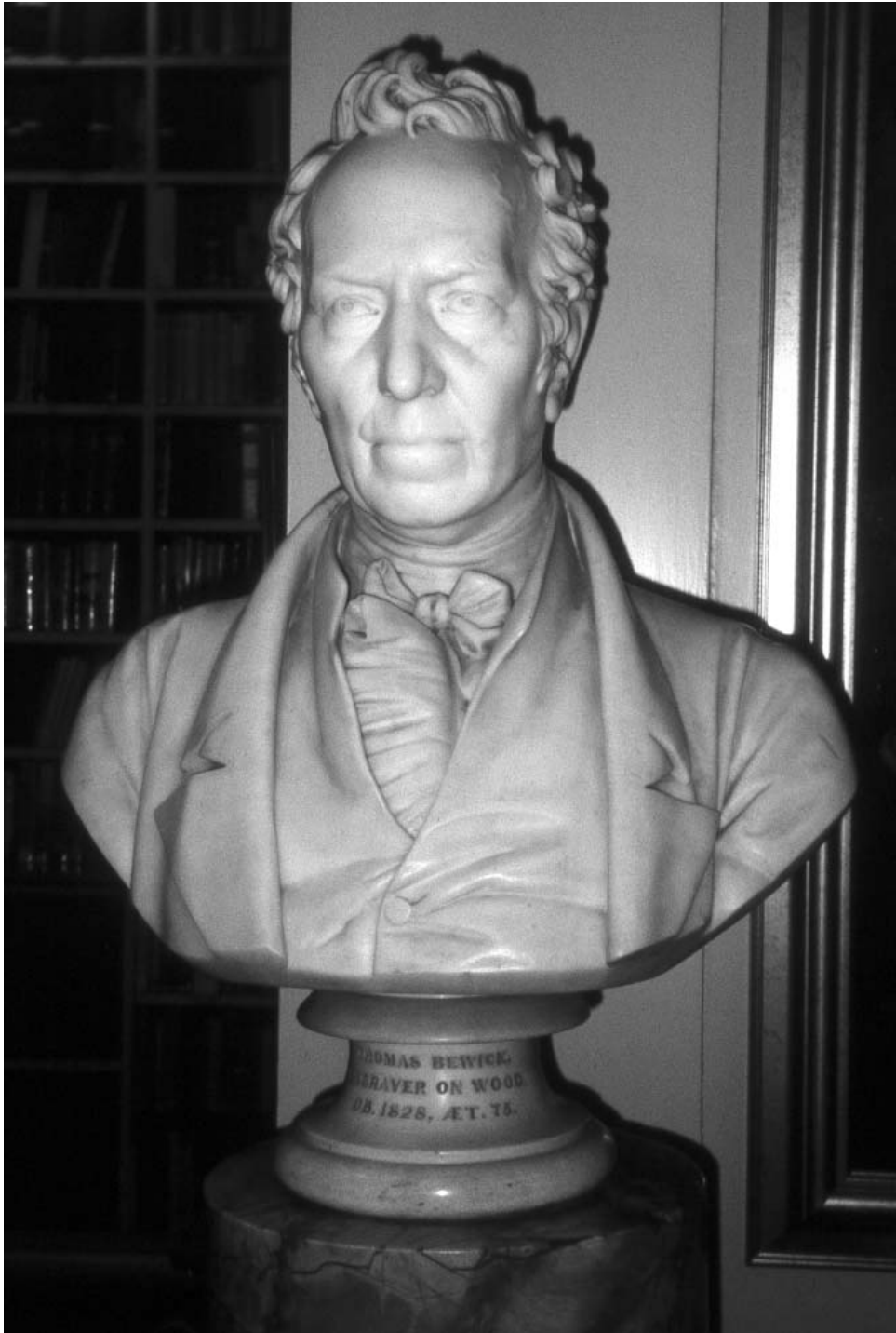


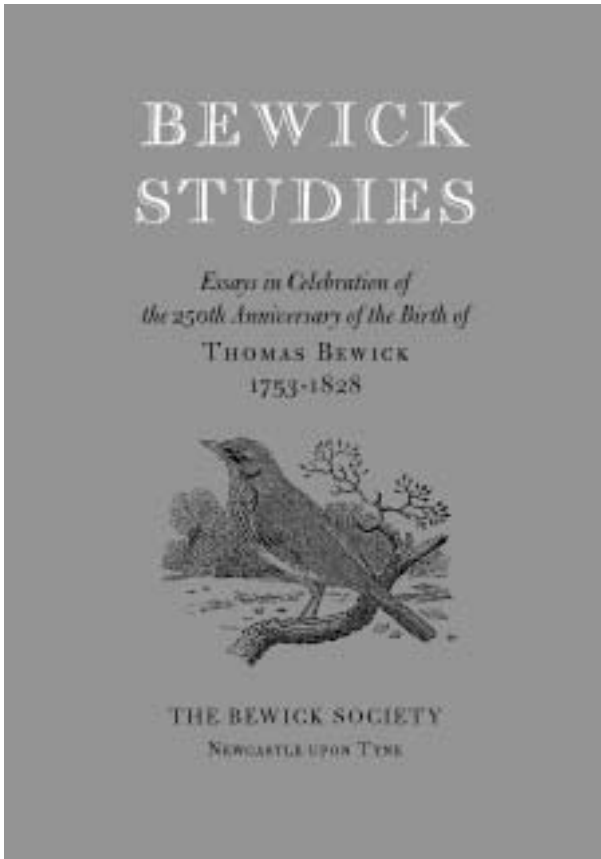


CHERRYBURN TIMES

The Newsletter of The Bewick Society



THOMAS BEWICK'S 250TH BIRTHDAY



Members of the Society may be surprised, but we trust they will be pleased, to receive, *gratis*, almost simultaneously with this issue an unheralded copy of *Bewick Studies*. Unheralded, that is, in the short term although something of the sort has been intended and rumoured for half a decade. The original idea was for the Society to launch a fine art periodical with an emphasis on Bewick. A generous grant from Kerr-McGee North Sea (UK) Ltd was secured and a few papers were submitted. Much debate and oscillating enthusiasm followed. The Thomas Bewick 250th anniversary gave a new perspective and in February 2003 the decision was made to publish instead a single volume as part of the Society's celebrations of the occasion, perhaps as a bumper issue of *Cherryburn Times*. The yellowing papers were unearthed and given new life. Others were promised and delivered. Then the situation was transformed again by a generous offer by Iain Bain to design and typeset the volume. This gave the prospect of paperback volume of a standard we could not otherwise have hoped to achieve. The eight encouragingly scholarly chapters were put together and then Iain negotiated two further splendid improvements. An additional grant from Kerr-McGee made it possible to bind it in hard covers with a dust jacket and coloured frontispiece, and a discussion with the British Library resulted in the collaboration of the BL in this country and of Oak Knoll Press in North America as joint publishers and distributors, thus securing the funding and relieving the Society of the more tedious aspects of selling and distributing the book. The result is a volume which we hope will please members, reward the longsuffering authors for their efforts, and prove a worthy tribute to Bewick. Bibliomanes (he was one himself) may wish to know that 700 copies have been printed, 500 for commercial sale and 200 for the Society. The covers and title pages (only) differ but so will the price – a few remaining copies of our version will be available to members for £20 plus postage; the shops will probably ask £25.

Newcastle Walkabouts

In May and June 2003 David Gardner-Medwin led groups of Bewick enthusiasts on city-centre walkabouts visiting locations with strong Bewick connections.



The May event was almost rained off. Here are a few stalwarts standing in front of the Bewick Memorial bust on the side of Milburn House, Amen Corner (behind St Nicholas' Cathedral). The bust was erected in 1905, when Milburn House was completed, as this was the site of Thomas Bewick's workshop. The whole area had been demolished to make way for the new building.



In June, with much better weather, this larger group are seen at the other end of Amen Corner between the Cathedral and the Side, a few yards away from the site of Bewick's workshop. They are attentive to their guide.



The same group in the churchyard of St John's (corner of Westgate Road and what is now Grainger Street). Thomas Bewick and his family regularly attended this church, one of the four parish churches in the city at the time (including St Nicholas', which was not a cathedral until sixty years after Bewick's death).

Anniversary Editorial

The 250th Anniversary Year now drawing to a close was always going to be special for the Bewick Society, and so it turned out. It has seen a string of events that have brought the name and achievements of Thomas Bewick and his workshop into ever greater renown. These have involved Newcastle University's Hatton Gallery, the Laing Art Gallery, the Discovery Museum, Newcastle City Library, Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum, Northumbria University, the Literary and Philosophical Society, the Hancock Museum, the Natural History Society of Northumbria, Saint John's Church Westgate Road, the Tourist Information Centre, and last but not least, Cherryburn itself, with the National Trust which now owns and manages it. Let us look at just some of these events, in the order they happened through the year.

First, on January 10th, a Bewick Society site was established on the World Wide Web, hosted by the University of Newcastle. This has already had a notable effect in recruiting new members, and many people have taken the opportunity offered to communicate with us electronically. The site is not yet complete – indeed, it may never be finished, since we can see ways to expand it in every direction. It included a special 'page' supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund announcing all the thirty-two events planned for the Anniversary year, with details to help people to locate and attend. ('Page' here refers to a section of a website; when printed out it may in fact be several, even many, pages long.) If any members or readers of this newsletter still don't know how to get to this website on computers with internet connection, its URL ('address') is www.bewicksociety.org

Secondly, a major Exhibition of all the portraits of Bewick, 'The Many Faces of Bewick', was held from July to October at the Hancock Museum in Newcastle, curated by June Holmes of the Natural History Society, which has significant holdings of Bewick materials. As far as we know, this was the first time ever that all the known portraits had come together in one place.

Thirdly, the President of the Society, Dr Frank Atkinson, with the Chairman, Hugh Dixon, steered through the production of a thirty-minute videotape programme about Bewick, written and presented by John Grundy, who is well known as a television presenter of cultural history programmes. It was directed by Paul Paxton and produced by Roger Burgess. This videotape was sponsored by both the Bewick Society and the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is available from the Society at a specially low subsidised price.

Fourthly, on 9th and 10th August, the birthday weekend, Cherryburn organised a series of celebratory events for all comers, with demonstrations of various rustic arts familiar to Bewick, and other specialist arts connected to the book trade, including bookbinding; musical performance with the Northumbrian small pipes (at which Bewick's son Robert was a skilled performer, much encouraged by his father); talks and discussions with Bewick experts; and special birthday cakes ceremoniously cut by Iain Bain (of whom more below),

Hugh Dixon, and a descendant of Bewick's. The Society is specially grateful to Stuart Thirkell, who manages Cherryburn for the Trust, for all his work and effort in co-ordinating this event, which attracted more than two thousand visitors. We include two pages of photographs in this issue.

Fifthly, August also saw the unveiling of the bronze Chillingham Bull in Bewick Street, Newcastle upon Tyne. Two pages of photographs showing the unveiling ceremony are also included in this issue. But the photographs cannot show the interesting background to this work. It did not start out as an anniversary event at all. It was actually part of the 'Grainger Town Project', an initiative of the City Council attempting since 1991 to revitalise the city centre by recognising the great achievements of Richard Grainger in building a major section of the city. The Grainger Town Partnership created a sub-group to consider a variety of landmarks and David Gardner-Medwin represented the Society on this group. He pressed for the Bull as the most appropriate signal of Bewick's fame and other points too, such as the naming of Thomas Bewick Square. The achievement of the bronze Bull owes much to the designer Sarah Carr and the bronze caster Stewart Stoneham, working nearly one hundred miles apart, but closely engaged with the technical demands of the project. It is anchored firmly in place with forty hidden stainless steel bolts and will certainly remain as a permanent pavement memorial to Bewick.

Sixthly, Northumbria University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Laws on Iain Bain in recognition of his work in retrieving Bewick and his work from the various doldrums he had fallen into in the middle of the twentieth century. The details of the citation need not be given here because it is printed in its entirety on page eight of this issue. This award did not only coincide with the Anniversary, but with the next item too, providing together a great climax to the year's celebrations.

Seventhly, the Bewick Society is publishing at the same time as this issue of the newsletter a special volume of Bewick Studies, about which members will read more in the page opposite, so it need not be repeated. The note mentions Iain Bain's extraordinary work in typesetting the book, alone, covering every aspect of its visual presentation in both words and pictures – a considerable technical and aesthetic feat. The note was written by David Gardner-Medwin, and so we need not be surprised that he fails to mention himself. However, we cannot be so bashful. We think this hard labour over a whole year in editing and proofreading this significant contribution to our knowledge of Bewick is a major achievement, performed (like Iain Bain) for no reward other than the pleasure of working on a meaningful project. The Bewick Society is deeply grateful that he stepped in and steered this whole project through all the difficulties and indeed agonies of book production, with positively professional aplomb.

These seven highlights, among the many celebratory events of the year, have done much to establish Thomas Bewick's fame on a new footing.

250TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT CHERRYBURN



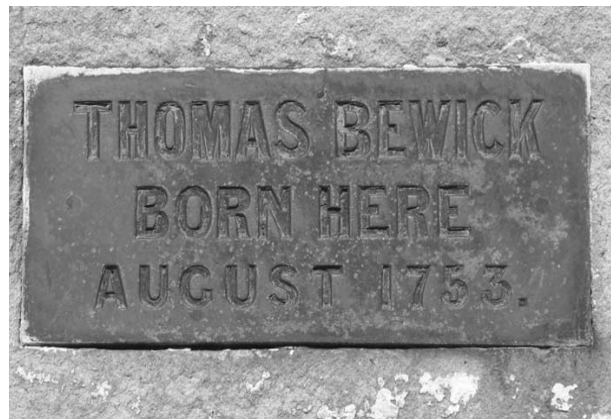
Cherryburn Cottage as it now is. The roof was originally thatched, and the out-house to the left did not exist in Bewick's day, as can be seen from the countless representations of the cottage in Bewick's vignettes. The photograph rather belies the fact that two thousand visitors came to Cherryburn over the weekend!



Visitors taking their refreshments on the warm August day in the small court overlooking the Cottage to the rear of what was Cherryburn farmhouse, built in the later 19th century. The farmhouse is now the museum and contains printing machinery, displays of Bewick work, woodblocks and Bewick family memorabilia.



This is the kitchen fireplace inside the cottage, incorporating the main cooking range available to Bewick's mother. The furniture and utensils are not actually 'original', of course; they were not the ones actually used by the Bewick family, but they have been selected as typical of the period and locality.



This plaque is placed directly above the door to the Cottage. We do not yet know when it was made, or by whom, or which organisation commissioned it and had it set in place. (It could have been Bewick's own daughters. The letter forms, known as 'grotesque', were very popular in the period 1850-1870. It is possible that this was put up in 1853 as part of a centenary celebration.)



Stuart Thirkell had thoughtfully supplied some hay bales in the farmyard under the trees. In the sultry August afternoon here we see some Japanese visitors resting in the shade, with the view in the background of the Tyne valley as can be seen from the Cottage front door:



A Japanese visitor takes aim with her camcorder at the Cottage kitchen and main room, with its split door, fishing basket on the wall, etc. In the background can be seen part of the Cherryburn farmhouse built later in the 19th century.

ERRYBURN, 9TH & 10TH AUGUST, 2003

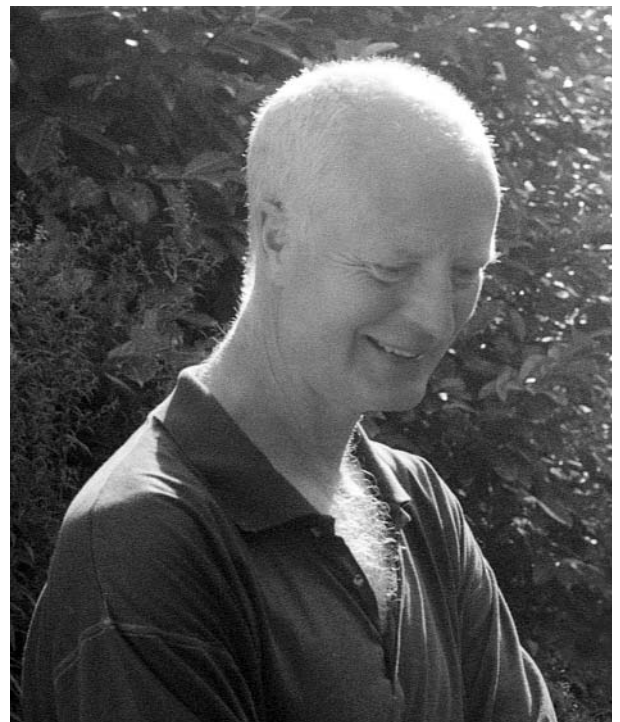


Top: Hugh Dixon, Chairman of the Bewick Society, with June Holmes, Membership Secretary.

Above: Frank Atkinson and Hugh Dixon announce the publication of the Bewick Videotape just prior to a performance by the Piper, Anne Dolphin (on the right).

Top: Iain Bain cutting the special 250th Birthday Cake in the main room of the farmhouse. (There was a second cake, and second cutting by Hugh Dixon.)

Above: Iain Bain holding two walking sticks that belonged to Bewick and now belong to his own collection. The blackthorn stick with the goat's horn handle is likely to have been in daily use, and the silver knobbed black cane, also shown *below*, was perhaps for use on Sundays when walking to church.



Nigel Tattersfield, author of recent books on Bewick and Beilby's Bookplates, and the first full study of John Bewick, Thomas's younger brother. He is working now on a comprehensive two-volume book on Thomas's work.

Unveiling the new bronze Chillingham Bull

On the 27th August 2003, Councillor Tony Flynn leader of the Newcastle upon Tyne City Council unveiled the new bronze version of Bewick's Chillingham Bull set into the pavement in Bewick Street (just opposite Central Station). This location was chosen as having special associations with Thomas Bewick, being as near as possible to the house he lived in for more than thirty years. A memorial plaque has also been placed on the wall nearby. (See also David Gardner-Medwin's article in *Cherryburn Times* Vol. 4 No. 2, Spring 2002).

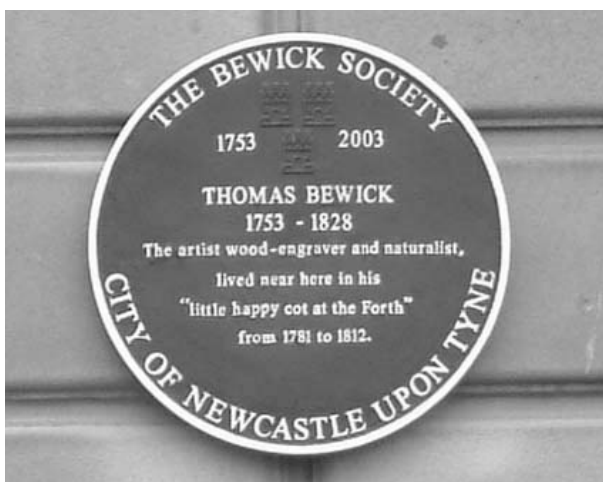


Above and below: A small crowd gathers as preparations get underway for the unveiling ceremony, in Bewick Street. On the left in both pictures is the newly renamed Thomas Bewick Square (opposite the Roman Catholic Cathedral).



Above: Councillor Flynn spoke of the pride that Newcastle felt in the work and worldwide fame of Thomas Bewick. The Grainger Town Project, when looking for ways to embellish the Grainger area of the city, had determined on a Bewick memorial and eventually fixed on Bewick's Chillingham Bull - just in time for this unveiling to be a high point in the 250th Birthday celebrations.

Below: The moment when all will be revealed! The red velvet carpet is grasped ...
Top left of next page: ...the carpet is whisked away, and the revelation achieved!





At the top: This view of the plaque was the only photograph of the many taken to show clearly the contrast between the polished surface and the black patina of the background. The angle was critical for showing this detail well in a photograph..

Above: Sarah Carr and Stewart Stoneham relaxing at the reception after the unveiling. Designer/Caster co-operation ensured the success of this project.

Below: 'Grainger Town' is the area in Newcastle City Centre built by Robert Grainger around 1840. The City decided to recognise its special identity in 1997.

Six key individuals in the Chillingham Bull pavement plaque project.

From the left: Stewart Stoneham of Cel-Tec, the bronze caster who literally made it; Tony Campbell, Director of Creative Glass and Mirrors, Stockton, the firm which designed it; Sarah Carr the designer of the bronze version; David Gardner-Medwin of the Bewick Society, who actually suggested the Bull as an appropriate subject; Councillor Tony Flynn, leader of the Council; Graham Bell of the North East Civic Trust and Chair of the Public Arts Panel of the Newcastle City Council.

Below: Stewart Stoneham, Cllr. Tony Flynn, Sarah Carr, Tony Campbell.



Iain Stuart Bain, FSA, FRSA, Hon. DCL

Northumbria University conferred the Degree of Doctor of Civil Laws *honoris causa* on Iain Bain on 8th December, 2003.

Below is the text of the citation given at the academic congregation by the Public Orator of the University.

Iain Bain's name is not well known to the world at large, though familiar in parts of the University for many years. Much of his work has been conducted out of sight of the public, with results well recognised by specialists, but largely invisible to the uninitiated. He worked for most of his career in publishing, an invisible profession to most of us. Furthermore, he went into art publishing, which may be even more invisible than most. His concern with fine typography leads even deeper into forests of invisibility, for reasons needing explanation. Before coming to that, however, we should note that his later work as a scholar researching the life and work of Thomas Bewick is another kind of unseen activity, as of course is most scholarship. We might think that such a man would never be noticed, yet he has not always been so hard to see.

He has also been rather well known in the past for throwing hammers. Indeed, he threw hammers for Scotland. He was for three years the Scottish Champion Hammer Thrower; and in that event he has represented Scotland, and also Great Britain, in several international games. We were not, alas, present to witness these events, but the mere report of them offers an interesting contrast with the recondite arts of his professional life.

We should also refer to another activity not of the retiring kind. He blows pipes – of several kinds, but all noisy. Not only the Scottish bagpipes, with their military – not to say battlefield – associations; which we might perhaps expect of a Scot who had served in the Seaforth Highlanders; but also the Northumbrian Small Pipes, an altogether more domestic, sweeter instrument more suited to indoor performance.

Notwithstanding his throwing of hammers and blowing of pipes, Iain Bain had a rather conventional education at Fettes College in Edinburgh and St Edmund Hall, Oxford. After his military service he went first into advertising, then into book printing. He was so interested in the physical work of printing that after getting married he set up a hand press in the spare bedroom. Eventually he moved into publishing, as production manager for Bodley Head. He was dealing with the printing of books, giving instructions to printers about layout and page design, specifying the typefaces or fonts to be used, and all the myriad obscure tasks involved in book production. It is a feature of typography that it seeks invisibility. We do not normally notice the typefaces that we read; indeed, if we do, it is in some degree a sign of failure. Typography is the most extraordinary of all the visual arts in that the finest and most successful work is literally not noticed – except by the highly trained eye, which knows what it is looking for.

He moved from the Bodley Head to become Head of Tate Gallery Publications in 1972. He was responsible there for the production of hundreds of catalogues and other publications which have done much to enhance the international reputation of the Tate Gallery and of British art, and to instruct the students of British art, of whatever nationality world-wide. In addition to this, he has written

on the history of copperplate printing and as a practical printer has involved himself in the discovery and use of original woodblocks and plates of artists such as Blake, Stubbs, Gainsborough and, of course, Bewick.

It was around the time of his move to the Tate Gallery that Iain Bain became involved with Thomas Bewick, the 250th anniversary of whose birth is celebrated this year. The first result of this new interest was the re-publication of Thomas Bewick's autobiographical *Memoir*. This had first been published in 1862, but since that time no-one had gone back to the original manuscript to compare it with the printed version. Perhaps it took the mind of a publisher to wonder about that relationship; and of a scholar to do something about it. This was Iain Bain's first major contribution to Bewick scholarship, in 1975. For the first time we had a complete version, purged of the original printer's many 'improvements'. Any University would appreciate this kind of unnoticed scholarship that traces the originals, revises the published versions, corrects the accepted 'knowledge' and refreshes our awareness of a subject. But when that subject is Thomas Bewick, all Northumbrians have reason to notice. Following the *Memoir*, Iain Bain curated the 1978 Exhibition 'The Genius of Thomas Bewick' held in Newcastle and at Yale, and then set out to research all the drawings and watercolours of Bewick and his apprentices, mostly in public collections in London and Newcastle, but very little examined and few published. In 1981, he brought out a two-volume edition of these, thus making accessible to a world public a significant body of Bewick's work for the first time. He has been working for several years on an edition of Bewick's correspondence. This unobserved beavering away in archives and private collections is recognised everywhere as the quintessence of scholarship; in this case making possible a major re-evaluation of Thomas Bewick.

Always the hands-on printer, he has also mastered modern computer type-setting, and just recently has himself typeset an entire book of essays on Bewick, to be published this very month. He is President of the Printing Historical Society, a Fellow of the Wordsworth Trust and of the Society of Antiquaries, a Past President of the Private Libraries Association, Vice-President of the London Topographical Society, and a sometime Fellow of the Society of Typographic Designers. He has done sterling work in areas of art, design and the history of art and design, all of prime importance to this University. In especial, he has retrieved the mislaid work and added to the resplendence of our greatest local artist, Thomas Bewick. The University wishes to recognise a scholar and typographer of distinction.

Cherryburn Times is normally published twice a year. Contributions are invited particularly from members of the Bewick Society.

Editor: David W. S. Gray, to whom contributions may be sent, at:
School of Arts & Social Sciences, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8ST

Typesetting and Graphic Design: John L. Wolfe

Produced by D. W. S. Gray and John L. Wolfe, printed at Northumbria University.