircne, was usually anglicized as *Caron* or *McCaron* in the 16th and 17th centuries, names which were also used as anglicizations of several other, unrelated Irish surnames, making disentangling all the competing possibilities for the current form and distribution of this surname particularly challenging, not discounting the possibility that it has simply died out.

The final paper of the morning, Ellen Bramwell's 'Personal names and cultural contact: evidence from modern-day Scotland', drew on her contrastive and comparative work with Gaelic-speakers in the Western Isles and members of 20th-century immigrant communities in Glasgow.

As is fitting for postprandial sessions, all three papers in the first session after lunch were as entertaining as they were erudite. The first was Kenneth Fraser's 'The politics of naming warships'. Ken, a retired librarian at St Andrews, traced his interest in ships and ship names to his childhood in Dunoon on the Firth of Clyde. He showed that the names of warships, from earliest times, reflected concepts which each state wished to publicize, such as its extent, ideals, virtues, history and rulers. This means that difficulties arise when the nature of the state alters, thus making some of the existing names objectionable. For instance, wholesale renaming — removing royal and aristocratic names — followed the French



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Revolution, and after the Russian Revolution hardly a Soviet warship retained her original name, yet some of the new ones proved short-lived. The Fascist dictatorships, on the other hand, considering themselves to exemplify patriotism, did not often resort to new names. Democracies too have not been free from controversy, as shown by Winston Churchill's several efforts to get the monarch's agreement to name a battleship after Cromwell.

This was followed by Doreen Waugh's "Auld ClettinRoe"; "Wha'll Dance wi Wattie?": summary withheld pending publication.

The final paper in this session was Shaun Tyas's 'Some problematic Scottish football club nicknames', which drew directly on his latest book, *The Dictionary of Football Club Nicknames in Britain and Ireland* (see p. 8). It included one of the most problematic of all, the Pars, the nickname of Dunfermline Athletic, which runs to a page and half, but which Shaun is confident of having solved.

Both papers of the final afternoon session were hagi-toponymic. The first, Gilbert Márkus's 'Colum Cille – inimicus Scottorum', drew on his work on the Leverhulme-funded DOSH (Database of Scottish Hagi-toponyms), to be launched later this year. From this work, it emerged that place-names

referring to Colum Cille (as opposed to Colmán, Mo Cholmóc, or plain Columba) have a distinctive distribution, which coincides very closely with areas of Scandinavian settlement.

Keith Briggs's paper, 'Saint's name + *stōw* in Suffolk', started with the question as to whether Felixstowe contains the name of St Felix, and, using the supporting evidence of the other five hagi-toponyms in *stōw* in Suffolk, one of which is the lost *Climstou* (Clement + *stōw*) concluded that Felixstowe does indeed commemorate St Felix. And on this positive and holy note, the conference adjourned for dinner. *Simon Taylor*

Saturday's after-dinner session comprised six short presentations. Jayne Carroll (Nottingham) outlined the advantages to researchers in a flexible and searchable version of the Survey of English Place-Names, and the technical problems to be overcome in the current digitization project involving university departments in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Eleanor Rye (Malvern) discussed how disciplines including genetics, archaeology and onomastics will cast light on 'The Impact of Diasporas on the Making of Britain'. Carole Hough's topic was how the Historical Thesaurus of English project at Glasgow University, covering the full range of vocabulary since Old English, will help study of metaphorical usages, such as words for body parts recruited as place-name

elements, a feature noted as probably occurring in all languages. Paul Tempan (Belfast) described how data gathered for the Northern Ireland Place-Names Project are now available in a more user-friendly, more comprehensive website, www.placenamesni.org, including a map-search facility. Brendan O'Connor (Edinburgh) spoke on the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework, co-ordinated by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and funded by Historic Scotland; the intention is for the framework to be updated as required so as to enable future projects to be carried out with greatest mutual benefit to understanding of Scotland's past. Alison Grant (Glasgow) explained how the SWAP project (Scots Words And Place-Names), which uses social media to gain information on contemporary use of language and local place-names, has already contributed to the content of Scottish language dictionaries, including entries with new earliest dates for the use of place-name elements.

After the AGM Peder Gammeltoft (Copenhagen) made anyone present who wasn't also working in Denmark extremely jealous, with 'DigDag launched – the end of a project or a new beginning for Danish onomastics?'. Already having operational the huge DigDag place-name database in versions for public users and for researchers, the vision for Peder



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

and colleagues was to digitize further vast volumes of place-name material for public access online. A practical demonstration of DigDag, with sample searches, showed how the existing data could be searched for and organized, for example with distribution maps 'on the fly'.

Alan James (Castle Douglas), on 'Brittonic *trev* in the place-names of south-west Scotland', introduced his discussion with a linguistic timeline, in which he reserved the term *Cumbric* for the Brittonic of the Old North during the 9th to 12th centuries, contemporary with Old Welsh. Many of those present will doubtless have kept for future reference the detailed four-page handout setting out the significant *trev* place-names in the region, their early forms and likely etymologies, and a possible scenario for the evolution of what the element denoted in relation to the changing pattern of political domination and landholdings in the region. The core of this scenario was that *trev* became the favoured term for major landholding units in the Northumbrian period of the 8th and 9th centuries; and of even greater prominence but applied to the units resulting from the break-up of the multiple estates during the upheaval of the late 9th and the 10th centuries, after the falls of Dumbarton and York to Scandinavian rulers.

In preparation for Monday afternoon's coach excursion to

Ayrshire, Thomas Clancy (Glasgow) sketched the county's political and linguistic history, which has resulted in a fascinating mix in its place-names; in Cunninghame (the most northerly traditional division of Ayrshire) for instance, the names of three parishes are Brittonic, two Old English, nine Gaelic (mostly *cill* + saint's name) and two Scots. Cunninghame (*Cunegan* 1131 x 1141) was still eluding convincing explanation. Earlier history was unreachable but the 'Continuation of Bede' recorded that Eadberht added *campum Cyil* to his Northumbrian kingdom in 750; this *Cyil* (Kyle, the district containing the town of Ayr) could not be named for a king *Coel*, as commonly believed, but possibly Brittonic *cil* 'narrow', 'recess' or 'retreat'. The name of the third, most southerly division of Ayrshire, Carrick, denoting a rocky place, could be either Gaelic or Brittonic. Among more local place-names denoting settlements the scarcity of Gaelic *baile* within the county was remarkable, while both Brittonic *trev* and Scandinavian *bý* were represented. An important element in the county's history was its inclusion in *Galwedía*, the lands under the sway of Gall-Ghàidheil.

The excursion as far as Carrick included a stop in Alloway, with time to explore the Auld Kirk and the Brig o' Doon with their Robert Burns associations, as well as the new museum in his honour. It also travelled through Maybole (Old English place-name, also

recorded in the late 12th century in a form with a Gaelic epithet, *Maybothelbeg*, 'little Maybole'), Kirkoswald (inversion compound), and the Electric Brae (modern Scots), where we experienced a mystery topographical, for once, rather than toponymic.

After dinner John Freeman (London) posited a remarkable but compelling etymology for Pyon Hill in Herefordshire, a strikingly regular conical hill, significantly, for his proposition, right beside a Roman road. Having noted that *podium* 'platform' (ultimately a borrowing from Greek *podion* 'little foot'), was widely used in late Latin and the origin of French *puy* and cognates in Catalan, Spanish, Portuguese/Galician and Italian for conspicuous free-standing hills, he suggested a Latin form **Podiōne*, with *-iōne* (in ablative case) suffix mediated through British and Primitive Welsh (with loss of [ð] as in modern Welsh *mewn* from British **medjon-*) to Old English **[ˈpejon] ~ *[ˈpijon] > * [ˈpeon] ~*[ˈpion]*. Other located instances of the element, with appropriate early forms, would be at Pinhoe (Devon) and Pendock (Worcestershire), with a recorded (*on*) *peon mýnet* at or near Culmstock Beacon in Devon

Rounding off the talks programme, Eila Williamson (Glasgow) spoke on 'Out and about with STIT: exchanging knowledge of Scotland's place-names'. She explained that the current Scottish Toponymy in Transition project, based in Glasgow University, aimed to build on the recently completed



Names Places People

SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

five-volume 'The Place-names of Fife' (Simon Taylor with Gilbert Márkus), the first comprehensive modern county survey in Scotland; with publication forthcoming for the small former (till 1975) counties of Clackmannanshire and Kinross-shire and the Menteith division of Perthshire, and work getting underway on on Ayrshire, Berwickshire and Renfrewshire. The 'out and about' element referred to ways of generating public interest and participation in the study areas through means such as open seminars, place-name walks and involvement of existing local organizations, and through contacts with schools; it was important to offer a range of events and activities to suit different groups.

William Patterson

SNSBI Postgraduate Workshop

Report by **Emily Pennifold**

The first postgraduate workshop took place just before the main Glasgow conference this year. The well-planned and interesting event was organized by Alice Crook and Leonie Dunlop of Glasgow University. The workshop looked at databases for name-studies and included a talk about library resources, with some fascinating documents on show, and a place-names walk led by Pete Drummond and Simon Taylor. The workshop is a great

opportunity for post-graduate students to meet and discuss their work. The next workshop, which I will be organizing, will take place in Gregynog, Powys on 2nd-4th April 2014, and I am happy to hear any suggestions of items students would like included in the programme: (epennifold@wales.ac.uk)

Website news

SNSBI website

I have taken over as SNSBI webmaster from Sue Laffin, who did an excellent job for over 10 years.

I have completely reformatted the website, with the main aim of making it more user-friendly on modern devices like phones and tablets, and also to make the website structure clearer to the casual browser.

All the old material from Sue's website is still there, including the valuable conference reports going back to 2000. But I have also made changes such as: the front page is intended to be very concise and clear, and to be used only for announcements of forthcoming events; the complete table of contents of *Nomina*, which I created, is now included; I have added links from names of people to their own web pages, when these exist; and now every page

has a "last modified" date, so that users can be sure that the content is up-to-date.

The reformatting task now being done, we can think about adding new material, such as perhaps short articles on specific names. I welcome contributions of this sort, or any other suggestions for improving the website.

Keith Briggs

In October 2012, a new online resource,

onomastics.co.uk, was launched by Glasgow postgraduates **Alice Crook** and **Leonie Dunlop**, with technical assistance from IT consultant **Scott McGready**.

The website was intended to fulfil a need for accessible and efficient onomastic discussion, and for engaging the general public with this exciting research field. Inspiration for the website came from the Onomastics Reading Group at Glasgow University, which began in January 2012. A group of enthusiastic academics, postgraduates and undergraduates, we have discussed a huge range of onomastic research, including general onomastic theory, the naming of dogs in an African tribe, the saints in the Scottish place-names project, and the names given to omelettes in recipe books.



Names Places People

SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

After the founding of this group, it soon became apparent that a new outlet for onomastic debate was needed, to enable onomasticians become more aware of the research interests of others, and also inspire some joint research projects which otherwise would have never been envisaged. Overall, we hope that usage of this website will help to develop and strengthen new and existing onomastic networks, and aid the creation of exciting new projects.

The site has been primarily designed for the purpose of keeping track of what is going on in the onomastic world, and so we have a monthly blog post, which is intended to allow contributors to alert other researchers to ongoing projects and interesting discoveries, and to spark general discussion into the development of the onomastic field. The content is contributed by researchers from around the world; so far, we've had submissions from researchers in countries including the UK, France, Denmark, and Australia. In the first five months since the website launch, we've seen posts regarding a huge range of interests, including a project on hagiotoponyms in Scotland, urban names in

Copenhagen, and the career development of a consultant toponymist. Future posts include an overview of the Ghana Place-names Project and a 'how-to' guide on easy and efficient geo-coding.

The website contains an events calendar, which is regularly updated with details of conferences, workshops, and meetings which may be of interest to researchers. This will hopefully also increase the membership of various onomastic societies and, to further improve the chances of this, the website contains a page full of links to useful websites, including the sites of various onomastic groups and societies, as well as interesting resources.

We have already had over 2,000 visits from visitors in 66 countries, including the USA, Brazil, Russia, Germany, Kenya, New Zealand, India, Iran, Spain, Vietnam, and Hungary. Of these 56% are returning visitors and 44% are new, showing that users are finding links to our website on Google and other sites, and are interested enough to



open the link and visit our site. Crucially, it also shows that many found the site engaging and worth more than one visit, and we plan to continue developing and promoting onomastics.co.uk, which promises to become an invaluable resource and forum for discussion.

Alice Crook & Leonie Dunlop

Forthcoming events:

Scottish Place-Name Society The [Autumn Day Conference](#) will be held at the Golden Lion Hotel in Stirling on Saturday 2 November 2013. Speakers are John Baldwin, Alice Crook, Peter McNiven, John Reid, John Stewart-Murray, and Eila Williamson. The cost (including tea/coffee and lunch) is £20 (£10 students). For a booking form and/or further details, please contact Carole Hough: carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk.

Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland

[Autumn Day Conference](#)

Saturday 16 November, 11 am - (about) 5 pm at Frenchay campus University of the West of England, organizer Professor Richard Coates. (see circular)

23rd [Annual Conference](#)

Gregynog Hall, Montgomeryshire, 4-7 April, organizer David Parsons. (see circular)

The **Guild of One Name Studies** [Annual Conference & AGM](#), 11

April 2014, at Ashford International Hotel, Simone Weil Avenue, Ashford, TN24 8UX, with a programme based on the theme '35 years on – the way forward'.



SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND



The death occurred last year, in Australia, of Joyce Miles, a former member of the society.

Working with with Dr Basil Cottle at the University of Bristol, she completed her MLitt in 1979: *The Naming of private houses in Britain since 1700*, and then went on to do a PhD at Leicester (1990): *The Rise of suburban Exeter and the naming of its streets and houses, c1801-1907*. She later emigrated to Australia, and became a research associate of the Australian Place Name Society, continuing her research into house names within their social context. Dr Miles' areas of special interest were the influence of early settlers on Australian house names, the similarities and differences between Australian and European house names, and house names as a source of street and place names. Her research also extended into place-names, in particular those of New South Wales.

She made regular broadcasts, on radio and television, in England and subsequently in Australia,

talking on house names and related topics, and she was the author of two books on the subject: *House Names around the World* (1973) and *Owl's Hoot: How People name their Houses* (2000).

Forthcoming events

which may be of interest to members:

Centre for Medieval Studies, University of York

22 October 2013

'Greyfriars, Leicester and the Search for Richard III'

Professor Richard Buckley (further details available soon at www.york.ac.uk/medieval-studies/)

'Storytelling in Court and Cloister'

2 November 2013

Speakers: Anthony Bale (Birkbeck), Ross Balzaretto (Nottingham), Bronach Kane (Cardiff), Henrietta Leyser (Oxford), Christopher Norton (York), Tom Pickles (Chester), David Rundle (Essex), Elisabeth van Houts (Cambridge)

Cost: £30 (£20 for SSMLL members); student/unwaged £20 (£10 for SSMLL members)

Registration: cms-office @york.ac.uk; enquiries: sethina.watson@york.ac.uk

The **Council for British Archaeology** will hold its AGM on 28 October 2013, at the British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, at 4 pm, followed by

Michael Wood presenting the CBA Beatrice de Cardi Lecture. Open to non-members; reservations on 01904 671417 or online at www.archaeologyUK.org/events/cba-annual-general-meeting.

Tour of Christ Church, Spitalfields, London

(church and crypt) conducted by the Rector, the Revd Andy Rider
12 November, 4 pm to 6 pm
Cost: £20 includes refreshments
Advance booking required: info @huguenotsofspitalfields.org

The Huguenot Society of England and Ireland

forthcoming lectures:
'Claude de Sainliens: a teacher in Elizabethan England', Dr Laurant Berec, Université de Haute-Alsace
13 November, 2012 at 6.30 pm, University College, Gower Street, London WC1

'Huguenots and Russia in the 18th Century', Dr Vladislav Rjéoutski, University of Bristol
15 January 2014 at 5 pm, Orange Street Congregational Church, London WC2
www.huguenotsociety.org.uk





SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Publications

A reminder that *Placename Australia*, the quarterly newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey, can be downloaded, free of charge, as a PDF from www.anps.org.au, and anyone wishing to receive regular email alerts or the print version can subscribe online. The current issue (September 2013) includes an article on Rame Head in Cornwall, after which Rame or Ram Head on the coast of Victoria was named by Captain Cook during his voyage of 1770.

Recent :

The Dictionary of Football Club Nicknames in Britain and Ireland, by Shaun Tyas (20 April 2013)

Reviewed by Linda Corrigan

This is a wonderful book which will delight football aficionados, those who like names and almost anyone else who cares to look at it. My first act was to look for the team from my home town and there it was (Barrow in Furness Bluebirds) and my second was to email Shaun about the meaning of the name. I've had to prise it out of the hands of everyone to whom I've shown it. It would

make a wonderful Christmas or birthday present for so many people.

Forthcoming:

Perceptions of Place: twenty-first-century interpretations of English place-name studies, ed. by Jayne Carroll and David N. Parsons (Nottingham: English Place-Name Society, 2013)

This volume, which will appear in October 2013, takes stock of the progress of English place-name study over the last hundred years: approaches and methods, changing currents of opinion, recent conclusions, and further possibilities. Drawing on the documentation and analysis provided by the 89 volumes to date of the Survey of English Place-Names—as well as a century of related work—scholars from a range of disciplines reflect on the languages and cultures that shaped early England, on English place-names in neighbouring territories, and on the interface between name-study and related approaches to understanding the history, cultures, landscapes and languages of the past:

Perceiving place through time: English place-name studies, 1924–2013 (Jayne Carroll)

Brittonic place-names in England (Oliver Padel)

Churls and athelings, kings and reeves: some reflections on place-names and early English society (David N. Parsons)

The Scandinavian background to English place-names (Gillian Fellows-Jensen)

Scandinavian place-names in England (Matthew Townend)

Place-names and linguistics (Richard Coates)

English place-names and landscape terminology (Paul Cullen)

Settlement archaeology and place-names (Richard Jones)

Personal names in place-names (John Insley)

Women in place-names (Carole Hough)

Many strata: English and Scots place-names in Scotland (Thomas Owen Clancy)

English place-names in Wales (Hywel Wyn Owen)

English place-names in Ireland (Kay Muhr)

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.