

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE MUSEUM OF NORTH CRAVEN LIFE, SETTLE

**News from The Folly (Vibrant Settle Newsletter June 2015)**

30 May 2015

First up this month is local writer Jean Harrison who will launch her first novel at the next Settle Sessions on Friday 5th June. Also taking part will be poet and literary critic Neil Curry, who will read extracts from his work. The session will be held on the ground floor of The Folly and start at 7.30 p.m. Tickets cost £6.00 in advance.

The grim and hazardous working lives endured by our predecessors in quarries, mills and railway construction are well-known but I would not have included local potters in that category until we set up our current exhibition 'A Community Skill'. The stories and illustrations reveal just how tough the lives of local potters in Burton in Lonsdale were, whether digging the clay, shivering in the 30 foot square settling pans 3 feet deep with a mixture of clay and water, or sizzling near the firing kilns which were heated to 1280 degrees centigrade. Throwing the pots demanded tremendous physical strength as well as skill. Imagine the size and weight of the lumps of clay needed to throw the 6 gallon storage pots designed for gin and cider. Legendary Henry Bateson supposedly threw 17 of these in the hour before he had his breakfast! On Friday 12th June well known Bentham potter Lee Cartledge will tell the story of Richard Bateson, the "Last Potter of Black Burton" from working a "jigger jolly" machine to produce jam jars when aged just 13 to his later career as a skilled craftsman. Lee will explain how, as the industry declined in the 20th Century, Bateson kept the last Burton pottery working until 1944. Lee believes it was the unusual jet black colour of the processed Burton clay that gave the town its name although one of our visitors who was born there told me that she had always been told the name resulted from the reputation of the large number of pubs - at least 14. Lee's talk starts at 7.30 in The Folly and tickets are £7.00, available in advance from The Folly or by ringing (01729) 822893.

Our new 'Display of the Month' for June shows how Settle people in Victorian times mourned the death of a family member, by wearing special clothing and jewellery, printing black-edged memorial cards and serving up 'funeral biscuits' which were wrapped in paper and given to all the mourners attending the funeral.

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