



# SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

**Stop Press:**  
 For anyone who was still expecting to hear about an SNSBI Study Day in Newcastle in October 2015, this has had to be deferred because of the pressures placed on the local transport and accommodation networks by the Rugby World Cup. Apologies are due to anyone who is inconvenienced by this. It is hoped that a study day will take place in Newcastle in Autumn 2016 or soon after that.

In the meantime, SNSBI will be joining the Welsh Place-Name Society/ Cymdeithas Enwau Lleoedd Cymru for their annual conference on Saturday October 3rd. The programme covers Welsh place-names, as well as Scottish place-names, Shropshire place-names containing Welsh elements and personal names. Papers are either in Welsh with simultaneous English translation or in English.

Unfortunately by the time this newsletter reaches you it may well be too late to book for this conference if you have not already done so. The Closing date is 25 September. However details can be found on the SNSBI website at [http://www.snsbi.org.uk/2015\\_LlaneIwedd.html](http://www.snsbi.org.uk/2015_LlaneIwedd.html)

**Newsletter NS. 11  
 Autumn 2015**

*Hello again and welcome to our 11th Newsletter in the New Series (NS).*

*The eagle eyed amongst you will notice that we have new photos in the banner at the top of the pages. I am indebted to those members who send me wonderful photos showing me the breadth of names within Great Britain and Ireland. Sadly, I get fewer 'personal name' photos than I do for place-names so if anyone has any suitable, interesting or amusing photos of 'personal names' I would be really grateful to receive them. Thanks are due to **Julia Stanbridge** for the 'Upper Up' photo and to **Ann Cole** for the photo of the startling red signpost from Dorset. The 'Gleaston/Dendron' photo and that of 'Thingwall' are my own. The former is from the Furness Peninsula in Cumbria while the latter is on the Wirral Peninsula in Cheshire.*

*2015 has been a busy year for SNSBI. We have reports in this issue from the Post-Graduate work-shop which preceded the society's annual conference, this year, in Norwich. The workshop seems to be going from strength to strength and does offer support to students who are often very isolated. It is important to encourage students to enter our field of study, so if anyone is in a position to provide a little financial support for the workshop, perhaps they could contact our treasurer **Julia Stanbridge**.*

*I hope that you enjoy this issue and will continue to contribute your much valued photos and comments.*

Linda M. Corrigan (Editor)

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**Book early for Maynooth**

Enclosed with this newsletter is the First Circular for the SNSBI 2016 Annual Spring Conference in Maynooth, Ireland. Further details and some enticing photos can be seen on the back page of this newsletter.

Please act quickly and return your booking form as soon as possible to help the organiser to estimate numbers and to ensure that adequate accommodation is available.



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### Postgraduate Workshop: Report by **Alice Crook**

*Photos supplied by members of the workshop.*

The 2015 SNSBI postgraduate workshop took place in Norwich on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March, preceding the spring conference at the University of East Anglia. It was organised by students **Eleanor Rye** (University of Nottingham) and **Emily Penniford** (Centre for Advanced Welsh & Celtic Studies at the University of Wales). Eight students participated this year, representing the Universities of Cardiff, East Anglia, Glasgow, Gloucestershire, Nottingham, and Wales.

The workshop began with participants each giving a short presentation on their research, with time for questions and discussion. Many of the students had attended the 2014 workshop at Gregynog, and this was an excellent opportunity to learn how their research had progressed over the last year. For those students attending for the first time, it was an ideal atmosphere in which to introduce both themselves and their research.

This year's workshop focussed on the reading of documents containing onomastic material. As we often find ourselves having to

decipher historical handwriting, Thursday afternoon was devoted to a palaeography masterclass, led by **Dr. Beth Hartland** (King's College London).

Dr. Hartland provided a range of documents including wills, tax records, and deeds from the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. We tackled these together, with Dr. Hartland teaching us about common abbreviations and formulaic phrases along the way. Overall this was a stimulating and enjoyable workshop, and it was encouraging to see the improvement in our palaeography skills by the end of the session.

On Friday morning, we visited the Norfolk Record Office and were treated to a tour of both the public and restricted-access areas. A particular highlight was the conservation workshop, where staff gave a talk on the methods of preserving and restoring, often very fragile, documents. We were keen to put some of our new palaeography skills to the test, and spent an hour poring over some of the documents held by the archive, including charters, tithe maps, and parish records. *(see photo above right)*

The marriage records of Burnham Thorpe were particularly interesting:



**Admiral Nelson's** father had been a clergyman there, and the young Nelson had been called upon occasionally to act as witness. Eleven-year-old Nelson preferred to style himself as 'Horace Nelson', though his father later corrected his signature to read 'Horatio'!

After lunch at a local pub, we embarked upon a place-name walk devised by **Rebecca Gregory** and **Eleanor Rye**. This was a very varied walk, encompassing names of rivers (*River Yare, River Wensum*), streets (*Finkel Gate* (see photo below), *Ber Street*), and buildings (*Dragon Hall*), as well as larger areas like *Trowse Newton* and *Norwich* itself. We finished our walk at the stunning *Norwich Cathedral*, before heading to





Names Places People

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the UEA campus to join the main conference.



Overall, this was a very useful workshop, with all participants being able to relate to the theme and gaining many valuable insights into reading historical documents. We would like to thank all those involved in the organisation and running of the workshop—**Eleanor Rye, Emily Pennifold, Rebecca Gregory, Dr. Beth Hartland,** and the staff at the Norfolk Record Office—and the Society for generously funding the event.

## Conference report:

### SNSBI 24th Annual Conference. March 2015: University of East Anglia, Norwich.

Report by **Alexander Rumble**

82 delegates attended the Society's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at the University of East Anglia which was a feast of well illustrated papers, many centred on East Anglian topics. The keynote lecture by **Tom Williamson** on Friday evening provided an overview of topography and settlement within the region. The 'River and Wold' model proposed by Alan Everitt for Kent was shown to hold good here too. The influence of river flows from the North Sea was stressed but a broad distinction in settlement character was drawn between Norfolk/NE Suffolk and south Suffolk/NE Herts. and Essex. The importance of heathland as *foci* of settlement in later Anglo-Saxon England was contrasted with the influence of church sites in Middle Saxon times.

Saturday morning was given over to papers on toponymy, initiated by **Keith Briggs** with a number of 'Completely Puzzling' or only 'Partly Puzzling' Suffolk p.nn., the

specifics of which are open to interpretation. Historically significant suggestions included an interpretation of Harkstead as a 'listening-post' on the R. Stour (~ OE \**heorcian* 'to hark[en]') and of Thelnetham and Whelnetham as possibly containing OE *þweal* 'washing' (the latter place being adjacent to Bury St Edmunds Abbey).

The next two papers considered names in other English regions. **Susan Kilby** described a large corpus of medieval microtoponymy from the soke of Peterborough useful, when allied to archaeology and landscape studies, for the study of peasant life. **Robert Briggs** presented a new look at *-ingas* and *-ingahām* names in Surrey, explaining some as containing topographical elements rather than pers. nn.

After coffee, the papers ranged even further afield, starting with **Carole Hough's** consideration of seven Maidenwells in Scotland (the earliest evidenced from 1504), extending the corpus of 21 such names in England discussed by her in *Nomina* 33 (2010). **Graham Collis** then discussed 22 *-ingahem* names from the Lumbres canton in northern France, mostly having Germanic pers. nn. as the specific, reflective of Saxon or Frisian settlement

## Odd Shots:

'Quiet please' taken by **John Wilkinson** in Northumbria, 2015





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there (the earliest form being *Fresingahem* 788). The morning's final paper was (I think) the first presented at a SNSBI conference which concerned names in Africa. **Idowu O. Odebode** gave an eloquent account of several important p.nn. in Nigeria (including the Christian state Jos, from the initial letters of 'Jesus Our Saviour') and also described changes made to existing pers. nn. when twins were born within a family.

The first afternoon session was mainly devoted to anthroponymy within England, although **Shaun Tyas's** paper on available sources for the reign of Ecgberht of Wessex (802–39) was broader in scope. **Patrick Hanks** was forced to divide into two his paper on the mobility of E. Anglian surnames while a cantankerous loudspeaker was mollified, but had wisely produced a very detailed paper handout. In an alternative venue, **Veronica Smart** kindly provided 'the filling for Patrick's sandwich' with her paper on 70 names of moneyers involved in the production of 'St Edmund's coinage' 890–920s, most of them continental in origin.

**Paul Cullen** ended the session with examples of his work in locating E. Anglian locative surnames as part of

the Family Names Research Project. After tea, two papers relevant to Viking settlement in E. Anglia were given by participants from Denmark.



**Gillian Fellows-Jensen** (above: photo by Brian Corrigan) pointed out the varying Domesday status of the region's 'Grimston hybrids' and also distinguished different historical contexts for pers. nn. in *-ketil*.



**Peder Gammeltoft** (above: photo by Brian Corrigan) gave evidence from several periods for the two-way influences on language between E. Anglia and Jutland.

Saturday's last session was dedicated to short project-reports: **Kelly Kilpatrick** on a

dictionary of Suffolk p.nn.; **Aengus Finnegan** on a database of p.nn. in Ireland with a facility to map Irish elements; **Keith Briggs** on a database of pers. nn. adduced in published EPNS volumes or in reliable substitutes; and **Ellen Bramwell** on mapping metaphor with the Historical Thesaurus of English.

Sunday morning began with the Society's AGM and then comprised two sessions before lunch. In the first, **David Boulton** related distributions of E. Anglian settlement-names to soil types, showing that those with an ON pers. n. + *þorp* were mainly in Norfolk and on better soils, OE *tūn* names were mainly on boulder clay, and ON *bý* names were mostly on the island of Flegg. Then **Johnny Jakobsen** described NW Sjælland as a typical East Danish landscape of settlement, making use of two 17<sup>th</sup> cent. land registers and distinguishing *torp*, *tved* and *rod* as indicative of medieval settlements on sandy soils, often at a distance from the parish church. In the second session, **Eleanor Rye** investigated different distributions in England of microtoponymic elements of Scandinavian origin, including *banke* and *klinte*. Then **Edward Martin** described the significance of greens in the



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E. Anglian landscape, being remnants of earlier wood pasture on interfluves and poorer clay soils, as opposed to commons on sandy soils. He also stressed both the importance of the R. Gipping as a boundary (dividing variations in both field systems and vernacular architecture) and the repeated phenomenon of hall + church complexes in the region.



*Above intrepid conference members brave the elements and right they reach Venta Icenorum in slightly better weather (both photos by Jennifer Scherr). Below they struggle up the hill at Eye (photo by Katrin McClure).*



Sunday afternoon, despite heavy rain and bolts of lightning, was taken up by the coach excursion, a circuitous



route along B and C roads to various onomastic locations, aided by an excellent handout but regrettably without a tea-break.

The final session dealt with medieval toponymy: **Rebecca Gregory** on field nn. in Notts., **Kishli Laister** on animals in Gloucs. p.nn. and **Katie Hambrook** on topography and land use in what are now suburbs of Oxford. The conference was ably organised by **Keith Briggs, Edward Martin** and **Julia Stanbridge**.



*(Eye Church, Photo by Katrin McClure)*

### Place-Names in the News:

#### Campaign group's call to protect Welsh place names 17 June 2015

Campaigners against changing Welsh place names to English have warned it could harm local culture. Those in favour of the move argue it makes the country more accessible to tourists. But supporters of the Mynyddoedd Pawb campaign, which means Everyone's Mountains, are calling on the Welsh government to legislate to protect the ancient names. Further details and brief video interview at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-33163744>

#### Bexhill historic charter revives *Wyrtesham* place-name. 5 September 2015

Historians have looked back to an 8th-Century charter to come up with a name for land currently known as North East Bexhill - or BX2 in local plans. The area has been known as *Wersham* and *Worseham* and buildings for upper and lower *Worsham Farm* still stand there. County archaeologist Casper Johnson put forward the earliest form of the East Sussex place name - *Wyrtesham*. Further details at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-34140827>



## SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

### News: SNSBI

#### Message from our webmaster: Keith Briggs

For some years, we have maintained a webpage detailing interests of members (<http://www.snsbi.org.uk/interests.html>), but this in many respects seriously out-of-date.

Could I therefore request you to send updated information as soon as possible? Just a sentence or two is needed. I propose to delete items which I judge obsolete at the end of October.

**Websites** which may be of interest to members:

<http://www.woodbridgewaterfront.co.uk/>

This website is where you can follow some of the developments leading towards the construction of the full-size replica of the ship that was buried at **Sutton Hoo** (just across the river from Woodbridge) in AD 625.

[www.saxonsinthemeonvalley.org.uk](http://www.saxonsinthemeonvalley.org.uk)

This is the site for the Saxon heritage project in the Meon Valley – centred around the Saxon church at Corhampton. Among many interesting items

it includes: *Saxons in the Meon Valley: A Place-Name Survey* by **Dr Kelly A. Kilpatrick**

### News: Other Societies

#### Lancashire Place Name Survey

##### Hole (or whole) House

This is a plea for locations. This is a surprisingly common name and may indicate something special about the locations. The one on the boundary between Caton and Claughton in Lonsdale was there by the 16th century. The same is true of the one in Tatham.

If you know of other examples - particularly if you could supply locations, some information about the landscape/topography and/or dating evidence and so forth it would be most helpful.

Please contact:

Andrew Walmsley

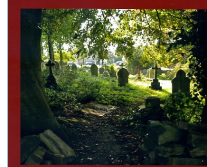
[secretary.lpns@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.lpns@gmail.com)

#### Another odd shot from Northumbria, this one from Ann Cole



### Forthcoming Publications:

#### A DICTIONARY OF YORKSHIRE SURNAMES



GEORGE REDMONDS

#### Redmonds, George.

*A Dictionary of Yorkshire Surnames.*

Shaun Tyas, 2015. ISBN 978-1-907730-43-6  
£49.50 864 pp.

Small reduction in price for SNSBI Members. Increased postage for members outside UK (very heavy). Buy from: [shaun@shauntyas.myzen.co.uk](mailto:shaun@shauntyas.myzen.co.uk)

“From Abba, a northern variant of ‘Abbey’, first recorded in 1570, to Yoward, meaning a ‘ewe herd’, which first appears in 1379, this comprehensive dictionary of Yorkshire surnames contains thousands of entries, all of which are treated to detailed explanations, not only of their linguistic meaning but also their geographical origin and their changing distribution through time.

Each entry cites the sources, and the variant spellings through which many surnames have evolved in the last eight hundred years. The dictionary represents a lifetime of research by its well-known Huddersfield-based author and will be welcomed by all family and local historians and those involved in that grand endeavour, onomastics: the science of name study.” (*Jacket comment*)



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## Recent Publications:

**Rollason, Lynda** (Editor).  
*The Thorney Liber Vitae*  
 (London, British Library, Additional MS 40,000, fols 1-12r)  
 Edition, Facsimile and Study  
 Published: 18 Jun 2015  
 ISBN: 9781783270101  
 Boydell Press, 387 pp.  
 £95.00

The Thorney liber vitae consists of many hundreds of names written in the front of a tenth-century gospel book. It is one of only three such compilations surviving from medieval England.

<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/>

*I am informed that this is published despite contrary indications on the web site (Ed)*

**Cunningham, Bernadette and Murtagh, Harman**

(editors)  
*Lough Ree: historic lakeland settlement.* 272pp; colour ills. ISBN: 978-1-84682-576-7 [Retail: €55]  
 For additional details, please

see: <http://www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2015/lough-ree/>

Combining archaeology, historical geography, history

and literature, this book explores the settlement history of Lough Ree through the centuries. Themes include place-names, mythology and literature, the architecture and context of ecclesiastical and secular buildings on the islands and surrounding shores, demesne landscapes, boating on the lake and modern island living.

These authoritative studies of key themes associated with the historic settlement of this lakeland region are a valuable resource to inform future work on the heritage landscape of Lough Ree and the River Shannon. The book is part of a successful series of thematic essay collections produced by the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement.

**Bernadette Cunningham** is deputy librarian at the Royal Irish Academy. **Harman Murtagh** was a senior lecturer at Athlone Institute of Technology. Both are past presidents of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement.

Includes:  
*The island names of Lough Ree* by **Aengus Finnegan** (DCU)

## Forthcoming events:



*Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant*  
 University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter  
 Dydd Sadwrn Hydref 31 / Saturday October 31st, 2015

Mynediad am Ddim – Croeso Cynnes i Bawb  
 Free Admission – All Welcome

*Trefnwyr y Gynhadledd / Conference Organisers:*

Cysylltwch i archebu lle/contact to book:  
 Jamie- [jamesparethdavidies@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jamesparethdavidies@yahoo.co.uk) or Mark- [markdmatthews@gmail.com](mailto:markdmatthews@gmail.com)

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## Lancashire Place Name Survey 2015 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held on Tuesday 27th October 2015 at Lancashire Archives. Subsequent to the AGM, **Dr Fiona Edmond** of Cambridge University will give our Annual Lecture when she will discuss: *Brittonic and Welsh influence in Lancashire: history and place-names.*

The Annual Lecture (for which there is a modest charge) will be given immediately after the LPNS AGM - please note that the Lecture is open to all. Enquiries to Andrew Walmsley [secretary.lpns@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.lpns@gmail.com)

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.



## SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

### More Forthcoming events :

The 25th SNSBI Annual Spring conference will take place at Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland, 15-18 April, 2016 . The conference is being organised by **Dr Aengus Finnegan**



*St Patrick's College (Photo: Wikipedia)*

Maynooth is conveniently located 16 miles west of Dublin, with a regular train and bus service. The campus is just a few minutes walk from the train station.

Accommodation, dining and lecture facilities will be on the South Campus which the University shares with St Patrick's College, a seminary. The imposing buildings of this campus, with names such as 'Logic House' and 'Rhetoric House' should provide an interesting setting for the conference (and hopefully inspire more logic than rhetoric). A short walk past Maynooth Castle and the medieval parish church leads to the main street of the town and a selection of pubs.

The annual Léacht an Bhreathnaigh/Paul Walsh Memorial Lecture will, this year, be held in conjunction with the conference and will open proceedings on Friday evening. **Donnchadh Ó Corráin** (Professor Emeritus of Medieval History at University College Cork) will speak on Irish personal names.

Other confirmed speakers include **Dr Fiachra Mac Gabhann** and **Dr Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill** (Chief Placenames Officer, the Placenames Branch).

On Sunday, the conference excursion will take in the medieval town of Trim, Co Meath, and its impressive castle.



*Trim Castle (Photo: Wikipedia)*

Contributions are welcome on a range of topics, both place- and personal names.

If you are interested in giving a paper please email a title or abstract to **Aengus** at [confsec@snsbi.org.uk](mailto:confsec@snsbi.org.uk)

### Advance Notice

There will be an Essex Names-Studies Conference in 2016 hosted by **The Essex Society for Archaeology and History**. The date and venue are still to be confirmed but details will be posted first on the society blog spot at [ESAH160](http://ESAH160) Keep your eyes open for news of this as it promises to be a really good event. You might also find other items of interest at this blog spot.

### Future SNSBI Conferences

In the pipeline include:

**Autumn 2016, Study Day** in Newcastle (deferred from 2015) Date to be announced.

A number of places are under consideration for future Spring Conferences after 2016, including: Cardiff, Nottingham, Oxford, The Isle of Arran, and The Lake District. Further details will be announced as and when plans are finalised.

SNSBI Newsletter

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