

FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM

Newsletter No.22
Autumn 2016



This has been a good year for the Museum, with a slow start, but a good September finish. The talks have been very well attended, so much so that the last one on lichens was so popular that I could barely squeeze in!

In August we held our annual tea party at Hudson House. Usually there is at least one shower to send everyone scurrying inside, but this year it stayed sunny all afternoon. Helen was unable to organise it this year, so I said I would do it, and then worried about whether there would be enough food, helpers, visitors to eat the food etc. But, of course, everyone rallied round, as always, to make sure there was plenty of everything, including visitors, some of whom at least must have been lured in by the music of the *Yoredale Strummers*. The ukulele group played three times, and looked and sounded splendid. Visitors dressed in their summer best, sat in the sunshine drinking tea and eating sandwiches and cake, and the garden was a beautiful backdrop to a very successful afternoon. Thank you to all the furniture shifters, food makers, washer uppers, Hudson House staff, musicians and visitors: it wouldn't have worked without you!

Janet Bishop,
Chair of the Friends of Swaledale Museum



The Garden Party - © Sandra Cockayne

A message from the Curator

I can't believe this season has gone so quickly! We have had an action packed programme and lots of visitors which may explain this. We also have some really uplifting comments in the visitors' book: 'A real insight into life in Swaledale', 'One of the best museums we've ever visited', 'What a wonderful museum! Having been walking the Dales this fantastic resource has brought to life the hard won history of this beautiful part of England. The coffee was good too', 'So much in such a small space - excellent', 'My husband enjoyed it so much he brought me back to visit', 'Everything either interesting or beautiful, often both', 'The perfect museum with everything brilliantly displayed and interpreted'. As a result we are feeling very upbeat.

We got off to a roaring start with Roger Preston's opening exhibition of black and white photographs of the local lead mines, which have proved exceptionally popular. Lead mine aficionados appreciated them as a record of the historic remains, walkers loved them as mementoes of their expeditions and the artistically inclined were wowed by their drama. We are immensely grateful to Roger for this display, and for his excellent talk which explained some of his techniques. He has been heroic in replacing the photographs as they flew off the walls, thereby also contributing to Museum funds. Our talks, thanks to the reputation of our speakers, have been incredibly well attended. I would like to thank all those who have contributed to our varied programme, offering diverse and fascinating insights into our local past. The double bill of Roger Preston and David Joy, launching his book *Men of Lead* started the programme off with a packed house. Will Swales's investigation of the life and times of Swaledale hill farmers cast new light on a much under researched,



Two young visitors this summer - on the left is Reeth Milsom, named after his parent's favourite place!

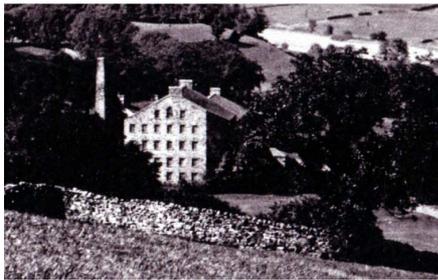
The Swaledale Museum is open for the 2017 season from 1st May to 30th September, 10am to 5pm daily.
Groups are warmly welcome at other times by appointment.



Some of Roger Preston's stunning black & white photographs on display in the Museum

yet vitally important aspect of the Dale, balancing an overview with detailed case studies. It was a knock-out. This was followed by Shaun Richardson's presentation of his survey of the Royal Observation Corps bunker at Grinton. Combined with film footage and comments from those who manned it, the talk brought this period to vivid life. We were lucky to be able to persuade Phil Batman to share his early research on Swaledale families in the 19th century with us, provoking debate on sources and methods, revealing just how knowledgeable and engaged our audiences are. Thanks to Marion Moverley's generosity and enthusiasm we were able to collate a selection of news cuttings relating to the Dales that she has been sending to us over the last five years, to present 'Read All About It!'. Amid the laughter and tears we managed to glimpse the challenges and triumphs of life here in the 19th century.

The now demolished Haverdale Mill at Low Row, courtesy of G E Brown



George Edward Brown revealed the life and transformation of Haverdale Mill, with evocative personal reminiscences, ably supported by Duncan Bythell, who we were delighted to see. We ended with an introduction to local lichens by Sue and Les Knight. We will never view these ancient plants in the same light again. As one of the audience commented the next day, walks which took half an hour now take three as heads are down in appreciation of them. It was a revelatory presentation - and we hope to develop more opportunities to spread the word about lichens next year.

We have also been very privileged to receive some wonderful donations, including the handsome white whole



cloth quilt stitched by Martha Jane Pedley (née Hird), generously presented by her granddaughter Mrs Rowena Hitching and a spectacular arrow head (*left*) discovered by John Cherry on Ivelet Moor, Gunnerside (noted by Edmund Cooper), and donated by Eleanor Cherry. Ed

Dennison has been kind in sending us copies of

archaeological reports his company have undertaken locally, keeping our archive up to date with developments. People have been generous in donating things for the book and gift shop, keeping us well stocked, and enticing.

Our displays have been enhanced this year by the temporary exhibition in a new case of some of the *Big Dig* finds, including a handsome and ingenious reconstruction of a Romano-British pot fashioned by Philip Bastow, which was rather a star of the show. We could barely keep pace with the demands for the accompanying booklet.

This year's Tea Party came with musical accompaniment thanks to the Yoredale Strummers. Photo - Sandra Cockayne



I would like to thank all the volunteers who help us in so many ways. First the Friends' Committee, who not only undertake regular work to keep the Friends going, but also help man the Museum, this has been much appreciated. Your Chairman, Janet Bishop took on the Tea Party ably assisted by her crack team of helpers, with the wonderful support of the Yoredale Strummers, thanks to Graham White. Stephen Eastmead has taken another large bag of photographs to scan during the winter to add to our online image archive, as well as responding to enquiries.

Sheila Barker is cataloguing and researching the Lucie Hinson Archive donated to us by Jonathan Dawson, while Sue Nicholson has scanned important documents that we make available to family history researchers, and our collection of Clarkson's preparatory drawings for the 1844 Tithe Map. Jenni Balfour-Simmons has enhanced what the Museum has to offer by coming to spin, and bravely accompanied me to the Museum stand at Muker Show (*right*), drawing fascinated crowds as she turned flax to thread like magic. We are most grateful to the Muker Show Committee for inviting us along. Not only did we have a fun day, but we also distributed leaflets to so many who reported that they did not know there was a Museum in Reeth!



We have been delighted to welcome a bumper number of Archive users. We were able to put Katie Jelske from Durham University in touch with the Knights in pursuit of metallophytes for her Ph.D; but we are still searching for those who might remember Robert Rackstraw who was evacuated from Sunderland to the Dale, and the

whereabouts of a plaque erected to the memory of Colin Jones who went missing in Gunnerside c.1977-9, while in training for the SAS. His body was never found. If you can help us do get in touch. We continue to act as a hub for local expert knowledge.

Next year we look forward to working with the Young Rangers' Officer and the local Youth Club, and developing new contacts and opportunities to draw new individuals and groups into the Museum. We also hope to be working with the May Sinclair Society on a new and exciting project. Meanwhile the 2017 lecture programme is shaping up well. Thank you all for your support, without the Friends of the Museum we simply could not go on. We look forward to seeing you all in the Museum when we re-open on 1st May. Wishing you all a fruitful Winter.

Helen Bainbridge, Curator

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ADAM BRUNSKILL

This May, my romantic side likes to think I was following in the footsteps of Adam Brunskill, the character from Thomas Armstrong's book of the same name. However the only similarities are that I was visiting Swaledale from overseas and I work in the mining industry. I am not a mining engineer but a metallurgist. I was also not visiting the Dales for the first time and I certainly did not arrive on foot! It is actually probably over 30 years since my last visit to Swaledale and I was happy to find the dale still as beautiful as I remember. It was also great to explore the many old lead mines given my career choice!

I can vaguely remember my first visit when we dropped in to see my great uncle, Thomas Armstrong, at Lawn House in Low Row. I was only three and my mother says that I was fascinated with the toilet and kept going and used up all the water supply! Also on the driveway there were low white wooden posts linked by chains and I sat on a chain and it collapsed as the wood posts were rotten! Unfortunately I never met Tom again before he died in 1979 but I have grown up with his stories. I was therefore very excited to see that he is well remembered and documented in the Swaledale Museum.

The Museum is also one of the best I have visited and Helen's ongoing assistance and encouragement invaluable in tracking down information about my great uncle. I am currently (very slowly) republishing his back catalogue as e-books on Amazon as well as researching his life. Tom was an only child, had no children and my father was his only nephew by marriage. It has been well documented that he was a recluse and that was the case even within our small family. I'd certainly love to hear from anyone who has any memories of him or his wife, Dulcie.



Linda outside Lawn House



Thomas and Dulcie Armstrong outside their house near Low Row in Swaledale. Dulcie was a great help and advisor on all his novels.

Thomas & Dulcie at Lawn House

For those that are unfamiliar with Thomas Armstrong, he was born in 1899 in Leeds and served in the Royal Navy as a midshipman in the 1914-1918 war. Finding the spit and polish of peace-time Navy life irksome, he entered the wool trade but was soon off on a roving tour of the world that lasted several years. After various literary experiments he settled down to write something really worthwhile; the result - *The Crowthers of Bankdam* first published in 1940, which at once established him as one of our leading contemporary novelists. *Adam Brunskill* is his fourth book published in 1952 and based on his beloved Swaledale. In total he published nine books many of them linked to the Crowthers and the fictional town of Ramsfield, which many feel closely resembles Huddersfield.

But back to Adam, the story of *Adam Brunskill* is one of my favourites and hence the second book I chose to republish. Adam, a young man brought up in a colony of northcountrymen among the lead mines of Spain, comes home on his father's death to the little town of Winterings, among the dales of the North Riding. The fells about the town are a warren of small lead mines, and Winterings is still a mining community, though the prosperity of the mid-19th century has passed. Two concerns work the area, and it is round

the rivalry of the East Side and West Side companies that the story is built. On the one hand are the Natrasses, cousins to Adam through his mother, but long-standing enemies of the Brunskills; on the other Titus Alderson, uncle of Cherry Dinsdale, a local girl to whose goodness and charms Adam soon succumbs. When Adam begins to suspect who has plotted Titus' disgrace, the stage is set; sides are taken in the little community and tongues wag; subterfuge and counter-plot get to work. Again I'd love to hear from anyone who has any theories on what and where this story is based.

Linda Bray, Great Niece of Thomas Armstrong

Lawn House Publications, lawnhousepublications@outlook.com



This old marmalade jar was donated by a good friend of the Museum who is a bottle hunter, along with a range of glass samples for us to sell to raise funds. Susan Connolly who bought it in July sent us this photograph of it being put to its proper use – for homemade gooseberry jam!

The May Sinclair Society recently sent us news of the discovery of a previously unknown letter from May Sinclair to the publisher John Lane which has come to light, which is very relevant to Swaledale in revealing Sinclair's thoughts about the relationship of topography and human drama in writing. You can read the story at <https://maysinclair society.com/> under 'Recent posts'.

MEMOIR OF TOM GRENDALE



*Tom & Mrs Gill outside
Wood End, 1940*

My name is Tom Grendale and I have contacted the Swaledale Museum to tell you of my experiences as an evacuee from Sunderland in 1939. I was six and a half years old then and was in the first wave of evacuees into the dale. After saying goodbye to our parents, we children, in great chaos, got the train to Richmond, then a bus up to Low Row. We were all taken into Low Row Institute and the local residents came and chose us one by one. Naturally the bigger boys and girls, who would be useful on a farm, were chosen first, and at the end of the first day there were two or three little lads left. A kind lady, Miss Reynoldson, put us up overnight in her cottage behind the Institute.

The next day I was picked up by Mr Jim Gill of Wood End, Feetham. His wife, Elizabeth Gill (one of the kindest ladies I ever met) and Lenny and Annie made up the family. The house, Wood End, was a typical old Dales farmhouse without, at that time, electricity or gas. There was a dry closet in the field. The only heating was a coal fire in the living-room which heated a big cooking range where Mrs Gill produced marvellous cakes.

Our school, now a private house opposite the (old) Post Office, had two main rooms, one for the small children and a big room for the older ones. Discipline for the older children was fairly strict: the headmistress Miss Mangles would cane the older lads and once, I remember, one of the girls. The girls loved to practise their copperplate writing, carefully blotting each word as they wrote it. The boys only wanted to finish school to get back to work on their farm. Once a year a dentist would come round and pull out rotten teeth, without anaesthetic. I would walk home from school with my mates and part of our way was a flagged path which, though I didn't know at the time, was part of the Corpse Way where the dead of the Upper Dale were carried down in wicker coffins to the church at Grinton (this stopped in about 1580 when a church was built at Muker).

The village was very lively at the end of 1939 with the flood of evacuees. However, a fortnight after evacuation day, the parents came to visit and a lot of the children went home with them. As time passed more and more left and after a couple of years I was the only one left in Low Row. I didn't see much of my parents since my Dad was in the Army and I saw him perhaps twice in five years. In 1944 he was a complete stranger to me.

I soon settled in at school and became almost a Dales lad. The accent then was much stronger but I soon picked it up. I made some good friends – my best friend was Charlie Spensley who lived at Kearton. Others were Mark Alderson, whose father was gamekeeper, Norman Hird of Smarber, and Alf Petty. I remember also Mary Petty, Colin Hird, Edmund Coates, Raymond Alderson, Dorothy Laws and many others. Two other boys, evacuated there with their parents, were Fred Womersley and Kenneth Bastin.

In 1940 Lenny was taken into the Army despite being in a reserved occupation. His departure meant that we were short-handed on the farm and I had to pitch in and do my share of the work. I remember in particular Double Summer Time when we would work in the hayfields until about 11pm until the light went. Modern folk, and especially those in the South, cannot conceive of how hard life was for a hill farmer. There were no such things as holidays: cattle had to be milked, fed and watered every day, no matter what the weather. We had some quite scattered barns – one was at Blades – and the winters were hard in the 1940's and I have seen Mr Gill set off hip-deep in snow with a back-can on his back to carry the milk home. We had then, of course, no tractors and worked with two horses.

There were only one or two cars in the dale then: one belonged to Ernest Bagshaw and, I think, one to James Coates who had a shop. The Post Office was run by Mr Gill's father William Gill, then later by his daughter Margaret, a lovely lady who was very kind to me. Margaret was married to Ernest Bagshaw who was a funeral director. The Post Office was also a shop and there was a newsagent in the Old Dairy, run by, I think, Mrs Sunter.

I often look at Sandra Woods' book *Swaledale-The Spirit Speaks Loud* book 1. On the first plate, showing the meeting of the hounds, I am one of the four boys behind the man with the whip, the boy on the right with the cap. We had a happy time as children in the dale. We would go bird-nesting (frowned on nowadays) or collecting conkers, having massive snowball fights, filling the girls' wellingtons with snow. We would go exploring in the ruins of the Old Gang mine, and play in the Swale. A wonderful childhood!

I took the 11-plus in 1944, the only one in the school to do so that year. The invigilator was the parson of the Congregational Chapel, which the Gills were devout members of. We used to go every Sunday evening, passing the Methodist Church en route. I always thought their hymns were much livelier than ours. I remember Mr John George Brown devoted a lot of time to the Chapel and kept it in good order. After passing the 11-plus I went back to Sunderland which was a huge culture shock, after the peace of the dales. When I went to Bede Grammar School my broad accent stood out – however children soon adapt.

After the war I used to go back each year to stay at Wood End and help with the haymaking. That went on until I joined the Army at 18. I learnt Russian in the Army, though it hasn't been much use to me since! In 1953 I went to Cambridge, to Trinity College, to read Economics, and I worked in the City of London until early retirement in 1990. I married Alma, also from Sunderland, in 1956. We have three children and five grandchildren. It has been a long trail from Wood End. I was lucky to have such a life-changing experience, to be accepted into a happy family and to live for a few short years in one of the most beautiful spots in England. I miss it still.

Tom Grendale, Ingatestone, Essex



*Tom & grand daughter
Beth in Paris 2013*

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Today, 22 July 2016, I visited the Swaledale Museum in Reeth for the first time in, probably, 35 years! What a pleasure it was, and so different to my last visit with a bright and airy feel, clearly laid out displays and information boards and welcoming and knowledgeable curators. The exhibits, the photographs, the life stories and the whole history of the dale were there to clearly follow and understand, and all for a modest £3 admission charge.

However the greater experience for me was a personal one, as someone who was born in Reeth and recognised some of the places and characters on display. I was born in Reeth, at Harker View, in a January blizzard in 1959 when the weather was too bad to get to hospital. I was the third of three sons and although we moved away to the West Riding in 1960 I have returned many times over the years, to Richmond (my mother Nancy's home town), Reeth and Arkengarthdale/Swaledale generally. My grandparents Tom and Ellen Gill (nee Hird) ran Heather Café on High Row with my aunt Betty for many years and it was wonderful to look back at old photos and references to them and the extended family. There is no shortage of Hirds hereabouts!

The salvaged posters of 'Grand Pantomimes' by the Reeth Wesley Guild and the newspaper reviews of them were particularly special. Reading of my dad, Robert Gill's, performances with his best mate Handley Burton and seeing his name on the posters as somewhere to buy tickets was very moving. I always knew that the W in R W Gill was Wharton but at the museum I could read about the Whartons as well as seeing a picture, in later life, of Handley Burton, someone I met many times. What the Swaledale Museum is undertaking should never be under-estimated and I commend anyone with an interest in the dale, or social history generally, to pay a visit at the earliest opportunity.

Stephen Gill, Skipton.

Currently on holiday at Moor Edge, CB Terrace thanks to my cousin Cathy Lawday.

A HISTORY OF CB YARD

Compiled by
CATHY LAWDAY



And by coincidence, around the same time, Cathy Lawday sent us her published findings on CB Yard, partly researched from the Museum Archive. The book is now in our library. It includes chapters on mining and the mine owners, the development, houses and inhabitants of CB Yard, and information about the Hird family as well as a family tree.

REETH BRASS BAND IN ITS EARLY DAYS

In the mid 19th century, there were 1,000 lead miners living in Reeth. Music was an important part of life as much then as it is today. It is thought that there would be a brass band in Reeth right back to that time. Evidence to support the fact has been discovered in a newspaper report from 1935 (kindly provided by Mrs. Jennifer Kendall). The headline shows 'The ups and downs of Reeth Brass Band'. This article indicates that the band was reformed for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations on 22nd June 1897, 'after a break of eight years'. The newspaper account also states that, 'The date of origin must be far back in antiquity; certainly it was in being upwards of a hundred years ago'. This would indicate that the band existed at the height of lead mining activity in the area during the mid 1800s. The photograph reproduced here has been extracted from the article and shows 'a photograph of the band in its early days'.

Further information has now come to light from the archives of the *Teesdale Mercury* relating to performances by Reeth Brass Band during the period 1865 to 1874. Permission to publish these details has been kindly granted by the Editor and they are noted below:-

14 June 1865 - *Temperance Gala at Raby - On Whit Tuesday*

In Raby Park the sight was very grand. There was Reeth Brass Band (kindly lent by Mr Robinson) present.

16 April 1873 - *Reeth Wesleyan Anniversary*

The anniversary of Reeth Wesleyan Sunday School was held on Good Friday. The Reeth Brass Band played several tunes on the Green.

28 May 1873 - *Gainford - Templars and Foresters annual demonstration*

Various lodges will march in procession, at 1.30 from the railway station to the gala-field, headed by the celebrated Reeth Brass Band. The band afterwards performs selections of music.

11 June 1873 - *The Good Templars of Barnard Castle* held their first anniversary on Whit-Thursday. At one o'clock the procession started from the 'Hope of Teesdale' Lodge room, in Hall-street, in the following order; The Reeth Brass Band; the officers and members of the Hope of Teesdale Lodge, ... On reaching the Park at Startforth, a concert was given by 200 juvenile singers. The Reeth Brass Band then again took up the music, and played a series of popular airs in excellent style.

27 May 1874 - *Whit-Monday at Barnard Castle*

The Good Templars held their second annual gala in the park at Startforth Hall. They assembled at the Music Hall, and walked in procession to Startforth. The Reeth Brass Band headed the procession.

Irwin Blenkiron,

Chairman, Reeth Brass Band



The band are actively researching their history. If you have any early photos or can shed any further light on the origins of the band please do get in touch either via the Museum or through their website: <http://www.reethbrassband.co.uk/> where you can also get a better look at this picture amongst many others.

Friends' Programme of Talks 2017
All to be held in the Museum at 7.30pm

Please note that other events will be added before the Spring Newsletter

Wednesday 17th May

Friends of the Swaledale Museum AGM at **6.30 pm**
 followed by a Fine Art Auction

Wednesday 31st May

Jane Giscombe and Alan Argent
 'Non Conformist Chapels in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale
 from the Christopher Stell Archive at Dr Williams's
 Library'

Wednesday 7th June

Keith Sweetmore,
 Engagement Officer North, The National Archives
 'The Train That Never Came - attempts to bring the
 railway to Swaledale'

Wednesday 21st June

Richard Lamb,
 'The Anatomy of Yorkshire Lead Smelting Mills including
 the special case of Grinton Mill'. (plus walk/tour of
 Marrick High and Low Smelting Mills - date tbc)

Wednesday 12th July

Ruth Rising, North Yorkshire County Record Office,
 'Grounds for Appeal: the secret stories of First World War
 conscription - the military appeal tribunals relating to
 Swaledale and Arkengarthdale'

Wednesday 16th August

Tim Laurie
 'The Ancient Woodlands of Swaledale'

COST: £3 for Friends and £4 for Visitors.
 More information: 01748 884118
 museum.swaledale@btinternet.com

Please watch the local press & posters for occasional
 alterations to time/date &, if coming from a distance,
please check with the Museum before setting off.
Advance booking recommended .



Mystery Object

As most of you probably recognised,
 last issue's object (*below*) was a pastry
 cutter made by Cuthbert Croft of Reeth
 and donated by Mr and Mrs Bastow for
 whom it was made. The next one is 3
 feet high and was bought at an auction
 with a load of other gardening tools by
 one of our members. Any suggestions?



In the Spring Newsletter we printed
 a scan of David Clayton's
 Richmond to Keld bus ticket from
 the mid 1960s and wondered who
 else might have similar items of
 'ephemera' hidden away. The
 answer wasn't hard to find!



One of our members, Alan
 Thorogood, came up with this
 Percival's ticket from a family holiday in 1962 and a complete
 Percival's timetable from his first independent holiday in Swaledale in
 1968 when he remembers staying at Grinton and Keld Youth Hostels.

Alan's diary also records the fares, including a train journey from
 Darlington to Richmond for a mere 2/6d! In comparison 1/10d for the
 bus from Richmond to Grinton seems quite expensive. Reeth to
 Gunnerside was 1/7d, as was Gunnerside to Richmond. At the end of
 Alan's holiday he paid 3/9d for the bus all the way from Keld to
 Richmond – those were the days!

Tom Carter visited the Museum in 2003
 and noticed the photo of Hannah Buxton
 who died in the Wisconsin village where
 his father, Jim, grew up. A few months ago
 they located her grave and kindly took this
 photo for the Museum.



Tom writes: 'She is buried in Providence
 Cemetery, Jefferson Road, Benton
 Wisconsin. If you go to findagrave.com
 you can find her by clicking on 'Find all
 interments' and scrolling down to her
 name. There are a few photos and
 information about what is written on the
 stone.

...This was after going through a family
 history my dad researched. My father, Jim
 Carter, started a family history about 20
 years ago. His mother's side came from Ireland and his father's from
 North Yorkshire (Swaledale). Both sides emigrated to Southwest
 Wisconsin because of the lead and zinc deposits that were found in the
 early 1800s. The Wisconsin State Flag has a lead miner as one of its
 features. Yorkshire and Cornwall are the areas listed on most of the
 headstones for the English folks.

The area looks much like Ireland and England, with rolling hills,
 green grass, farmers' fields etc. I have been to Ireland and Great
 Britain and it looks just like where Hannah is buried and where I grew
 up (a town in Lafayette County named Blanchardville). The cemetery
 no longer has a church next to it but is in a pretty spot on a hillside in
 the country (between Benton and Hazel Green, WI), with corn and
 alfalfa fields around. One could see how it would remind them of
 where they came from. Lafayette County is very rural, mostly
 farming and cheese factories. (Mining ended in the 1940s - 1950s).

CORRECTION

In the Spring newsletter article 'Some Memories of the Upper Dale'
 we said that Guildy Hall at Muker belonged to a Miss Adlin. We now
 know that this should have read Miss Aslin. Many thanks to Jocelyn
 Campbell for pointing this out.

KNITTING CAFE & CRAFT GROUP

Not just for Knit Wits! All sorts of crafts have been turning up so bring along whatever you're into. Everyone welcome, all at 2pm on
 Thursdays in a number of venues around Reeth throughout the year. For details of dates & venues please contact Christine Price
 ewellprice@hotmail.co.uk or 01748-884406.