



Names Places People

SNSBI SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

SNSBI 27th Annual Conference, 6-9 April, 2018, Blackwaterfoot, Arran. <http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/arran/blackwaterfoot/>



By the time you receive this newsletter, it will probably be too late

to book for this conference. However, it might be worth contacting the organisers in case of cancellations at: ellen.bramwell@glasgow.ac.uk

Arran is the largest island in the Firth of Clyde, and is easily accessible by public transport. The Kinloch Hotel is located in the village of **Blackwaterfoot**, on the west side of **Arran**, 11 miles from the island's main port of **Brodick**. It is in a beautiful location, looking out directly onto a sandy beach and well-situated for walking. The hotel will provide us with accommodation, conference facilities, meals and leisure facilities all within the one building.

The draft programme appears on pages 5-6 but please be aware that this is subject to change. Further details of accommodation, transport and the final cost will appear in the 2nd Circular which will go out, by email, to those who have already booked places.

Newsletter NS. 16 Spring 2018

Hello again, and welcome to the 16th issue of this newsletter. As is usual for the spring issue, it brings you reports of SNSBI and other meetings over the winter and looks forward to our annual spring conference, this year in Arran.

*For SNSBI's autumn meeting in 2017 we joined with the **Scottish Place-Name Society** for their Autumn meeting in **Glasgow**. (Report page 2)*

In recognition of joint research interests and of avoiding conflicting dates, it has become our practice to sometimes join with the other mainland British names societies as well as continuing to hold our own autumn study days as appropriate. (Details of proposed venues appear on page 8)

*There has been much activity in names-studies in the North of England with a major day conference on **Northern Names**, in **Lancaster** as well as the **AGM and Annual Lecture of the Lancashire Place Name Survey**. (Reports pages 4-5). It would be good to have more reports of regional activity.*

Sadly, we again have to say goodbye to a long standing member of the society. (page 7)

Once again, I would like to encourage all members to send me news of society members, whether drawing attention to their successes or bringing sad news; and to thank those who have provided photos and information for this issue.

Linda M. Corrigan (editor)

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Stop Press: Last chance to book for:

Manchester Cluster for Anglo-Saxon Studies (MANCASS) Easter Conference, 4 & 5 April, 2018 on 'The Anglo-Saxons at Home' see page 8

Guild of One-Name Studies, 39th Annual Conference, Wakefield. 23-25 March 2018
<http://one-name.org/guild-conference-agm/>



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Conference reports:

Scottish Place-Name Society's Joint Conference with SNSBI, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, November 4 2017. Report and photos by **Jennifer Scherr**

About 60 delegates from both societies gathered at **Glasgow's** imposing **Mitchell Library** on a bright, chilly day in November. The morning was chaired by **Carole Hough**, SNSBI's President and Convener of the **SPNS Committee**, and the presentations began with a comprehensive introduction to **Glasgow City Archives** by the city archivist **Irene O'Brien**. Their records date from the late 12th century. They include those from private landed families as well as a strong collection of local authority documents, **Glasgow** having been the second city of the Empire and the largest authority in the UK. Some early church records were taken to **Paris**, and those not lost at the Revolution are still in the ownership of the Catholic Church but now held in the Archives of the **University of Aberdeen**. Some indexes are now being put online, for example the **Poor Law Records**, which include names and previous addresses of first generation Irish settlers in the city.

Peter Drummond is working

on the place-names of **Lanarkshire**. He explained that Scots names form a large part of the early names in the **Glasgow** area. About half refer to Anglo-Norman landowners; others contain Scots vocabulary terms such as *girth* 'sanctuary', *ferm* 'land let at a fixed rent', or *drip* 'disputed land'. He noted that the **Gorbals** could be from *Sc gorbai*, *gorbel* 'young bird, child', but also pointed out the legal term for corn tithes, *decimae garbales*. He drew attention to a number of ironic or humorous names, wondering whether *Shuttlefield* (of which he has several examples) could be one.



Ian Fraser and Peter McClure, old friends meet at the conference

Alasdair Whyte, who works on the **Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic** at the **University of Glasgow**, reported that there are over 80 place-names of Brittonic, Cumbric or Gaelic origin within the city council boundaries. An online interactive map of these is being built up, which may be available on trial by March 2018. Without many early

spellings, however, it is sometimes difficult to provide exact meanings: for example, **Gairbraid** may have as first element *garbh* 'rough, coarse', 'broad, thick', or 'torrent', or *gart* 'small-holding', or *gearr* 'short'.

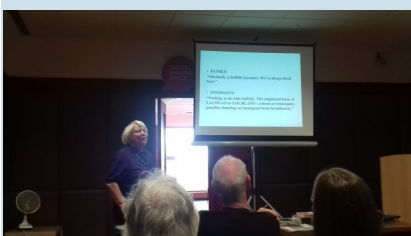
The afternoon session, chaired by **Guy Puzey** of the **SPNS Committee**, started with **Alice Crook** of the **University of Glasgow** detailing her PhD research into the names recorded in the **Registers of the Presbyterian Scottish Kirk**. These records date mainly from the 17th or early 18th centuries and are estimated to cover about 60% of the population, and she analysed 11 parishes in detail. This enabled her to list the most frequently used first names and to identify practices such as naming after parents or grandparents, naming after deceased siblings and so on. The popularity of female names seems to vary by locality (eg. in **Dundonald**: Margaret, Mary, Janet, Jean, Elizabeth; in **Durness**: Barbara, Catherine, Ann, Mary, Margaret). She also noted some alternative names (*Maryann* commonly *Minie*, *Andrea* commonly called *Rhea*) and also some translations (Henrietta or Harriet, called Eric <*Oighrig*>). Over 6,000 surname spellings were recorded. The most frequent was McLean/



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Maclean and variants. She also found the resource useful for variant spellings of place-names, for example noting that Shutterflat was earlier *Shitterflatt* or *Shitesflat*. Any relevance to Shuttlefield above?

Katie Cuthbertson is a current PhD student at the **University of Glasgow** working on denotative naming in Scotland, 1264 to 1600. Using bynames found in the **Exchequer Rolls** and the **Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer**, she has identified 18,000 occurrences of over 5,400 different names. She is analysing these by language and type, including nicknames, aliases, double patronymics etc. The latter type seems to continue into the 16th century and she suggests that one may be parental, the other hereditary. The names in some cases predate examples in the *Dictionary of the Older Scots Tongue*: for example, Andrew *Castelward* 1369. Robert *Laverekedaunce* 1303 may refer to the bird, but if not, the sense as in “what larks” is not recorded until the 19th century.



Sue Laflin (see photo above)

from SNSBI then gave a short summary of the puzzle of her surname. Considered a **Suffolk** name, but with no examples recorded before 1500, it could be an anglicised form of Scots or Irish Lachlan or Lochlann; or perhaps a Scandinavian name. The earliest example she has so far is Thomas *Laughlyn* 1524 in **Boxford**. One possibility is that her ancestors arrived on the sea route from **Aberdeen** to **London**, stopping off at **Ipswich**. She invited further suggestions or information from the audience. A fishing connection seemed attractive. Suggestions included a Norwegian origin – or perhaps Flemish? On the other hand, the spellings with -gh becoming -f might confirm an English attempt at Irish pronunciation.

Thomas Clancy ended the day with an overview of the establishment of the **Survey of Scottish Place-Names**. He acknowledged his debt to **Simon Taylor's** ICOS 2014 paper '*Charting a course through the Scottish Namescape*'. Some counties had been looked at early in the 20th century, and a pamphlet on the place-names of **Berwickshire** was produced by **J B Johnston** in 1940, but the idea of a county by county survey, similar to the **English Place-Name Survey**, did not

resurface until the time of **Bill Nicolaisen** and **Ian Fraser** at the **School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh**. With the forming of the **Scottish Place-Name Society** in 1996, such a survey formed one of its objectives. **Simon Taylor's** five-volume *Place-names of Fife*, latterly funded by an AHRC project led by **Thomas Clancy**, brought the idea to glorious fruition. Continuing AHRC project funding and later the **Leverhulme Trust** project '*Recovering the earliest English Language in Scotland*', supplemented by **Landscape Partnership Schemes** and others, has enabled the research and publications to go from strength to strength. **Bute** and **Kinross-shire** are published and **Clackmannanshire**, **Perthshire**, **Berwickshire**, and **Kirkcudbrightshire** are all in progress. In November 2016, the survey was formally established as a sub-project of the **SPNS**. Now the plan must be to make as much material as possible available online, and perhaps use **SPNS** members to fill out databases to supplement and speed research.

Apologies to any speakers if I have not done full justice to their papers. I do recommend **SNSBI** members to attend future collaborative meetings – inspiration can certainly be found 'in pastures new'!



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Other conference reports:

Regional Heritage Centre, Lancaster University: Northern Names – regional aspects of the names of places and people
03 February, 2018. Report by **Linda Corrigan**

This day conference was sold out long before it took place and drew in academics and other interested parties from a wide area of the North West of England, thus demonstrating the interest in names studies in the area.

The day began with **History and Names: Introduction to the day** by **Dr Fiona Edmonds**, the Director of the **Regional Heritage Centre**. In a wide ranging paper, **Fiona Edmonds** set the day in context, giving a comprehensive introduction to both the study of names and the 'state of play' of this study in the North West of England. She covered the terminology of names study, the linguistic issues posed by the confluence of languages in the area, the resources both printed and online for those seeking the earliest forms of names, and the major players in this area of research both historical and modern. This paper gave interesting insights into *llanerch* names in the North West which she postulates may be the

Brittonic equivalent to Old Norse *thwaite* names and also to the prevalence of Goidelic and Old Norse personal names descending through northern families well into the 13th Century and beyond.

Peter Iles then gave a paper on the **Recent Work of the Lancashire Place Names Survey**. He explained very clearly the work of the survey from its start in 2000. The methodology of the survey, starting with the earliest 6" Ordnance Survey Maps and then the collection of field names from the Tithe Awards was described along with the difficulties posed in both cases. He emphasised the hard work of the many volunteers who have helped with this work but also the amount of editing and rechecking of this work and the distance there is still to go.

After a welcome cup of coffee and excellent biscuits, the morning concluded with **Exploring language and dialect in North-West England through minor place-names**, a paper given by **Dr Eleanor Rye**, from the **Institute for Name-Studies** at the **University of Nottingham**. For the

benefit of those not familiar with place-name studies, **Eleanor** gave an introduction to the construction of place-names, their component parts, the languages involved and their designation as *major* or *minor* and the many possibilities within those terms. She then went on to discuss her study of the minor names of the **Wirral Hundred** in **Cheshire** (as it was in 1086) and of the **West Ward** of the **Westmorland Barony** (in the pre-1974 county of **Westmorland**), making comparisons between these two areas, both areas of Norse settlement, and noting their differences.

In the afternoon, **Professor Angus Winchester**, **Emeritus Professor of Local and Landscape History, Lancaster University**, former **Director** of the **Regional Heritage Centre**, talked about **Field-Names in the Lake District**, and introduced his new publication *Lake District Field-Names: A guide for local historians*. (see page 7) With many old maps, and views of the Lake District, **Professor Winchester** emphasised the need to collect field-names before they are lost, but also stressed their ephemeral nature and their lack of longevity with examples from research done as part of the **Rusland Horizons: Mapped Histories Project**.



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The afternoon concluded with *Every Tom, Dick and Harry: the significance of personal names* by **Dr George Redmonds**.

Anyone who has heard this speaker before will know that this was the perfect way to end an excellent day conference. **George Redmonds** never fails to entertain, and there was no question of anyone falling asleep even though some people had very early starts, travelling considerable distances, sometimes in bad weather. The phrase 'snow on Shap' was heard more than once. In a clearly set out paper, there was: a clear explanation of the change in dominant given names from the Anglo-Saxon period through to the 14th Century; a comprehensive debunking of the concept that the popularity of *George* as a given name was a consequence of the accession of the House of Hanover to the English throne; an analysis of the popularity of male given names in 14th Century **Westmorland** in general and in **Raventonedale** in particular; and an analysis of 14th Century **Westmorland** by-names/ surnames clearly demonstrating the lack of heritable names and the dominance of patronyms and matronyms at that period. Many thanks are due to the

organisers at the Regional Heritage Centre for a great day, well organised and full of interesting papers.



As seen in Lancaster (photo by Brian Corrigan)

News: Other Societies

Lancashire Place Name Survey AGM & Annual Lecture Report by **Linda Corrigan**

The Lancashire Place Name Survey's AGM took place at **Lancashire Archives** in Preston on 25 October 2017. It was well attended and heard reports of the activities of the survey during the year.

The audience grew for the Annual Lecture which followed the AGM and was given by **Dr Charles Insley** of the **University of Manchester**, on **Lancashire before Lancashire: the tenth and eleventh centuries**. In an entertaining and informative lecture, **Charles Insley** deftly summed up current understanding and resources on the place-names of what became Lancashire, up to and including Domesday Book. The lecture was very well received and prompted many interesting questions.

SOCIETY FOR NAME STUDIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

TWENTY SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Best Western Kinloch Hotel, Blackwaterfoot, Isle of Arran, 6th to 9th April, 2018

Draft Programme

Friday

16.00-18.00 Conference registration

18.00-20.00 Dinner

Opening session

20.00-21.00

Ian Fraser and Jake King – Arran place-names

Saturday

9.00-10.30 Hebridean Islands/Norse connections
9.00-9.30 Peder Gammeltoft – Hebridean and Manx place-names in Old Norse *-staðir*

9.30-10.00 Sofia Evemalm – Viking trails: how prevalent are Old Norse anthro-toponyms in Lewis?

10.00-10.30 Richard Cox – The village names of Lewis



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Draft Programme (Continued)

10.30-11.00 Coffee

11.00-12.30 Personal names

11.00-11.30 Sara Uckelman – Revisiting “puritan” names in England, 1550-1600

11.30-12.00 Alice Crook – Abram and Onesiphorus revisited: the significance of surnames as middle names in early modern Scotland

12.00-12.30 Goabilwe Nnanishie Ramaeba – Polemical names in Botswana

12.30-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.30 Source materials/transmission of place names

14.00-14.30 Aengus Finnegan – Decoding the Black Islands, Lough Ree, Co. Longford

14.30-15.00 Diana Whaley – From Achnacarry Plantation to Youly Sike: Northumberland names in the Ordnance Survey Name Books c. 1860

15.00-15.30 Chris Lewis – Place-names and personal names in Domesday Book:

new thinking from the Exon Domesday project
15.30-16.00 Coffee

16.00-17.30 Methodological issues

16.00-16.30 Alison Grant – How do you define a name when the name doesn't stay the same?

16.30-17.00 George Broderick – The Arran place-name survey 1974-75

17.00-18.00 Break

18.00-20.00 Dinner

20.00-21.00 Saints and legends

20.00-20.30 Thomas Clancy – The saint of Shiskine and Lamlash: some problems with names and antiquarians

20.30-21.00 Kay Muhr – Names in the legend of Suibhne/Sweeney (with a digression on church sites)

Sunday

9.00-9.45 AGM

9.45-10.45 Landscape features

9.45-10.15 Paul Tempan – *Tonn* and *tuadh/dumhach*: concealing Brittonic cognates

of Welsh *tywyn* ‘beach’ and *tywod* ‘sand’ in Irish place-names?

10.15-10.45 Dàibhidh Grand – Testing Gelling and Cole’s *hypothesis*: a view from the hills of Berwickshire

10.45-11.15 Coffee

11.15-12.15 Water names

11.15-11.45 Richard Jones – Flood warnings: exploring the relationship between river-names and riparian settlement-names in England in the early medieval period

11.45-12.15 Susan Kilby – The *slydinge watir*: living with water in medieval Alrewas

12.15-13.30 Lunch

13.30-17.30 Excursion

18.00-20.00 Dinner

20.00-21.00 Project reports

20.00-20.15 Postgraduate workshop report

20.15-20.30 – **Keith Briggs** DDD: a new standard for document date description

20.30-21.00 **5 –10 minute proposals welcomed**



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News: SNSBI People

Reverend Brian Coombes

Members of the society will be sorry to hear that in October, we were advised by **Paul Coombes** that his father, the **Reverend Brian Coombes**, had died in June.

There was an announcement in the Falmouth Packet, which is printed below along with the web reference:

COOMBES Reverend Brian Passed away on June 4th 2017, aged 83 years. Beloved husband of Janet (deceased) and loving father of David and Paul. Former Grand Bard of Cornish Gorseth and scholar of Cornish language and history. **Falmouth Packet** reference <http://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/announcements/deaths/deaths/15346019.REVERAND BRIAN COOMBES/>

Odd Shots (sent in by members)



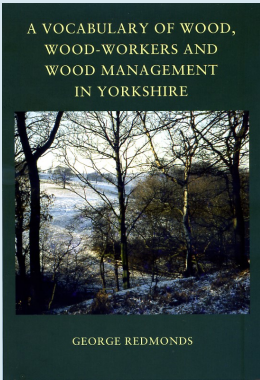
Keith Briggs found this in **Crete**.

The last line explains that the Street-Name refers to the old name of **Heraklion**.

Publications which may be of interest to members:

Recent Publications:

A Vocabulary of Wood, Wood-Workers and Wood Management in Yorkshire by **George Redmonds** Shaun Tyas, 2017, 160 pp. Sewn Paperback ISBN: 978-1-907730-61-0. £14.95. Special offer to SNSBI members £12 post-free in the UK.

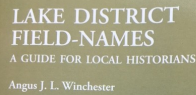


Contact Shaun at

shaun@shauntyas.myzen.co.uk

This book is a collection of words found in mostly medieval texts, like charters, relating to wood, a dictionary, with all **George Redmonds'** usual scholarship and references and also with a colour section of pictures. Very useful for medievalists. Most of the words are not exclusive to Yorkshire and many predate the OED entries.

Lake District Field-Names: a guide for the local historian



by **Angus Winchester**, 2017. £4.00

Available from **Lancaster University** online bookstore

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/rhc/books/index.htm> This booklet is a handbook for all those interested in exploring the history, development and meaning of field-names in the Lake District. It offers advice on the sources to consult to discover the field-names of a local area, and how to interpret their meaning with a view to making sense of the history of fields in a chosen locality. It also includes a detailed Glossary of obsolete and dialect terms encountered in field-names and a series of local maps to illustrate patterns in field-naming in different parts of the Lake District.



Another Odd Shot

Ann Cole and her daughter found this in Orkney. A very narrow passage?

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.



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Forthcoming events



The **Manchester Cluster for Anglo-Saxon Studies (MANCASS)** is pleased to announce its **Easter Conference, 4 & 5 April 2018** on the subject of **'The Anglo-Saxons at Home'**.

Conference organisers: Dr Charles Insley charles.insley@manchester.ac.uk & Ryan T. Goodman ryan.goodman@manchester.ac.uk

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- domestic life and domestic labour; homes and domestic space;
- gender and family relationships;
- royal families and royal homes; representations of 'home' in art and literature;
- monastic *familiae*; or conceptions of homelands and belonging.

Dr Debby Banham

(Cambridge) will deliver the keynote speech

Dr Thijs Porck (Leiden) will deliver the ECR keynote.

Æthelflæd 1100

Conference, Friday 13 - Sunday 15 July, 2018

Tamworth Booking details available shortly. Conference organiser: **Dr Philip Morgan** p.j.morgan@keele.ac.uk

Draft programme includes:

- Anglo-Saxon Traditions of Female Royal Power
- Mercian Landscapes: Past and Present: Conference paper and photographic exhibition
- What was Æthelflæd's Wales?
- Fact or Fiction: Ireland's Designation of Æthelflæd as Queen of the Saxons.
- Interplay between Edwardian and Æthelflædian Annals
- Wessex and Mercia in the Tenth Century: the view from across the Wye
- Bishop Wærferth and the Kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons
- Beyond Queenship? Mathilda of Quedlinburg and the possibilities of rule by royal daughters
- The origins and early development of St Edith's Church, Tamworth
- Æthelflæd and Wales: women and political power in early medieval Britain
- Aethelred, Aethelflaed and the re-making of Mercian rulership
- The Power of Embroidery in Mercia and Wessex
- Mercian Royal Women
- Æthelflæd: an Irish Sea queen?

Welsh Place-Name Society Autumn Conference, Saturday 6 October 2018, Bangor.

SNSBI will join with the **Welsh Place-Name Society** for its autumn meeting for 2018 and will hold its autumn committee meeting at this event.

SNSBI 28th Annual Spring Conference, 2019, University of Nottingham



SNSBI Autumn Meeting and Study Day, 2019 King's Manor, York

SNSBI 29th Annual Spring Conference, 2020, Cardiff

SNSBI Autumn Meeting and Study Day, 2020 University of Leicester

SNSBI 30th Annual Conference, 2021, University of Limerick,

SNSBI Newsletter

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