

ANTIQUARIAN NEWS

The Society's website is now on line and can be accessed at:

www.sunderland-antiquarians.org

The site has a 'Members Only' area. Access to this will only be allowed by members entering their email address and a password of their choosing. Non-members will **not** have access to this area. Member's email addresses, therefore, need to be collated by the Society to allow access. We currently hold each member's home address but now require the email address. Members should send a simple email with this to the Society secretary: P11cur@aol.com
Please be patient with the website. In the future, it is the intention to have on-line, **available to our members**, a large selection of our archives and photographs. The uploading will take time but should prove worthwhile.

JUNE LECTURE

The final evening talk for this season will take place in The Vestry of The Sunderland Minster on **Tuesday, 9th June at 8pm** (doors open 7.45)

'The History and Development of Sunderland's Town Centre' by John Tumman

This is an illustrated talk and promises to be a very enjoyable evening. Please do come along and support the Society.

FORTNIGHTLY RESEARCH MORNINGS

The Society's archives at The Minster will continue to be open for research fortnightly throughout the summer on Saturday mornings **10.am – noon**. 23rd May, 6th June, 20th June, 4th July, 18th July, 1st August, 15th August, 29th August.

MONTHLY TUESDAY EVENING LECTURES

A printed programme will be sent out to each Member with details of our future Tuesday evening lectures. Meanwhile please note the following in your diary:

9th June *'History and Development of Sunderland Town Centre'* by John Tumman

8th September *'Sunderland's East End Revisited'* by Michael Bute

13th October *'Back on The Borough Beat – Sunderland Police'* by Harry Wynn

10th November *'Sunderland's 125 Anti-Tank Regiment'* by Alan Burns

8th December *'Sunderland in the 1950s'* by Philip Curtis

IS THIS SUNDERLAND'S FIRST MOBILE CHIPPY?

Pictured below, Annie Nord is seen standing outside of her mobile fish van, in Ocean Road, Grangetown. The picture was taken in around 1900 when the enterprising Mrs. Nord supplied Sunderland's East End with fresh fish. It was rumoured that she was the first person to fry fish in



the area, so perhaps we owe her a debt of gratitude for bringing fast food to the town.

In a strange parallel with another of the town's characters, (Tommy Sanderson, who lived in a railway carriage called the Metal Hall), Annie's son George set up home in an equally strange domicile.

During the depression, after most of the family had emigrated to America, poor George was left behind because of his poor eyesight. George and his wife Phyllis struggled to find accommodation, so he employed the services of his ship carpenter father-in-law, Robert Calder, to build their dream home. Two decommissioned Northern buses soon found their way to the allotments behind Margaret Street, and the talented Mr Calder set about fashioning one of the most peculiar des-res' that Sunderland has seen.

Known locally as "The Buses", George and Phyllis soon became well-known characters in the town.

George and his father-in-law, Robert Calder are pictured in contemplative mood outside of "The Buses".

Pictures and information supplied by Antiquarian member Rob Shepherd.

Rob can be contacted by email:
robshepherd1974@googlemail.com



Ed: Most districts in Wearside had a number of fish and chip shops and by mid twentieth century there were almost 100 of them in the town. Then, cod and haddock were the usual offering and before the Second World War a whole family could be fed for 6d when a bag of chips could be bought for as little as 1d. In comparison to the local districts, the commercial centre has always had fewer fried fish shops. By the mid century the popular fish fryers in the town centre were Leedham's, Adey's, Cooper's of Crowtree Road and Silver's of High Street West.

HELP WANTED

Mr Clive Hodgson of Yarm has contacted the Society for help in identifying a building in an old family photograph:



Pictured above is William Robson, a well-to-do timber merchant who lived in Harold Street, Hendon, at the turn of the last century. Alongside Mr Robson is his wife Jane and younger members of the family.

While Mr. Hodgson can identify all of the people on the photograph, it is the building in the background that he would love to identify. The photograph has on its rear, a handwritten note referring to the family at “The Farm”, but that is as much as he knows. The fact that the farm is referred to in such a familiar way suggests that this was not a “one-off” visit.

To his knowledge, Mr Hodgson’s ancestors did not have any connection with farming, nor is there any record in his family history of a farm building or grand house that is linked with the Robsons.

Assuming that the building is on the outskirts of Sunderland – where is it?
If any Antiquarian members can offer a definitive answer, or even an educated guess, then Mr. Hodgson would indeed be very grateful.

Please contact Norman Kirtlan email: forensicart@yahoo.co.uk or on 07765635128 if you can help.

SCHOOL CLASS PHOTOGRAPHS

The Society has in its archives hundreds of Sunderland school photographs dating from late 19th century to 1960s. One of our members, Bill Hawkins, is currently working on these with a view to placing them on our website for research purposes. Bill is now appealing to members for any old school photographs for inclusion in the archive. This would mean borrowing same for 48 hours to scan. All would be returned. If you can help please contact Bill at the Society (Saturday morning research) or email: b.hawkins6@yahoo.co.uk or telephone: 01915513947

MARCHING THROUGH SUNDERLAND

By Sandra Lane

The recent controversy over safety concerns and policing for the Good Friday March through the city brought to mind other parades which attracted many more participants and spectators than the above and which passed off without incident. The following is just one example of how the people of Sunderland have always shown pride in their town by supporting events wholeheartedly.

As early as the eighteenth century, public events such as royal weddings and naval victories were celebrated in Sunderland, as were the dedication of new buildings.¹ They culminated in 1796 with the opening of the iron bridge over the River Wear which, at last, linked the divided Sunderland parishes. As the town and its industries grew, the need for easy access and communication made the building of a bridge a necessity. Ferries had linked both sides of the river since earliest times but were of little use to businessmen of the age such as Rowland Burdon, landowner, 'shrewd businessman', entrepreneur and M.P. for County Durham. He was much involved with 'the improvement and turnpiking that linked Wearmouth more efficiently with Stockton and the south.' In 1792, through an Act of Parliament, he was authorised to appoint commissioners to raise money for the building of a bridge across the Wear at Sunderland.² The river traffic, the life-blood of Sunderland, needed to be able to continue to flow without interruption, so the bridge was designed to cross high above, linking the cliffs. The span across the river was 236 feet, a greater distance than had ever been attempted. Burdon and Thomas Wilson, an experienced local building contractor, decided to build the bridge from iron, based on plans drawn up for a bridge in America by the radical Tom Paine. Hollow blocks of iron replaced the usual stone and the bridge was completed within three years to much acclaim.³



ROWLAND BURDON.

The celebrations for the opening were astounding. The Free Masons dominated the whole event. More than 300 of them met the bridge commissioners, clergy, magistrates, police, officers of the Army and Navy and the Loyal Sunderland Volunteers, to march in a procession numbering around 600, through the town, across the bridge and then on to Holy Trinity for a 'Divine Service of Thanks'. Afterwards, the whole company gathered at the Assembly Rooms for a banquet, adjourning at seven in order to allow an Assembly and Ball at nine. The 'spectators were computed to be above 80,000.'⁴ Unlike the opening of the People's Park Extension in 1866 there were no foreign consuls – Sunderland was not yet important enough to have them – but 'His Royal Highness Prince William of Gloucester honoured Sunderland with his presence and walked in the Procession as Past Grand Master.'

¹ M.A. Richardson, *The Local Historian's Table Book* 4 Vols. (Newcastle Upon Tyne: MDCCCXLI), vol 1 379

² Tom Corfe, *Sunderland A Short History* 54

³ Corfe, *Sunderland A Short History* 54

⁴ Special Collections, Palace Green, XLLL942.81, Durham University Library

MEMORIES

I was born in 1915 into a working class family and we lived in The Barracks at the bottom of High Street. Before and during the war there were soldiers billeted there and they did their training, including gun practice which they did in the 'ball alley.' The barracks were closed in and the gates were locked at certain time so, as we used these gates, we had to conform to those times. After the war most of the barracks were demolished and a prop yard and oil tanks were situated there. The guard house was left and was converted into a three-roomed house, 10 The Barracks, which is where we lived until 1946.

My father was a riveter and I was the youngest child of seven. We also had a cousin living with us as her mother had died young. We didn't have a lot of space and we used all three rooms to sleep in, using desk beds and a sideboard bed.



Sunderland Barracks, about 1937

Although my father had a period out of work I can never remember ever doing without. My mother was a marvellous manager and we had good food and clothes. She was a saver and even bought my sister a piano in Fawcett Street.

I have pleasant memories of my school life. I remember that it was very important to get your good attendance medal and we went to school no matter how we felt. I used to suffer from very bad throats but I would go to school with my neck all packed with bread poultices. Unfortunately I did not get my medal as I broke my leg and had to stay off. However my brothers and sister all got their medals.

The churches were well attended and they seemed to be always open and never locked. After school we used to go to St John's Church to the Children's Corner to hear stories. I left school

at fourteen and worked as a domestic in a house in Hastings Street receiving 5/- (25p) a week for 7 days (no day off) from 8a.m. until 5.30p.m. It was hard work. I cleaned the entire house and looked after the two children.

We generally made our own entertainment. I went to the pictures, the Gaiety in High Street or The Villiers in Villiers Street. It cost 3d upstairs and 1d down. Most of the time, however, we just went for walks in a crowd, pairing off with the boy you liked. Every Sunday everyone seemed to walk to the town, round and round Crowtree Road and Park Lane, but we had a good time. No one drank or seemed to fight much.

Ada

I was born in Sunderland in 1902. My husband worked as a signalman on the railways. He walked to work to save money, the only means of transport being the trams and they were slow anyway. He earned £3 a week. 12/6d went on rent because we couldn't afford to buy a house and there were very few houses to buy. All my friends rented their houses too. The rest of the wage paid for coal, gas, food and clothes and we had very little left to put into savings. On Friday night my husband counted out the wages and allotted money for the bills. He put this into a big metal cash box.

Our house was heated by coal fires. There was a big coal-fired kitchen range which was used to cook food, boil the kettle and heat the flat irons as well as keeping the room warm. If it was cold I would wrap one of the oven shelves in a cloth and put it into the bed to keep it warm. In the scullery there was a big set pot heated by coal where the water was boiled for the washing and for the big iron bath which was nearby. Gas was used to light the house. Sometimes the pressure went low and the lighting was not very good. Later on I bought a gas boiler and a small gas oven called Onward, one of the first gas ovens to be made.

We were never hungry but food was plain and simple. I made all my own bread and cakes which were baked in the oven beside the fire. I bought what I could afford – lots of offal, especially liver and tripe which were cheap but nourishing. Nothing was left to waste. I could go to the greengrocers and buy a pennyworth of pot stuff which I made into a pan full of broth with some bacon bones. I went to the corner shop for most of the food. He would give you credit if you couldn't pay and you settled up at the end of the week when you got your wages. The grocer weighed out flour, sugar and many other items and put them into little blue bags. I just got the amount I needed or could afford at the time. The milkman called every morning with his horse and cart. I would take out a big jug and he would measure the milk from the churn. The lady with a basket of herrings always came too. The children ate lots of bread and jam and bread and dripping. My husband liked suet pudding but his favourite was pot pie either filled with meat or fruit and spotted dick. I made most of the children's clothes as well as my own, except for the outdoor clothes which were made by a dressmaker. I would take the material to the dressmaker and, for a small charge, she would make it up for me.

On Sunday the whole family went to the Methodist Church three times because there was nothing else to do except go for walks. I never allowed the children to play outside on a Sunday: such things were frowned upon.

Washing was always done on a Monday morning. I would get up early to light the fire under the set pot. When the water was hot I put it into the dolly tub and, using the poss stick, I washed the white clothes first and then the dirty coloured clothes. Then they were rinsed, put through the wooden mangle and hung out to dry. Monday's dinner was usually bubble and squeak made with food left over from Sunday.

There were lots of jobs to be done in the house and I was kept busy most days dusting, sweeping, polishing the lino, black leading the stove and white washing the steps. At night, if I

had any spare time, I would be busy making a clippy mat with pieces of rags from old discarded clothes. I went to the library every week and got two books changed. Sometimes we all had a game of cards – a favourite game was ‘horses’ played with halfpennies or matches. When I was first married we had a cat’s whisker radio. You had to wear earphones and play around with knobs until you got it tuned in. Later we bought a bigger radio with an accumulator battery which had to be taken to the bicycle shop in Villette Road to be recharged. I rarely went to the cinema except for a special treat. The films were in black and white with words underneath. Small children could get into the local cinema on a Saturday afternoon to see a special children’s show and were allowed in free providing they took a jam jar.

Looking back, I never really thought about life being hard in the 1930s. I just accepted things as they were and made the best of them

Nora

RECENT DONATIONS

W. Smith	Ward’s Directory 1889-90 Sunderland/Jarrow/Newcastle
Margaret Taylor	Ship Reports 1879
A.L. Colquhoun	Henry T. Fenwick Lease Wearmouth Colliery 1894
	Hylton Castle Estate ledger 1908
	Map: H. Stobart 4.10.1809 Wearmouth Shore
J. Knight	End of War Certificate from King Geo VI
A. Temple	Framed Ryhope Colliery photographs
J. Joyce	Joyce Family Tree
M. Sanders	BBC Songs of Praise – Empire Theatre 08
W. Hancock	Photograph – drivers and conductors Philadelphia Depot
D.W. Smith	‘View From the Foothills’ by Chris Mullen signed copy
A. Charlton	16 files on WWII – 90 newspapers 95 magazines
J.W. Cheeseborough	‘Times Past’ book of photographs

As always, donations to the Society’s archives are always very welcome item. Arrangements can be made for collecting material.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership subs are paid annually. They are £15 for an adult and £25 for husband and wife. If your subs are due in May or June please forward same to the Treasurer, Mr R. Hope, 25 St. Gabriel’s Avenue, Sunderland SR4 7TF. This entitles you to 6 bi-monthly newsletters per annum, a programme of events/talks and a free booklet on an aspect of Sunderland’s History (published annually). There will also be varied membership access to the website in due course (work is on-going on this). **NEW MEMBERS ARE MOST WELCOME** and should send subs to the Treasurer who will arrange for a welcome pack to be sent.

JOPLINGS STORE

The longest established department store in the city is Joplings in John Street. This is the store's third site as well as its third name. It originated in High Street East in 1804 under the partnership of James Jopling and Joseph Tuer. Jopling was from Witton and lived in Manor House close to West Sunnyside. In 1882 Stephen Moriarty Swan and Robert Hedley bought the business and traded as 'Hedley, Swan & Co known as Joplings' at 174/179 High Street East. By 1900 there was a staff of 100 and the business was expanding.

The store moved premises in 1921 to the site further up High Street which had previously been occupied by another Wearside store, J.T. Calverts. For the Grand Opening that year the shop had one of the biggest half-priced sales ever seen in Sunderland and mounted police were required to control the crowd. After 1930 the name Hedley, Swan & Co was dropped from adverts and shoppers referred to the store by the name of one of its original founders – Joplings. The store remained in High Street until the night of the 14th December 1954 when the building was completely destroyed by fire. Six weeks after the fire it was business as usual in temporary premises on the old High Street site while a brand new store was built around the corner in John Street. This was completed within eighteen months and duly opened in May 1956 where it remains today. The store's previous site in High Street was for some years occupied by Bristol Street Motors but this year a new bowling alley and apartments have been built there.



OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 2009-10

President: Mr D.W. Smith, 7 Crow Lane, Middle Herrington, Sunderland SR3 3TE

Vice President: Mr F. Lowes

Hon Vice Presidents: Mr R. Lawson, Mrs C. Davison

Secretary/Web Editor: P. Curtis, 14 Park Parade, Roker, Sunderland, SR6 9LU
email: P11cur@aol.com. Tel: 01915101923

Treasurer: Mr R. Hope, 25 St Gabriel's Avenue, Sunderland, SR4 7TF

Image Archivists: Mr R. Lawson, Mr P. Phipps

Map Archivist: Mr N. Kirtlan email: forensicart@yahoo.co.uk

Librarian: Mrs C. Davison

Donations Sec: Mr G. Prince, 15 St Nicholas Avenue, Sunderland SR3 1YG Tel: 5297307

Membership Sec: Mr R. Davison, 17 Marion Street, Sunderland, SR2 8RG

Council Members: Mr J. Cheeseborough, Mr D. Bridge, Mr W. Hawkins, Mr C. Metcalf
