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NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER

Newsletter July 2007

No 72

Departing from the traditional lay-out, important information follows:-

New Fair Meetings

There will be two meetings:

Public Meeting Monday 9th July 7.00 p.m. in the Market Hall/Supper Room, organised by Mr E Fleming

Meeting of the Appleby New Fair Joint Committee (Appleby Town Council), also in Supper Room, Tuesday 10th July, 2.00 p.m.

Public Meeting 31 May 2007 “From Musical Stones to Dead Cat’s Bones”

Jamie Barnes was our speaker for this intriguing-sounding talk and he began by explaining his role as Curatorial Assistant and House Manager at Keswick Museum. There followed a brief history of the present museum and art gallery, the collections and the building which houses them. Then we got to the main topic - the Musical Stones. Included in the Museum’s collection are 2 memorandum books kept by Peter Crosthwaite and in one of the books is an entry for 11 June 1785 in which Peter Crosthwaite records his finding of six musical stones. The stones were in perfect tune and Peter went on to find ten more, making a set of 16 notes. There had been an earlier museum in Keswick, founded in 1780 by Peter, and he played these musical stones as a way of attracting visitors to his museum. The next episode in the story came in 1827, when Joseph Richardson found musical stones in the course of his occupation as a stonemason. A musical genius, Joseph was a maker of musical instruments and he spent the next 13 years gathering sufficient stones to make a seven-octave range. In 1840, Joseph and his three sons set off with the musical stones on a tour of the major towns on the north of England. The tour was meant to take three weeks but, such was the success and popularity of the performances, it lasted three years. Then it was off to London, where they performed over 60 concerts, including three for Queen Victoria. Their travels also took them to France, Germany and Italy. But a planned trip to America had to be cancelled, due to the death of Joseph’s youngest son and most talented player. The musical stones were packed away. The stones were kept in the family and, after being stored in his Keswick bookshop by Richard Henderson, were given to Keswick Museum in 1917. The Curator of the Museum from 1920 to 1960, Bill Davey, became an expert player of the stones and was the subject of a film made by Pathe News. Evelyn Glennie has also played the instrument. The story comes right up-to-date with Jamie now giving performances. He ended the talk by explaining that the ‘Dead Cat’s Bones’ referred to another exhibit in the Museum’s collection. The bones are 665 years old, having been mummified naturally in the dry roof space of Clifton church, where they were found. Finally, he played the stones and invited audience members to ‘have ago’.

Throughout the talk, Jamie made good use of modern technology which meant that, not only were we shown slides but also, we were able to hear voices and music. This was a wonderful addition to a fascinating talk and a great evening was had by all.

A full report has been sent to *The Herald* and will appear - soon, we hope.

I have a 'hand-out' about the stones, provided by Jamie, and can provide copies for anyone who would like more information. Please ask.

Vivienne Gate

From the Chairman

I am writing this a long time before publication, because Maggie and I are going away for AGES to Canada.

I thought I should pre-warn you about the pattern I propose for the Sundial Safari on 16th August. I would like to show you that there are interesting and historic sundials close to Appleby that you perhaps didn't know about and to talk a little about the variety of these instruments in the countryside. The 'cunning plan' (thanks to Baldrick) is that we use our own transport, sharing cars where possible to ease the parking problem. We start at Culgaith at 18.30 (6.30 p.m. to the civilians amongst you), move on to Newbiggin, thence to Milburn and return to Appleby via Long Marton. We might find it comforting to partake of a small jar on arrival back in Appleby! Parking is fairly easy at most places but it is very tight at Milburn (a small car park down a **very** narrow lane), so it might be best if people parked on the green and walked to the church. It is not a race, so we shall have time to take it easy down the narrow roads involved. This is a bit of an experiment - please turn up and make it a success.

I would appreciate a count of interested parties at the A.G.M. on 26 July, to get an idea of numbers but this would be just a guide for me so please feel free to join the group even if you decide at the last minute.

R Ian Campbell

Appleby Accolades

This edition's Accolade goes to Society member, John Wilson who looks after and keeps tidy the hedges on Banks Lane, as well as keeping benches in good order. There are probably other things he does about which we are unaware. We pass on thanks and appreciation for the care and concern he demonstrates in his quiet and practical way.

History Slot

Appleby Secret Society

The Society found itself in hot water when I coined the term 'Appleby Secret Society' a few months ago. At least, I thought I had coined the phrase. Not so, it seems! J F Whitehead beat me to it.

At the Mayor's complementary dinner in 1927, J F Whitehead made an after dinner speech on behalf of the town's businesses. He complained that the traders knew almost nothing about what went on in the Council chamber. He recalled that Cllr Parkin, at a recent mayor-making, had referred to the Mayor as a prominent member of a secret society. Mr Whitehead, for his part, considered the Council to be the most secretive society in Appleby. (Applause - wrote the reporter.) He went on to point out that it was not fair to the ratepayers if they had no way of knowing how the town was governed. Secrecy had no place in local government and was to be "condemned rather than applauded." (More applause.) As if to underline his remarks, the press report of the next Council meeting was headed, "A Five Minute Meeting at Appleby." In common with past practice, Councillors had simply confirmed the minutes of various committees and then gone home.

Mr Whitehead's words struck a chord and a few months later Councillors spent two hours debating a proposal to change the way the Council worked. Cllr Dawson opened the discussion by pointing out that history and tradition seemed to take precedence over legal requirements. Appleby had

withstood the Scots and survived the plague; it might have been abolished in 1882 but it survived to become a municipal (non-county) borough. The only obvious change was the need to hold elections for the first time in its history. He pointed out that Appleby's committee structure was unique. Committees appointed their own chairman and vice-chairman; they dealt with business in the absence of reporters and were required only to forward their minutes to the full Council for 'adoption'. He read a letter received from the Secretary to the Non County Borough's Association which referred to central government's suggestion that the number of boroughs should be further reduced. "Suppose," he argued, "that government was to ask, "What is your constitution?" only to be told that Appleby had a code of management known only to itself. In such a circumstance, Appleby's days would be numbered. He ended by saying, "We cannot afford to be unconstitutional in our interpretation of the Municipal Corporations Act."

Cllr Bland seconded the motion - he could not understand why Councillors were opposed to open government. Some seemed to be immune from taunts of being a secret society. What would they think if they were reduced to the status of parish councillors simply because they did not like the rules. As an aside, he wondered whether many residents would notice a difference.

Cllr Dawson, winding up his contribution, said he could see no good reason for continued secrecy. He agreed that silence was golden on occasions but ended by saying, "In public life it is absolutely essential that we should not carry it out to a point where silence might become criminal."

Alderman Parkin spoke in support of the motion, pointing out that interested residents often purchased a newspaper to read about proceedings in Council only to see that a meeting had lasted six or seven minutes and the only business had been to adopt the minutes of various committees and sub-committees.

As mentioned above, the debate took two hours and several speakers were opposed to change, usually those with many years service who were set in their ways and did not see how or why Appleby should conform to any rules other than its own. Their spokesman was Alderman Rigg, who said he had 38 years service. He thought, "Any change would be detrimental to the working of the Council."

Cllr Dawson's proposition that the Council's proceedings should conform to the requirements of the Municipal Corporations Act was defeated by eight votes to seven. The Mayor abstained. Plus ça change.

A bit more about the Moot Hall

In 1910 the Council agreed to the Moot Hall being used as a butter and egg market whilst the Market Hall was being rebuilt.

Chariots of Fire (Part 2)

In the previous Newsletter Maggie Clowes introduced us to the Appleby Volunteer Fire Brigade, the origins of which she traced to a public meeting in the Tufton Arms on 24 January 1879. The purpose of that meeting, as you will recall, was to consider the best means of providing a fire engine and establishing a fire brigade for the Appleby and Bongate Special Drainage District, the two parishes having combined for the purpose of providing themselves with mains water in 1875.

Local government in 1879 was as fragmented and counter-productive as it seems to be today and, despite the fact that Sir Henry Tufton had offered a steam-powered fire engine free, there was considerable discord among local representatives. The burning question (pun intended) was whether the brigade would serve only Appleby and Bongate or should the East Ward Union be involved? A rough outline of contemporary local government structures might help us follow the machinations of the various public bodies at the time.

Prior to 1885 local government in the area was provided by the Board of Guardians of the East Ward Union. The Union covered most of East Westmorland and was responsible for the East Ward Sanitary Authority. Appleby Corporation was not part of the Union and was responsible for Appleby and part of Bongate. Appleby did, however, send representatives to meetings of the East Ward Union.

When Appleby was reformed in 1885 it absorbed the remainder of Bongate. The Union was gradually replaced by a new body known as North Westmorland Rural District Council. Appleby, being a municipal borough, was not part of the N.W.R.D.C. scheme but the Rural District Council's headquarters was Appleby's Shire Hall.

The best way to demonstrate the mutual distrust and downright antagonism which existed in 1879 is to reproduce, in full, an article from *The Herald* dated 29 March 1879.

“EAST WARD UNION
THE STEAM FIRE ENGINE
(meeting on the previous Saturday)

Mr Crosby, in bringing forward the motion of which he gave notice at the last meeting, said the question as to what they should do in isolated districts in case of fire, had often recurred to him, and he was sure they would all feel exceedingly obliged to Sir Henry Tufton for the very handsome offer which he had made. (Hear! Hear!) The Authority had decided to accept the offer, and the question had arisen how the engine could be managed so as to be of most use in the district. Different plans for the management might have been thought of by the members present but he was glad to see that the Ward was so well represented at the present meeting, and he had no doubt that they would be able to devise some means by which they could best carry out the donor's wishes (Hear! Hear!) He begged to move, “That the offer made by Sir Henry Tufton of a steam fire engine be accepted by the Authority; that the cost of maintaining the engine be spread over the whole Union; and that application be made to the Local Government board to confer upon the rural Sanitary Authority the urban power contained in section 171 of the Public Health Act 1875”.

Dr Simpson said he should have been very glad to second the motion as it stood, but it had occurred to him that there were several questions which should be placed before the Authority before the handsome offer made by Sir Henry Tufton was accepted. In the first place, they might decide, in the terms of the motion, that the cost of maintaining the engine should be spread over the whole Union; next they might agree to confine the cost to the parishes in the immediate district to which the engine was kept, and finally they might decide that the expense of maintenance should be borne by the Appleby and Bongate Special Drainage District, the ratepayers of which had been the motors of the very liberal offer then under discussion. With regard to the cost, he had been told that it would not amount to more than £10 or £15 per annum, which was a mere bagatelle, and not worth consideration when spread over the whole union. There might be technical difficulties in the way of obtaining the necessary urban powers in respect of the whole union, but he did not think that the Local Government Board would hesitate to confer power on the Appleby and Bongate Special Drainage District. If such a power were obtained in regard to the districts named, the question would arise as to what restrictions should be made with reference to use of the engine in outside parishes, and it thought best a committee might be appointed to confer with Admiral Elliott as to the rules and regulations under which the fire engine should be so used.

Mr Sanderson thought it would be very ungracious on the part of the Authority to enter into much discussion as to the manner in which they should manage the engine, seeing that the cost would only be some £10 or £15 per annum. As far as Appleby and Bongate were concerned, they had already sufficient protection against fire by means of the hydrants connected with the waterworks and, as he thought the fire engine would be mostly used in the outlying districts, the proper course

would be to spread the cost of maintenance over the whole union. He seconded Mr Crosby's motion.

Mr John Robinson said that the offer made by Admiral Elliott, on behalf of Sir Henry Tufton, had originated from the meeting held at Appleby, which he understood had been convened for the purpose of considering the best means of obtaining a fire engine for Appleby and Bongate, but now they were told that an engine was not required at Appleby. He did not intend to move any amendment, but he thought the best plan of dealing with the matter would be that Appleby and Bongate should take charge of the engine, especially as they were about to form a volunteer fire brigade there. It might however become a question whether or not Appleby was the proper place to have the engine stationed.

Mr Boustead rose to move an amendment. He thought that the engine should be confined to Appleby and Bongate, and those parishes should bear the cost of maintenance as a fire engine stationed at Appleby would be of very little practical utility to many of the parishes and townships at a distance. To what extent, he asked, might not a fire rage at Ravenstonedale, Brough, Stainmore, Mallerstang, Orton or even Warcop, before intelligence could be conveyed to Appleby and the engine got upon the spot. A fire brigade, composed of volunteers, had been spoken of; but once establish a master, who was able to pay, and voluntarism would sink into insignificance (Hear! Hear!) - and they would find that the cost, instead of being a mere bagatelle of £10 a year, would be more likely to exceed £100 per annum. He moved, "That the cost of maintaining the engine be not spread over the whole union."

Mr ?, in seconding the amendment, said he was sure that a fire engine at Appleby would do no good in case of a fire at Ravenstonedale or Orton which were the largest parishes in the union.

Mr Bousfield - "Had the offer been divided into four, stationed in different parts of the union, I should have thought that when they came to balance the account at the end of the year they would find the expenses pretty nearly ten times that amount." (Hear! Hear!)

Dr Simpson said he was very sorry to find from the tone of some of the remarks that had been made that the engine appeared to be looked upon as a white elephant and likely to ruin the whole union. With regard to the probable cost, certain particulars had now been placed in his hands from which it appeared that the expenses of the fire brigade amounted to £41 per annum, but that sum comprised certain items of expenditure which they in that union would not necessarily incur, and although £10 a year might be considered a low estimate of the probable cost, £40 was certainly a high one. They might take something like a medium and put it at £25 which, spread over the whole union, would still be a mere bagatelle and they were all aware that the engine would benefit someone. Only a few men were required to work a steam fire engine and, as far as he remembered, they would be sworn in and have to give twelve months' notice before leaving the brigade, so that the brigade would be entirely under their control. He disagreed with the opinion that there would be so much difficulty in getting the engine to a distance - an hour would carry it to Kirkby Stephen, and it might be the means of preventing a great loss of property. He should vote for the resolution. The cost of maintenance would be trifling and year by year it would become less. Mr Pearson took exception to the latter view, and thought that year by year the cost of maintenance would increase. The Clerk explained that the £41 referred to as the annual cost at Kendal was for the maintenance of two manual engines. He had spoken to Mr Story, the wheelwright, who was a good man and he had offered to keep the engine in working order for £10 a year.

Mr Bousfield - "That's all very well at first, but I expect your volunteer fire brigade will want payment before long."

Mr Crosby - "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

The Clerk continued - "The management of the engine will require four men, and it is proposed to appoint a brigade of about 20 men, who will all be resident on the spot, so that there will be no difficulty in calling the requisite number together at any time."

A good deal of desultory conversation having taken place, the Chairman put the amendments to the vote, and it was negatived by 10 to 8. The original resolution was then put and 10 voted in favour of it and 4 against it. The Chairman declared Mr Crosby's resolution to be carried and the Clerk was directed to communicate with the Local Government Board thereon, with a view to obtaining the necessary power under the Public Health Act."

Graham Coles and Maggie Clowes

Current Affairs - a commentary

Apparently I went on a bit last time so I have been asked to limit my contribution to just two pages. The May Newsletter is always difficult (space-wise) as I think it should include something about the Annual Town Meeting. This meant my 'bit' was longer than usual. This caused problems, so two pages it is!

Annual Town Meeting (part 2) 21 May 2007

A dozen or so members of the public, including six members of your Committee, turned out to discuss Council finances. Members will recall from the previous Newsletter, that I had asked for the April Town Meeting to be adjourned so that we could consider 'a summary of the Council's finances'. This was agreed. I was later told that the Council intended to provide ten A4 sheets of close-packed financial details. This was not asked for, nor is it what used to happen in the bad old days. In the event, it was not ten pages - it was eleven and they weren't numbered. The Town Clerk was diligently huddled over her magic machine, keen not to miss a single word that was said. The minutes (which won't be minutes) of the meeting will be interesting as the words, "What page are we on now?" were uttered at approximately thirty second intervals.

The Council had, once again, incorrectly assumed that it was a Council meeting - the mace, which has to be dutifully carried into and out of the room during Council meetings whenever non-Councillors are about to speak, was there in all its glory. Please, Councillors, keep the mace for Council meetings. It has no place at residents' meetings and, in thus parading it, mockery was made of your proud traditions.

A question I have been trying to have answered for over a year was dealt with in less than two minutes, simply because someone else asked it! Its the way you do it, obviously. I think I've got the story straight now.

Councillor Budding is our non-paid Responsible Finance Officer. This is one of two posts which a council is legally obliged to fill. The other is an independent and competent internal auditor. Councillor Budding is not a 'financial officer' as shown on the Town Clerk's staffing schedule circulated at the previous Town Meeting. As much as the Town Clerk might wish to see him on a par with the T.I.C. Manageress and the Public Hall Manageress, reporting to her as his line manager, he isn't. He IS DOING the job the Town Clerk was appointed to do and he does not report to the Clerk - he advises the Council.

Councillor Budding, it was revealed, was appointed to the post on 17 April 2006 - over a year ago. The decision was taken at a closed meeting and could not be made public until the Town Clerk, who was in hospital at the time, had been informed. A question directed at the Town Clerk soon clarified the position. She had been informed in May 2006 - also over a year ago - but, because she is not allowed to see the minutes of closed meetings, she was unable to carry out one of her responsibilities i.e. to inform the press of any decision taken during a closed meeting. This strange explanation (there are other words which spring to mind) is, apparently, the official reason why the

Council has failed in its legal duty to inform us of decisions taken behind closed doors. I seem to recall that Councillors objected strongly when I accused them of secrecy.

We were told that there are five staff on the T.I.C. payroll but only two of them work at any one time. Gone are the glory days when two of them managed but that was before the T.I.C. became a trading post. A resident asked whether the Council's questionnaire on the future of the T.I.C./Moot Hall would have a question which asked whether we want a T.I.C. There was a chorus of, "Yes" from the assembled Councillors. Predictably, there wasn't.

We also learned that the loss of £7106 on the Public Hall in 2005/6 would fall now that the Council had got a grip on things. We were told by the Chair of the Public Hall Committee and she should know. I wonder if she did what I did when I got home - read the eleven pages of financial clutter. Had she done so, she would have seen that the loss during 2006/7 was almost £10,000! One questioner had spotted it and asked the question - why do we have three employees to run the Public Hall? The answer, it seems, is that rents have to be kept low to encourage residents to use the hall and without three employees you could not run up a loss of ten grand! Seems logical.

Town Council supports Prime Minister

No sooner does our Prime Minister declare the British press to be a 'feral beast' than do our Councillors object to recent press coverage of their activities. *The Herald* was singled out for complaint at both the April and June Council meetings due to the way in which its proceedings had been reported. Only problem was *The Herald* did not have a reporter at the meetings concerned (March and May) and the articles appear to have been contributed by an unidentified Town Councillor.

Heart of Eden also came under fire at the June Council meeting, which I attended. Despite being the official mouthpiece of the Council, it now appears that, instead of buying space in the parish newsletter and contributing its own material, it now allows R. E. Porter (aka Cllr Harland) to include his version of Council proceedings. As Cllr Harland is also the editor of *Heart of Eden* Councillors have no control over him or the Newsletter. Perhaps the Council could restore the status quo ante? Just a thought.

Finally, we have the dear old Society Newsletter to which some Councillors have always objected. For good or ill, the Newsletter was discussed at a recent Eden District Council Special Standards Board hearing. Whereas the independent legal advisor, who inquired into a complaint by a number of Councillors about a colleague, found that the Society (and its Newsletter) did **not** have among its objectives a desire to influence public opinion or policy, the District Council found to the contrary. I wonder why? Could it be that we have discussed the District Council from time to time? The good news is that our elevated status has caused the Town Council to take us seriously as the feedback contained in our previous Newsletter will be an agenda item at the 11 July meeting. Hopefully, the debate will not degenerate into the traditional war of words and will be used as an opportunity for the Council to consider whether or not its proceedings conform to the rules governing parish councils. Once they do, criticism will cease and the Society will, no doubt, declare its undying devotion.

Unintended Consequences

A most unfortunate spin-off from the decision of E.D.C.'s Special Standards Board i.e. that the Society had, amongst its objectives, a desire to influence public opinion and policy, has been the loss to the Society of a valued member and our Vice-President. Lance Thwaytes is also a Town Councillor and was concerned that his impartiality might be challenged at future Council meetings so, in order to remove doubt, he reluctantly contacted Vivienne to say that he should resign both from the Society and the Vice-Presidency.

It would be inappropriate to comment further as the dust has far from settled on this sad episode in the life of our Town Council.

A hurricane in a teacup

When our Mayor accepted his nomination on 9 May, “a sigh of relief went round the Council chamber like a hurricane.” (*Herald* 12 May.) Given that the Mayor “graciously accepted” the offer on 14 March, we now have an informal definition of a hurricane in so far as it relates to the Town Council. It began on 14 March and ended on 9 May. Should have swept a few cobwebs out of the Council chamber, although at that speed, I doubt it!

Mayor’s Lunch

Since no one else has done it, I would like to thank Vivienne for the splendid way in which she proposed the ‘Toast to Appleby’ at this year’s Mayor-making lunch.

The Future

And whilst I am in a good mood, I would like to extend congratulations to a former Chairman of the Society who has gone on to even greater things. Keith Morgan, already Father of the Town Council, has become Chairman of Eden District Council thus following in the footsteps of Cllr Mrs Langan, who was E.D.C. Chairman a couple of years ago.

How did you vote when you had the opportunity to choose between Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council as our unitary authority? If only there had been no Local Government Act 2000, which ripped the heart out of our District Council by replacing something that worked (real Chairmen with a proper job and Councillors who made decisions) with a ‘gang of four’ senior Councillors working closely with the Council’s chief officers. All but those four senior Councillors have no power at all and the Chairman even less. Sad, but we were not given the chance to go back to the pre-2000 situation. Central government will continue to centralise. Our future? A non-elected Government Office North West which calls the shots by directing Cumbria County Council what to do and how and when to do it. But all is not lost. Upper Eden will be O.K. Kirkby Stephen Town Council is the centre of a group of co-ordinated Parish Councils; it has a Parish Plan and a Council centre; it has even absorbed Appleby Alliance. We’re in the hands of Appleby Town Council which, I’m sure, will find a way to look after us - one day - perhaps -

Graham Coles

[There it is - two pages full. No room for Appleby New Fair or Public Toilets - sorry! Bet you can’t wait for next time?] - VG’s addition

On (or Off?) the Buses

Appleby and Kendal are Westmorland’s historic capital towns. There is some rough country in between, but right back to the days of horse-drawn stage coaches and wagons, they have been linked by public transport. Five years ago there were two daily morning buses, Monday-Friday from Appleby to Kendal on route 561. Stagecoach ran the service commercially, combining it with school bus runs and mid-day services in the Kendal area. Then Cumbria Education Department awarded the school contract to another company, and Stagecoach withdrew. The best county Transport officers could come up with as a replacement was a 90% cut: a single weekly subsidised bus, leaving Appleby every Wednesday at 0915, returning at 1420.

It has proved popular, routinely carrying 25 or more passengers, most from Appleby, some from Burrells and Hoff. The market and shops are particularly attractive to those who have difficulty walking long distances because of the lifts and moving staircases in the Westmorland Centre; but others use it to meet relatives living in Kendal and in my case to research in Kendal Record Office and Library, where most Westmorland stuff, including the Grammar School Archives, are stored. Robinsons provide a friendly and helpful service. A recent bus survey in Appleby Ward by local Lib Dems revealed a widespread wish for an additional day for the 561.

Cumbria County Council had other ideas. Strapped for cash as ever, last November they drew up plans for ‘transforming’ subsidised public transport on the basis of criteria nominally approved by

the Council, but actually carried through so stealthily that, like many others not in the 'Cabinet', Appleby's County Councillor knew nothing of what was going on. These criteria are basically designed to tick boxes by increasing the number of Eden residents who live within 800 metres of a bus stop, however infrequent the service. This can only be achieved by making cuts elsewhere regardless of evidence of substantial demand. So the 561 is to be axed.

The grounds for doing this are (a) prioritising bus use for access to work and education - something the 561 used to provide until the actions of Cumbria made it impossible, and (b) a rule that small towns and villages only need bus access to one 'Level II Service Centre', which in our case is Penrith. This rule doesn't, however, apply to some places smaller than Appleby: not Shap, Orton or Tebay who would continue to have regular daily services operating between Penrith and Kendal via the 106 route; nor Kirkby Stephen which would continue to have both the 563 services to Penrith via Appleby and the 564 to Kendal every day. Kirkby Stephen people are understandably upset at proposals to restrict their 564 Kendal service to a daily early morning bus plus a Wednesday market shoppers' service; but this is far more than Appleby gets now, and what is proposed for Appleby is no bus to Kendal at all!

In the face of widespread anger and dismay, all this has been put on hold until April, and the County now suggests that fares on the 561, unchanged for the last five years, should be raised in line with those charged on the 563 buses to Penrith; many passengers are, of course, over 60s using free Now Cards, but if the fare they don't actually pay is higher, so is the government-funded compensation paid by Eden to Cumbria. The hope is that, coupled with publicity to raise regular loadings by six or more bodies, this would make the service, at present costing Cumbria about £50 a week, commercially viable. This is a reasonable objective; what is not reasonable is the implication that if it costs the County anything in a few months time, it should be axed. A Cumbrian spokesman has said they will reconsider if it can be shown that the criteria are not being applied 'equitably' – as in the case of Appleby-in-Westmorland!

Andy Connell

Committee Meeting 29 May 2007

Matters Arising from Minutes for 10 April 2007: Memorial Trees - not only was the Committee advised regarding types of trees being planted but a report was given regarding the loss of Charitable Status for the Playing Field - see later article; Appleby Record Society - no longer amalgamating with the Society; Explorer Films - the project is being given serious consideration and a sub-committee is planned; Publications - index of Newsletter topics has been produced. Decisions about which 'History Slot' items will be published postponed until the next Committee meeting.

Reports:

Treasurer/Membership: balance as at 30 April 2007 - £4901.27. 3 new members.

Oral History: nothing to report

Planning/Townscape: no objections to plans for 3 Battlebarrow, property on Colby Lane and Castle Bank. Committee members were urged to be on the look-out for a notice regarding planning application for ramp on the Sands.

Appleby New Fair Joint Committee: information leaflets to be produced. Car parking signs erected, indicating that the police are bringing their plans into action. But no meeting of the Infrastructure sub-committee and no management structure in place.

Shire Hall: clarification of current situation to be sought from Steve Adcock/Bob Mather, of Cumbria County Council.

Cemetery Chapel: concern continues at the lack of consideration of practical matters and lack of definite plans.

Chamber of Trade and Community Association: new officers had been elected and further efforts are to be made to get people working together.

Newsletter: after discussion it was agreed that length of items will be monitored, to formalise Vivienne's previously informal editor role and a 'disclaimer' will be included on a regular basis.

Future Programme Speakers/Visits: 2007-2008 programme still to complete. Feedback from the visits by members of Chester Civic Trust and Sedbergh and District History Society was very positive. Money received has been divided between the Mayor's Senior Citizens' Party Fund, St Lawrence's Church, St Anne's and the Society. Thanks to all Committee members who helped. Fees from a talk on Lady Anne will be retained for the Explorer Films' project.

E.D.C.'s Penrith Museum Review: correspondence had been received from E.D.C. and a response had been sent, stressing that Penrith Museum and E.D.C.'s Museum Service must be considered as two separate and distinct entities.

Financial Contribution to Parish Newsletter: in exchange for production of our Newsletter, a financial contribution will be offered.

Correspondence received: CLHF A-Z of Speakers; BALH *Local Historian*; letter from Martin Holdgate in response to one from the Society regarding Appleby's buildings; Town Council meeting agendas and minutes.

Any Other Business: enquiry from Mrs M Brown regarding town museum; reminder that the Coffee Morning is arranged for 16 June; exhibition space in Moot Hall has been booked for a month March/April 2008; letter to be sent expressing support by the Society for St Lawrence's Church application for funds; request from Cllr Budding regarding records of work carried out on the Moot Hall (known information has since been provided).

From the Secretary

King George's Field

During a telephone conversation in May, Mr Sharrock, Fields Manager, Playing Fields Association informed Judith Sowerby that the Playing Field no longer had Charitable Status. At that stage Mr Sharrock was unable to provide any details and Judith spoke with Denis George of Eden District Council. He confirmed that Charitable Status had been removed and that E.D.C. was happy at this. More recently, further enquiry with Mr Sharrock has revealed that the Charity Commissioners, concerned that playing fields were properly registered, had contacted trustees of some 170 playing fields, asking if they wished to re-register. The contact was made at the beginning of 2007 and the deadline for re-registering was May 2007. The trustees for King George's Field - Eden District Council - replied by 16 February 2007, saying that they wished to de-register with immediate effect. We are trying to find out more detail and to seek to establish whether E.D.C. consulted our Town Council or anyone else before replying so speedily (three months 'early') and will advise members when there are developments to report.

Bongate Church Bells 'Money Box'



This little box, measuring 4" wide x 2½" deep x 2" high, was found at the back of a cupboard at Tynefield House, Penrith by Mrs Eileen Messenger. It was passed to Judith Sowerby in case it was of significance in the history of St Michael's Church. We would love to know more about why and when this box was produced. Are there others? If anyone knows anything about the box, please speak with Judith or Vivienne or any other Committee member.

Coffee Morning

Took place on Saturday 16 June. After a worryingly slow start, we had a very successful morning, making £21.85 more this time than last year. Details: Cakes - £73.10 (+ £18.05); Raffle - £52.00 (+ £5.50); Door - £31.20 (- £0.90); Extra coffees - £2.00 (- £0.80). Many thanks to all the helpers, cake and produce makers, with particular thanks to Anne Crosby who was 'in charge'.

North Pennines Archaeology

An opportunity has arisen for anyone interested in receiving training in archaeological skills and /or historical research or would like to go on a 'dig'.

If you would like more details, please ring **01434 382045**.

Cumbria Local History Federation

Has notified its forthcoming Annual Convention 2007, taking place on Saturday 22 September 2007, at Newton Rigg. This year the event is supported by The National Lottery "Awards For All" Fund. Well-known key speakers will address the practice of local history in Cumbria and its future. These speakers include Dr Michael Winstanley, Dr Alan Crosby, John Myers, Derek Denman, Chris Cant and John Berry. It promises to be an informative and fascinating day (lunch available). Please see Vivienne for further details and how to book a place/places.

Brass and Silver Bands

We have received a request for any information about local brass or silver bands. Any information any member/reader can provide will be gratefully accepted (whether it be narrative, pictorial or musical) by Gavin Holman. Even knowing a particular band existed would be significant. He can be contacted directly at the e-mail address gavin@ibew.co.uk If anyone has information but no e-mail access, I am happy to send off any information. Please let me (Vivienne) have any details.

Reminder about Subs

Please remember that subs are due for renewal at the A.G.M. Appropriate paperwork is enclosed herewith and I would appreciate its completion and return with any remittances. It helps me so much.

Treasurer and Committee

The Constitution states that, alongside the Officers, the "Committee shall consist of at least four, and not more than eight, members elected at the A.G.M." We have four members at present and thus there are up to 4 vacancies on the Committee, and Olive is retiring as Treasurer. This means

we are looking for volunteers. Please can you give some serious thought to standing for election as a Committee member and/or Treasurer. Appropriate paperwork is enclosed.

Civic Trust Awards 2008

Notification has been received that the closing date for entries is **11 September 2008**.

The aim of the Civic Trust is to encourage the very best in architecture and environmental design, to improve the built environment for us all. Civic Trust Awards are given to outstanding projects in the fields of architectural design, landscape, public art and urban design. Entries are invited from schemes of all types and sizes. Work must be completed between 1 September 2005 and 1 September 2007.

Further details and information can be obtained from the Civic Trust Awards website
www.civictrust.org.uk

Next Meeting

Thursday 26 July 2007
7.30 p.m. Supper Room, Market Hall
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Before the Business of the A.G.M. gets underway, Cllr Budding would like to address members to tell us of his discussions with English Heritage about the Moot Hall, etc.

“GOING LIKE THE CLAPPERS”

Speaker - Frank Harland

Following the Business part of the meeting, Frank will give an illustrated talk about Church Tower Bell ringing and Hand Bell ringing. There will be opportunities for audience participation.

The Society's website address is: www.applebysociety.force9.co.uk

If you have enjoyed reading this Newsletter and are not already a member of the *Appleby-in-Westmorland Society*, you could have it delivered free to your home six times a year simply by joining the Society.

A £6 individual/£10 family subscription also entitles you to attend six bi-monthly meetings free. These are usually held in the Supper Room of the Market Hall on the last Thursday of January, March, May, July (our A.G.M. meeting), September and November at 7.30 in the evening.

Application forms are available at the Library.

The contents of this Newsletter may be freely used to the advantage of Appleby-in-Westmorland but, in order to comply with their wishes, the **personal histories** of living persons MUST NOT be used in whole or in part without the written consent of the Society which retains the copyright.

The Appleby-in-Westmorland Society Newsletter is published by the Appleby-in-Westmorland Society and is edited by Vivienne Gate, Secretary, tel: 017683 51597

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter, either in editorial comment or by contributors, do not necessarily reflect the collective view of the Society, its Committee or its members.