**BRANCH MEETING REPORTS – APRIL 2017**

**ALNWICK**

There were a total of 22 people in attendance for the April meeting.

David Lockey gave a very interesting talk ‘Bamburgh to Otago’ about the remarkable life of John Turnbull Thomson who was born in 1821 at Glororum, Northumberland. His life took him to Singapore and finally to New Zealand, where he is known as a figure of national importance through his contribution to the creation of that country, although virtually unknown here. His profession was that of an engineer.

**BELMONT**

The meeting was held on the 19th April, 27 people attended 16 of whom were NDFHS members.

Norman Kirtlan gave a well received power point presentation about the Mary Bell murders.

Not only did he give an in depth analysis of Mary Bell but outlined characteristics of any child murder.

**BLYTH**

The meeting held on Tuesday 19th April had an attendance of 13 members. The talk by Colin Brown was a presentation of ‘Blyth Remembered’ and the it was a very enjoyable trip down memory lane for those present.

**NEWCASTLE**

There were 27 people present at the April meeting and there were 3 apologies, including Edith our chairman.

The talk on Mary Queen of Scots was given by Prof. John Derry. The talk was up to his usual outstanding standard. How he remembers all the names and dates without notes is amazing. He has agreed to come back to the branch to talk again next March.

**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND**

At the meeting held on April 10th there were 36 present and apologies from 4 people.

The speaker was Gill Blanchard who gave a talk on Tracing the History of Your House. The audience were taken through the many and varied sources of historical documents which can be used. Going right back to the Domesday Book at the National Archives, although this is can be downloaded. Moving on to the present time with the Land Registry that began in 1862 and compulsory for change of owner to be registered only since 1990.

Gill is a professional researcher and has been engaged upon occasion to carry out research for ‘Who do You Think You Are’ Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the talk.

**SOUTH TYNESIDE**

There were six members in attendance at the meeting held on Wednesday 19th April.

The speaker was Wendy Stafford whose talk was entitled ‘The Origins of Nursery Rhythms’.

Wendy illustrated in her talk of our well known nursery rhythms came into being from historical events and people. ‘The Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe’ being linked to George 11’s wife Caroline who had 8 children and a shoe being the sign of fertility, and ‘Pop goes the Weasel’ refers to the weavers looms in Spittlefield.

A very interesting talk.

**TYNEDALE**

In consideration that it was Maundy Thursday and the Easter holidays the attendance was 10 people. Most of the meeting was devoted to the Service Records of the Army, Air Force, Royal Navy and Merchant Navy. There were very useful discussions on hoe they could be obtained and decoded and then supplemented by other sources.

**WANSBECK**

The meeting was held on the 5th of April, 29 people were present.

Memory Mining: a workshop presented by Michael Murphy one of our members.

Michael produced a fictitious case study which stimulated discussion about the correct protocol when interviewing people.

We looked at the case on three different levels and it made us focus on the issues involved. We all agreed that some form of agenda was required and that sensitivity should be exercised.

It was a worthwhile exercise which got us all thinking and thanks to Michael for preparing the session.