

THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

January 1977

Quarterly

Number Fifteen

DR. SWINDALE RETIRES

The end of 1976 marked the retirement of one of Wylam's best known personalities—Dr. Alfred Swindale, C.B.E.

He came to Wylam in 1924, reputedly for two weeks, to assist the late Dr. Bishop—and has stayed ever since!

His major contribution to village life over the past 52 years both as Doctor and as active member of many local organisations is impossible to assess.



Presentation to Dr. Swindale. July 6th, 1974.

He was a Wylam School Manager for over 20 years, and formed and ran the local branch of the Boys' Brigade for many years. He is an active Freemason, a local preacher, but, outside his work as a family doctor, he is probably best known now for his efforts on behalf of the Wylam Institute Community Association—of which he is at present the Chairman and Treasurer. The success of the Institute and the annual Community Week in recent years owe a lot to the work of Dr. Swindale.

In his medical practice, he has always shown concern for all his patients, although his special interests seem to have been in the very young and the elderly. His affection for babies is legendary, and he is specially beloved by his elderly patients, many of whom he has visited faithfully over the years.

In July, 1974, when he celebrated his Jubilee—50 years as a doctor in Wylam—the village had and took the opportunity to show its appreciation of his contribution to village life, and its real affection for him, in a special presentation, held on the playing field. We hope that although he has decided to retire from active medical practice, he will continue to stay amongst us in Wylam—and that he will have the long and happy retirement which he richly deserves.

Thank you, Alfred Swindale, for your long and devoted service as a family doctor in Wylam and district.

Editor's Note: Now that he has a little more time, we would like to suggest to Dr. Swindale that he record some of his recollections of life in Wylam over the last 52 years. We would be happy to serialise it in the Globe!!

OPENCAST COAL WORKING—WYLAM AREA

Most of you will have seen the press reports over recent months about future opencast coal working in the Tyne Valley.

One of the maps published showed areas on the northern and eastern outskirts of Wylam (where prospecting had been carried out several years ago) as possible sites for future workings.

Because of local concern about opencast workings near the village, the Parish Council wrote to the Regional Planning Officer of the N.C.B. Opencast Executive asking for clarification of their future plans.

His reply, dated 25th November, stated:—

"I can confirm that the areas around Wylam are not known to contain any coal workable by opencast methods and whilst I clearly cannot say that the Executive would never work such little coal as may exist (because never is a long time) I can say it is most unlikely that this area would be worked for coal. As far as our present thinking is concerned, these areas have been abandoned."

Editor's Note. It looks as though Wylam is fairly safe from the threat of opencast coal working—at least for several years.

WELL DONE, LADS

We reported in our last issue that the Parish Council were appointing a small team under the Government Job Creation Scheme, to carry out various environmental improvements in the village over a period of three months.

The team of four, under the keen supervision of Ken Oswald of Ovingham, started early in November and has carried out work at Charlie's Corner, at the entrance to The Orchard, along the riverside footpath below the playing field, on the riverbank at West/Tyne View, and elsewhere.

On all of these sites they have created considerable improvements which will be of lasting benefit to the village, and most people who have seen them have been impressed with the way they have worked.

They have proved (if anyone needed proof!) that today's youngsters can work as hard as their fathers!

ANY MORE SUGGESTIONS?

We're still looking for more ideas on how the village should celebrate and commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee this year.

One suggestion is that there should be a joint Field Day or Fete (perhaps a revival of the old Wylam Hoppings?) in June or July, to mark the re-opening of the Playing Field, perhaps held in association with the proposed Festival of Sport competition organised by the Tynedale Sports Council.

Another idea is to compile an album of old photographs showing the village and its residents during the last 100 years. The album would be kept on display in the new library for anyone to see.

As well as preserving photographs of Wylam in the past, it is hoped to make a modern photographic survey of the village this year. This will provide a permanent record for the benefit of future generations—showing what Wylam was like in 1977. The Wylam Photographic Club has agreed to help with this project.

There are 37 Societies and organisations in the village, and about 2,500 of you (the residents)—surely we can produce more than two or three ideas. Why not send your ideas to the Clerk of the Parish Council?

MORE INFORMATION

You may like to add some of the following details to your pink Information Card which we distributed in October.

SOCIAL SERVICES:— All local enquiries about Social Services should be made to the N.C.C. Social Services Area Sub-Office, Oakfield Terrace, Prudhoe. (Tel. 998 32758.) For assistance outside office hours, Tel. 995 2544.

The N.C.C. Director of Social Services (G. W. Jackson) is based at Eldon House, Regent Centre, Gosforth. (Tel. 9 850421.)

RIVERSIDE WARDEN:— The part-time warden appointed by the County Council to keep an eye on the country walkway which is being created along the old railway track, is Mr. A. Wallace.

He knows Wylam riverside area well and will carry out regular patrols during the summer months and occasional visits throughout the rest of the year.

He has also been given authority to patrol the riverside recreational area owned by the Parish Council.

WYLAM AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Carolyn Hawkes, Secretary of the Society, writes:—

"Although our membership is increasing, we are still in need of a few more men to provide a better balance and to widen our choice of plays and the scope of our activities. Are you, or someone you know, interested in taking a part, large or small, in our production, even if only on an occasional basis? Apart from our two main plays, we perform one-act plays at local Drama Festivals, Community Week Concerts and at the Hospital. We are also making a film and are interested in other aspects of Drama.

Are there any of you (preferably handy with a saw!) willing to help put up the stage and build the set? It is only two weekends each year.

We are an enthusiastic group who enjoy taking our turn both at acting and backstage, but we do need a Business Organiser to provide some continuity in arranging publicity for our plays—posters, tickets, programmes etc.

If you, or someone you can suggest, could help in any of these ways, please contact me, Carolyn Hawkes (Tel. 3518), or come along one Monday to the Institute at 8 p.m., to a play reading. New faces are always very welcome.

Before our next production we will be inviting you to become Patrons of the Society. The cost of £1 (60p Senior Citizens) will include tickets, and first choice of seats, for both our 1977 productions."

VILLAGE DIARY

February

- 3 "Hey there, it's Yogi Bear." Cartoon Film show at school.
- 11 Fox and Hounds Leek Club Dance, Institute.
- 22 "Wylam at the turn of the Century." Talk and Slides, Institute, 8.00 p.m.

March

- 4 P.T.A. Barn Dance, Wylam School.
- 11 Playing Field Association, Lemington Male Voice Choir Concert, Institute.
- 24 St. Oswin's M. Union—Overseas Coffee Morning.
- 29 "Conserving our Northumbrian Heritage," Talk. Institute, 8.00 p.m.

April

28-30 Drama Society Play.

VACANCY ON THE PARISH COUNCIL

Dr. and Mrs. Jardine and family will be leaving Wylam, and moving to Inverness in two months' time.

Although she has only been a member of the Parish Council since last May, we thank Mrs. Jardine for her contribution to the Parish Council and other organisations in the village, and wish her, and her family, every success now that they are returning to Scotland.

As a result of Mrs. Jardine's pending resignation it is likely that a by-election will need to be held to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council, and details of arrangements for this will be displayed on public notice boards in the village in due course.

... WE SHALL REMEMBER THEM ...

In recent years there has been no ceremony at the village War Memorial to mark Remembrance Day.

This was discussed at a recent meeting of the Parish Council, and whilst it was felt that it might be difficult to revive this ceremony, it was agreed that the Parish Council would accept responsibility in future for providing a wreath of poppies—on behalf of the village—in memory of those men of Wylam who died in the two World Wars, in the service of this country.

CLINIC MOVES

The Child Welfare Clinic which has been held for many years in the Chapel "Hut" has now moved to a room in the Falcon Centre.

HAVE YOU A 3 or 4 YEAR OLD CHILD?

Mr. Eric Ford, Headmaster of Wylam School, has asked us to include the following:—

"Would parents of children who will be five years old between 1st September, 1977, and 31st August, 1978, please contact the school by phone (Tel. 2771) or letter as soon as possible, giving details of name, date of birth and address of the child.

I would like to thank the many people who helped and gave generously to our Toy Fair held at the end of November. I am particularly grateful to those people who are not associated with the school, but were kind enough to give something towards the Fair. £94 was raised for the School Fund.

Details of dates of film shows are as follows:—

February 3rd: "Hey there, it's Yogi Bear." (Cartoon Feature Film.)

March 3rd: "Bedknobs and Broomsticks." (Walt Disney.)

March 31st: "The Lion and the Horse." (A Walt Disney-type adventure film.)

Anyone is welcome to come to these film shows at the school, which start at 6.30 p.m.

SCHOOL MANAGERS

Several people have asked for the names of the Managers/Governors of the local schools—and for information on their role/responsibilities. The names and addresses of Wylam people who are school managers at the Wylam First, Ovingham Middle and Prudhoe Secondary Schools are as follows:—

WYLAM FIRST SCHOOL MANAGERS

Mrs. J. K. B. McCallum, West House, Ovingham Road.

Dr. M. H. Battey, Elmhurst, Holeyn Hall Road.

Dr. T. W. F. Brown, Dumbreck, Station Road.

C. H. d'Ambrumenil, West House, Horsley.

*P. R. B. Brooks, 20 Bluebell Close.

*Mrs. M. E. Jacobson, 14 Algernon Terrace.

*The Parish Council are entitled to appoint two managers at the First School, and it has been the Council's policy in recent years to choose Parish Councillors who have a direct connection with children at the school.

At present only two councillors have children/grandchildren at Wylam School, Philip Brooks (with daughter Rebecca) and Ellen Jacobson (with grand-daughter Cathy Tuck.)

OVINGHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL GOVERNORS

C. H. d'Ambrumenil, West House, Horsley (Chairman).

Dr. M. H. Battey, Holeyn Hall Road, Wylam.

Dr. Kershaw, Woodlands, Wylam Wood Road, Wylam.

PRUDHOE SECONDARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS

A. R. Johnson, 22 Riding Terrace, Mickley (Chairman).

Dr. M. D. Rowbotham, Fairholme, Elm Bank Road, Wylam.

Mrs. J. K. B. McCallum, West House, Wylam. (Until July '77.)

At our request Jean McCallum, the Chairman of Wylam School Managers has provided the following information on the role and responsibilities (as she sees them) of school managers:—

"The role of a School Manager or Governor varies according to the type of school and the age group it serves—the following brief notes relate to Wylam County First School and are a very bare outline of our task.

Under the Education Act, 1944, managers "exercise a general control over a particular school" and must appoint representatives to visit the school from time to time "in order that they may be satisfied that the school premises are maintained in good order and repair and that the school is conducted in accordance with the Education Authority's regulations." In addition to this we try to act as a channel of communication between our local community and the school; two of the managers are always appointed by the Parish Council, others by the Local Education Authority itself and a parent representative joined us for the first time this year. Managers are responsible (with the Head Teacher in attendance and a representative from the Authority) for the appointment of new teaching staff and senior ancillary staff. When a new Head Teacher is appointed half of the members of the interviewing committee come from the County Education Committee itself, and the rest are local Managers.

At our regular termly meetings which the Head Teacher attends and a Clerk from the County Education Department who represents the Director of Education. We consider the report of the Visiting Manager (who is appointed on a rota basis) on conditions generally at the school and put forward our recommendations to the Director. If action was not taken on previous recommendations or there are other matters of concern we discuss them thoroughly, in conjunction with the termly report which the Head Teacher also puts before us. It is not our function to interfere with the teacher's professional duties but the Head Teacher informs us about major changes in the organisation and running of the School, listens to our comments and may ask our advice on general matters or particular problems which have arisen. In recent years Wylam Managers have been very outspoken about the needs of the children in the village and when the new First School was built it was paid for out of the Authority's Minor Works Budget, a recognition of the urgency of the situation which had arisen in the early 1970's.

At the present time financial restrictions are a frustration to us all but we are proud of our school and grateful to the staff for the genuine interest they show in the progress of the village's children."

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Confused? Confused? Confused?

Someone suggested recently that we might run a competition to see how many different names we could find by which people know various places and features in the village. Here are two examples:—

The old railway bridge over the river at Hagg Bank:

This is known as either—the Points bridge, or the Birdcage bridge, or Hagg Bank bridge, or West Wylam bridge, or just the old railway bridge.

The Playing Field:

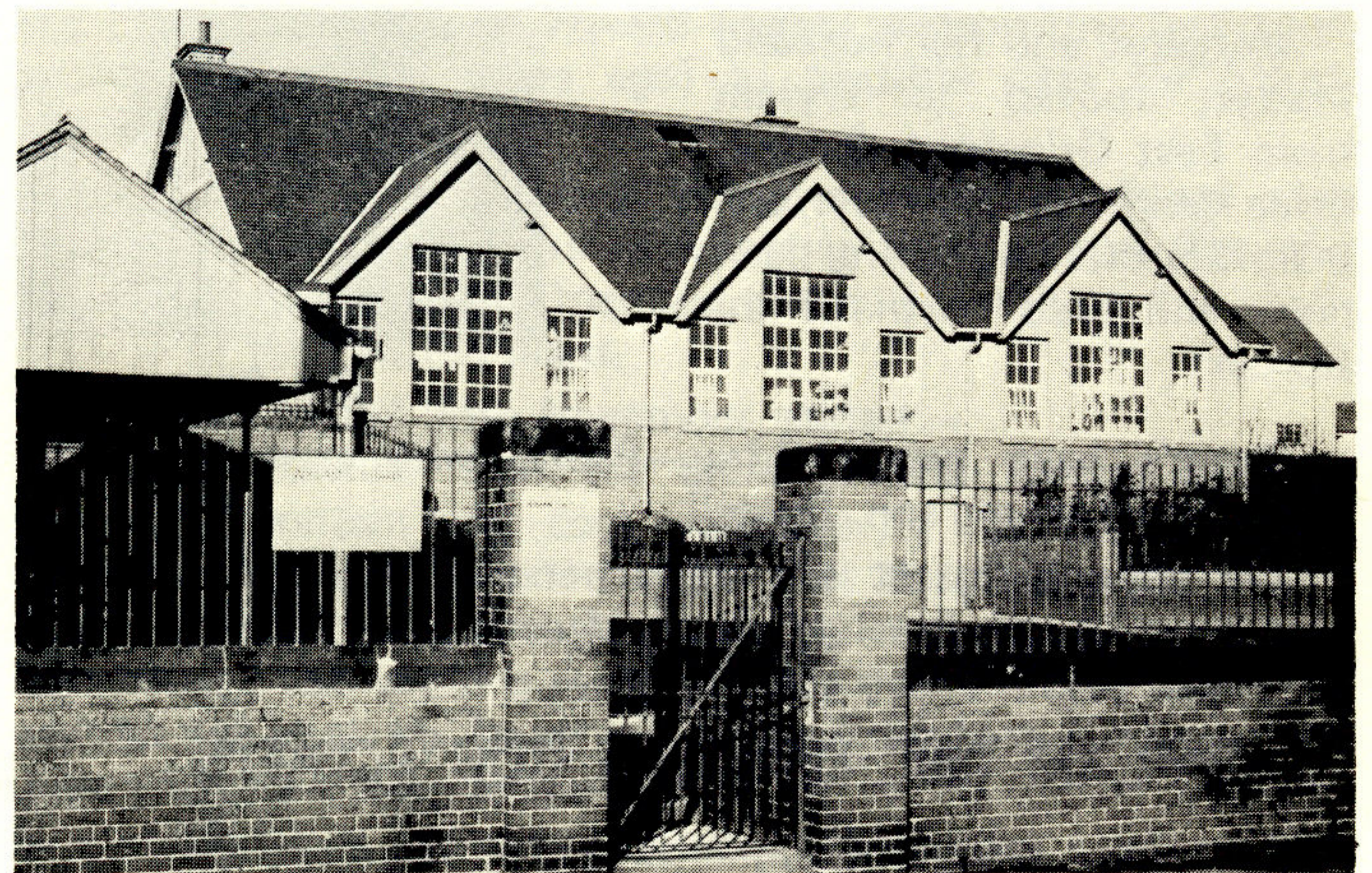
This is known as either—the Jubilee Field, or the Boys Brigade Field, or the Community Playing Field.

There are many more places in the village known by several different names, and while in most cases this doesn't create problems, in some instances it can cause confusion.

One recent example is the old primary school on Falcon Terrace, which ceased to be used as a school in 1974 and is now being used for several different purposes—part for the library, part for the Youth Club, part for the Clinic, part for Evening Classes and part will soon be used for a small museum.

To continue to call the building "the former primary school" would be confusing as the "original" school used from 1854—1909 still exists in Woodcroft Road and is known as "the old school."

Since the Falcon Terrace building is now a Centre, accommodating a variety of different uses, it has been agreed by the County Council (who own the building) at the suggestion of the Parish Council, that in future this building will be known as "The Falcon Centre." This should avoid future confusion.



Former Primary School on Falcon Terrace—to be known in future as "THE FALCON CENTRE."

HELP FOR THE PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION

It is a happy coincidence that the village playing field, which was first opened and laid out as a playing field in 1935, the year of King George V's Jubilee, should be reopened this summer when his grand-daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, is celebrating her Jubilee.

The Community Playing Field Association (C.P.F.A.) Committee are purchasing a range of equipment so that you can play a wide variety of sports/games ranging from cricket and football to croquet and putting.

Two years ago the Parish Council agreed in principle to help in the future maintenance of the playing field once it was back in use, and following a request from the C.P.F.A. have agreed to contribute £150 towards the costs of grass-cutting and grounds maintenance on the field this year. This is approximately half the estimated cost.

DOROTHY FAIRLESS TAKES A WELL-DESERVED REST

After nine years as Clerk of the Parish Council, Mrs. Dorothy Fairless has decided to take a well-earned rest. She was appointed in October 1967 after the Council had had several clerks in quick succession.

Things were quieter at that time and it was rare for there to be a contest for seats on the Parish Council. However, since the reorganisation of local government—which gave Parish Councils greater powers and responsibilities—the Council has been increasingly active, and this of course has meant more work for the Clerk!

Everyone who knows Mrs. Fairless will share the sentiments of Jim Robinson, the Chairman of the Parish Council this year (and the only member of the present Council who was also a member when she was appointed Clerk)—

"Being part-time Clerk of a small, but active, Parish Council requires a sense of devotion, a strong interest in the village and its activities, and a willingness to do odd jobs at awkward times; Dorothy Fairless has done the job admirably, in a quiet and efficient manner, and with her retirement the Parish Council will lose a most loyal friend."

Past and present members of the Parish Council are making a small personal presentation to Mrs. Fairless in appreciation of her services to the village as Parish Clerk.



Mrs. Dorothy Fairless.

NEW PARISH CLERK APPOINTED

Mrs. Margaret Roan of 88 Dene Road (Tel. 3669) has been appointed as the new Clerk of the Parish Council to succeed Mrs. Fairless.

Margaret and her husband Martyn moved to Wylam from East Grinstead, Sussex, three years ago. However, she is no Southerner, having been born and bred north of the Border!



Mrs. Roan.

Roan's have two children—Paula, who goes to Wylam School, and young son, Russell.

We hope Margaret will enjoy her new job—and in future please write to her about parish matters. (NOT to Mrs. Fairless.)

1st WYLAM (ST. OSWIN'S) CUB SCOUTS

The Cubs meet each Saturday morning at 10.30 a.m. in the Church Hall.

As well as playing games, they have work sessions where Cubs can work for badges, and throughout the year there are several outings.

The pack is led by Mr. Tom Gallon of Heddon (Akela), assisted by Mrs. Furniss (Baloo.) At present there are a few vacancies and anyone interested should contact Mrs. Furniss, Dunmore, Elm Bank Road. (Tel. 2341.)

DISEASED TREES FELLED

Arrangements have been made by the County Council to fell many of the elm trees in the village which are infected by Dutch Elm Disease. The places where there are diseased trees were listed in the last issue of the "Globe" and a number of these have been, or will be, felled.

So if you see elm trees being felled in the village in the next few months, it will be in a good cause—trying to stop the spread of the disease.

During November, a group of infected trees in the woods surrounding Castle Hill Convalescent Home were felled.

SEARCH YOUR ATTICS— EMPTY YOUR CUPBOARDS

An appeal for more local photographs

We mention elsewhere that one project which has been suggested to mark the Silver Jubilee is the compilation of an album of photographs showing the people and places in the village—and the way things have changed from the Victorian period up until the mid 1970's.

A good number of local people have already lent old photographs (which have been carefully copied and the originals returned to the owner) but there must be many more interesting ones still lying in albums in the village.

Please have a look in your cupboards before you forget. Acknowledgement will be made to everyone lending photographs.

Several people have enquired what sort of photographs we want to find.

The short answer is "Anything concerned with Wylam people, its buildings and local events during the last hundred years or so."

A selection of some of the photographs already collected were on display in the Institute in Community Week and will be displayed again in the library in February.

If you have any photographs which you think would be of interest and would like to have copied for inclusion in the Commemorative Album, please take them to **Elizabeth Lonsdale**, the Librarian, at Wylam library (the library is open Tuesday and Thursday) or any of the following:—

Alan Sleightholme, Bewick Cottage, 1 River View, Ovingham.

Philip Brooks, 20 Bluebell Close, Wylam.

Jean McCallum, West House, Ovingham Road, Wylam.

Mrs. T. Pattinson, Wylam Wood, Wylam Wood Road, Wylam, or to the Clerk, or any member of the Parish Council.

NEW PATH CONSTRUCTED

A ramped path linking the old railway track walkway to the side of the Bumbler Box Bridge (the accommodation bridge off Woodcroft Road) has recently been constructed, and should make it easier for Hagg Bank residents to get from the track into the centre of the village. Our thanks to the County Council for carrying out this work, following a suggestion from the Parish Council.

CONGRATULATIONS MRS. McBEATH

We have great pleasure in congratulating Mrs. Mary McBeath (formerly of Brewery House) who celebrated her 100th birthday on 18th December.

WASTE GROUND ON JACKSON ROAD

Some of the recent press reports on the proposed scheme to improve this derelict site were liable to misinterpretation and it might be helpful if we were to clarify the present position.

Following public consultation in the village earlier last year, a scheme has now been agreed for improving and landscaping the site.

At the request of the Parish Council, the County Council has agreed to undertake the reclamation of the area, involving the clearance, levelling, drainage and cultivation.

Unfortunately, the only two large trees on the site and many of the scrub bushes along the Jackson Road frontage are elms—and affected by the Dutch Elm Disease. Although they will have to be cut down and cleared, a large number of small trees will be replanted around the site, and these should result in the creation of an attractive area several years hence.

Most of the cost of the scheme will be met by a central government grant.

It is hoped to start work shortly, but it may have to be delayed until June.

All correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. M. Roan, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 88 Dene Road, Wylam.

Printed for Wylam Parish Council by
The Gilpin Press, Houghton-le-Spring.