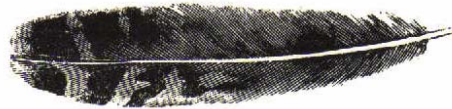


# THE BEWICK SOCIETY



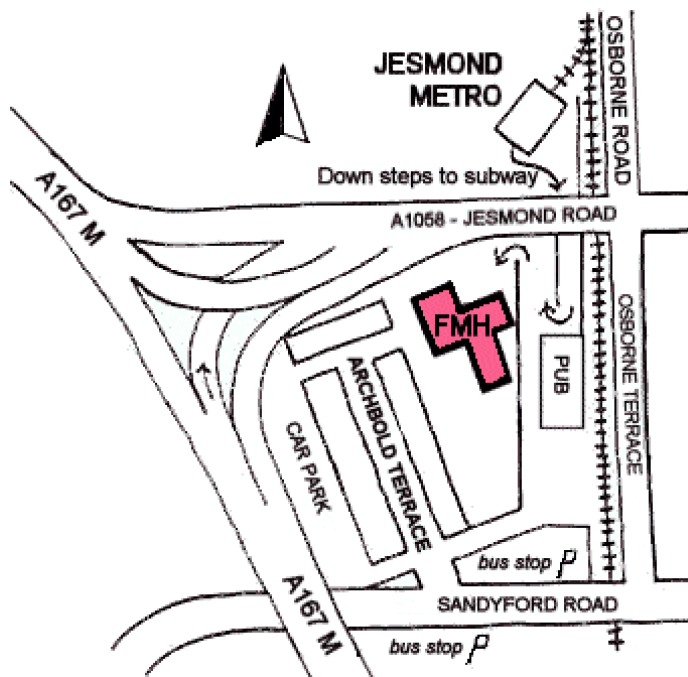
*Thomas Bewick*

## Programme of Events for Spring 2009

### Saturday 31 January 2009 Bewick Enthusiasms Afternoon

*Bewick Enthusiasms* will be an afternoon of lecturesses by speakers with enthusiasms for particular aspects of Bewick's life and work or that of his associates. Keith Armstrong will lead us off with a selection of his latest poetry inspired by Bewick and Peter Osborne would like to tell us something about Bewick and Emily Bronte. This meeting is intended to allow our members to share their passion for Bewick so do please come along and if you would like to contribute a five to ten minute discussion on something you find fascinating about Bewick we would be delighted to hear from you.

**Venue:** Room 1, The Quaker Meeting House (Friends Meeting House), Jesmond.



**By car:** Take the motorway turnoff for the coast, then turn right at the intersection into Osborne Terrace, right again into Sandycroft Road and into Archbold Terrace. Only limited parking is available on the forecourt of the Meeting House but there is a large public car park off Archbold Terrace.

**Date and time:** Saturday 31 January at 2pm.

**Contact:** June Holmes: The Bewick Society, c/o The Natural History Society of Northumbria, The Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4PT. Tel no. 0191 232 6386 or e-mail [nhsn@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:nhsn@ncl.ac.uk) (FAO June Holmes).

## **Saturday 16 May 2009 Bewick Society Walk around Kirkharle, Northumberland**

The annual Bewick walk this year will explore some places associated with Thomas Bewick's paternal grandparents, Thomas senior and Agnes Arthur. There is a strong chance that by 2010 the landscape will be transformed by a group of new windfarms, so this may be the best year to go there.

We plan to meet at the Kirkharle Visitors' Centre (NZ 013825) at 11 am and leave some cars there before all driving in the others to Kirkheaton village (NZ 019774) where the walk will begin. It was there that John Bewick, father of Thomas, was born.

The route of about 6½ miles back to the tearoom at Kirkharle by way of Agnes's home covers tracks, fields, one of them potentially wet, and some unavoidable road walking on minor roads. There are no steep climbs or very challenging surfaces and the general tendency is downhill but waterproof boots and weatherproof clothes are strongly recommended and you will need a packed lunch and something waterproof to sit on while we picnic in a field.

Please let June Holmes know by **Tuesday May 12th** if you hope to come and how many full and empty places you will have in your car. And please leave an e-mail address or telephone number in case of last minute uncertainties about the weather or changes in plan.

**Date and time:** Saturday 16 May starting at 11.00am.

**Venue:** Kirkharle Visitor's Centre car park Grid Ref: **NZ013825**

**Contact:** June Holmes – details as above.

## **Other Events for your Diary in 2009**

This year sees major celebrations for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bewick's contemporary Charles Avison who was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1709. Avison was a composer, conductor, organist and writer of music and he is now considered to be the most important English concerto composer of the 18th century. The Avison Society is marking the occasion with concerts, a series of lectures and a published biography on Avison *The Ingenious Mr Avison or Two Ladies for Half a Guinea*. More details can be found on [www.avisonensemble.com](http://www.avisonensemble.com) or contact The Avison Ensemble, 3 Bentinck Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 6XN, Telephone: 0191 226 0799.

## **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009 Thomas Bewick and music: 'an emanation from heaven'**

*Dr Peter Quinn; Artist, Art Historian, Tutor at the Centre for Lifelong Learning and Honorary Treasurer of the Bewick Society.*

In 1770, the year of Charles Avison's death, Thomas Bewick (1753–1828) was an apprentice engraver at the workshop of Ralph Beilby. Situated at Amen Corner to the south of St. Nicholas Church, the workshop placed the young Bewick at the centre of the commercial and cultural heart of Newcastle. He heard a wide-range of music at this time and developed a number of life-long musical enthusiasms. This lecture will highlight those early musical connections and describe the importance of music in Bewick's view of nature and art.

**Date and time:** 24th March at 7.00pm.

**Venue:** Brunswick Methodist Church, Newcastle upon Tyne. Free entry on the Door.

## Friends of the Hatton Gallery

The Friends based at Newcastle University's Hatton Gallery have cordially invited members of the Bewick Society to their next two lectures.

Tuesday 3rd February 2009 - *The Isle of Raasay*- celebrating the tenth year of the Friends of the Hatton visiting the island.

Tuesday 24th March 2009 - *Image and Meaning* - Looking at work from the Hatton Collection.

**Venue:** Hatton Gallery, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU,  
Tel: 0191 222 6059

**Time:** 6.00 for 6.30pm

**Contact:** Please contact Vhairi Cardinal, 6 Beverley Park, Monkseaton, North Tyneside, NE25 8JL on [vcar@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:vcar@blueyonder.co.uk) if you wish to attend; by 30th January for the Raasay Event, and by 20th March for the talk on the Gallery's Collection.

## Other News

### *Bewicks at the Civic Centre*

Planning a trip to Gateshead? –Why not try out *Bewicks* the new coffee shop and restaurant on the ground floor of Gateshead's Civic Centre.

The title *Bewicks* was chosen to celebrate the life of its famous namesake who resided in 19 West Street, Gateshead from 1812 until his death in 1828. The Bewick Society and the Natural History Society of Northumbria were approached, albeit at very short notice, to provide graphics and details for a permanent information panel for customers, Bewick's signature which was reproduced as a two metre long metalwork restaurant sign and books to put on an interesting display for the opening. They also borrowed some woodblocks and tools from local wood engraver Chris Daunt for their small exhibition and were so impressed by him that he has been given a commission for the town's visitor centre in St Mary's Church. We look forward to hearing more about that in due course. The restaurant was officially opened on the 16 December by Lord Kinnoek.

Opening hours are 7.30am - 4.00pm and customers have the choice of using the restaurant or the deli counter and coffee shop. The new space is also available for meetings, seminars and dinners.

The Society is always keen to assist in anyway with this kind of venture. Although we received no remuneration for the work, undertaken in the main by David Gardner-Medwin, the publicity gleaned for the promotion of Thomas Bewick in the future is worth all of the effort. Apparently the majority of Gateshead's Councillors were not aware of their famous resident until the opening.

### **The Whitley Great Ox Festival – Saturday 28 March 2009**

The Whitley Bay Chamber of Trade are planning to hold a Whitley Great Ox Festival in memory of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Quadruped immortalised by Bewick in his copperplate engraving of *The Whitley Large Ox*. The original Ox engraving was produced for the owner Mr Edward Hall and published on the 10 April 1789.

The Ox became a beast of folklore in the 1780s due to its immense size, growing to a height of over 5ft 9ins and weighing a massive 216 stones. It was said to have grazed near the site of the aptly named Fat Ox pub in Whitley Bay before it was walked all the way to Newcastle to

be slaughtered. The festivities – which will also mark 2009 as the Chinese Year of the Ox - will include a life-size model of the Ox made from a metal frame planted up with flowers to be paraded through the town. Local school children have been invited to submit poetry about the Whitley Ox which is to be judged by Michael Rosen, children's laureate for the UK and there will be a painting competition. Special shields have been designed to be presented to the winners of the two competitions by both the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Bewick Society.

The Natural History Society has also provided the organisers with an image of the Whitley Large Ox engraving for publicity purposes. The Society's engraving belonged to the Bewick family and is hand coloured, they also have in their collections the original watercolour drawing of the Ox standing in its field with Tynemouth Priory in the distance.

This is a fantastic opportunity to promote Thomas Bewick in Whitley Bay and June Holmes is hoping to work with some of the schools and libraries, providing Bewick vignettes for lessons and themed activities.

### **Thomas Bewick *Tale-pieces* 8 April – 25 May 2009**

**An exhibition devoted entirely to the vignettes of the extraordinary artist-engraver and naturalist Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) at Ikon Gallery – Birmingham**

The exhibition will include approximately 100 tail-pieces, selected in consultation with Iain Bain. A catalogue will accompany the exhibition, with texts by Nigel Tattersfield and artist/critic Tom Lubbock. It is hoped that after its run in Birmingham the exhibition will transfer to the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle in summer 2009.

Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-6pm. Admission is free. For further details see [www.ikon-gallery.co.uk](http://www.ikon-gallery.co.uk).

### **Literary Award for Jenny Uglow**

Congratulations to Jenny Uglow who received the National Arts Writers Award for 2007 from the Arts Club of Washington, USA for her acclaimed book *Nature's Engraver: A Life of Thomas Bewick*, published in 2006.

Following on from her success Jenny has written about Bewick again in *Words & Pictures: Writers, Artists and a Peculiarly British Tradition*. In this beautifully illustrated book she explores the connections between British writers and artists. It is a must for Bewick enthusiasts, as not only is it an enjoyable read but it also provides the evidence that the wood engraver from the North East of England is worthy of his place in the canon of great British artists.

*Words & Pictures: Writers, Artists and a Peculiarly British Tradition* by Jenny Uglow is published by Faber & Faber at £12.99.

### **High Praise for *The Many Faces of Bewick***

The Natural History Society of Northumbria's publication *The Many Faces of Bewick: An illustrated catalogue of the portraiture of Thomas Bewick* by their archivist June Holmes was nominated as a contender for the prestigious 2007 William MB Berger Prize for Excellence in British Art History research. The Berger Prize is awarded by the Berger Collection Educational Trust and the British Art Journal. The standard of the other publications on the Berger Prize long list was extremely high, with nominations from all over the world. The winner, announced in June 2008, was architectural historian, John Harris, OBE for *Moving Rooms: the Trade in Architectural Salvage*, published by Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre.