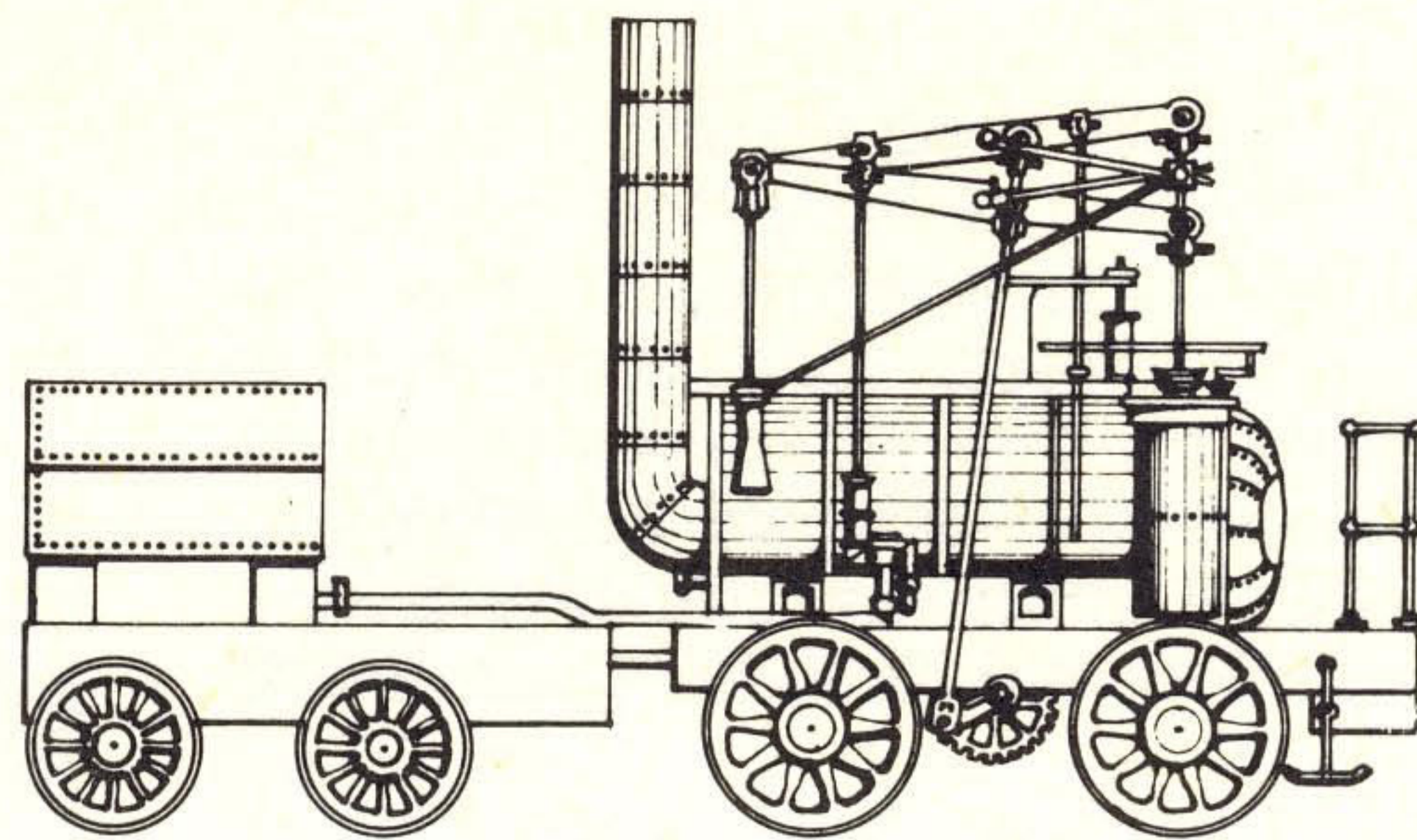


THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Spring 1979

Quarterly

Number 24

Elections:—Two down, and still two more to go!

Although the General Election and the District Council elections are now over, the Parish Council Elections on 24th May and the European Assembly Elections on 7th June, still remain.

The last Government's decision to hold the General Election on the day previously fixed for the local elections (3rd May) and then to defer the Parish Elections, separating them from the District Council Elections, has come in for criticism.

Holding the Parliamentary and District Elections on the same day increased the total poll for the District Elections, but undoubtedly meant that in many areas (if not in Wylam) views on national instead of local issues influenced the way people voted in the District elections.

In areas like Tynedale there are much closer links between the District and Parish elections and it is a pity that the Parish elections are being held on their own on Thursday 24th May. This could have an adverse effect on the turnout. Parish elections are particularly important since Parish Councils reflect the local "grass roots" opinion more effectively than any other form of government.

We therefore urge all electors to vote on 24th May. A supplement enclosed with this issue of the Globe, gives details of the candidates in the parish elections.

In the District Council elections our two existing councillors, Peter Bennett and Alan Butterfield, polled 928 and 763 votes respectively, while Jean McCallum and Bruce Reed had 578 and 363 votes.

Once again the village was fortunate in having excellent candidates standing for the District Council, and any two of the four would have made first class councillors.

In congratulating those elected, we also thank the two unsuccessful candidates.

Now it's up to you, the local residents, to ensure that those elected are aware of your views so that they can represent the interests of the village.

By the time the European Assembly elections are held on 7th June most people will already be tired with elections

for this year and a low poll is predicted.

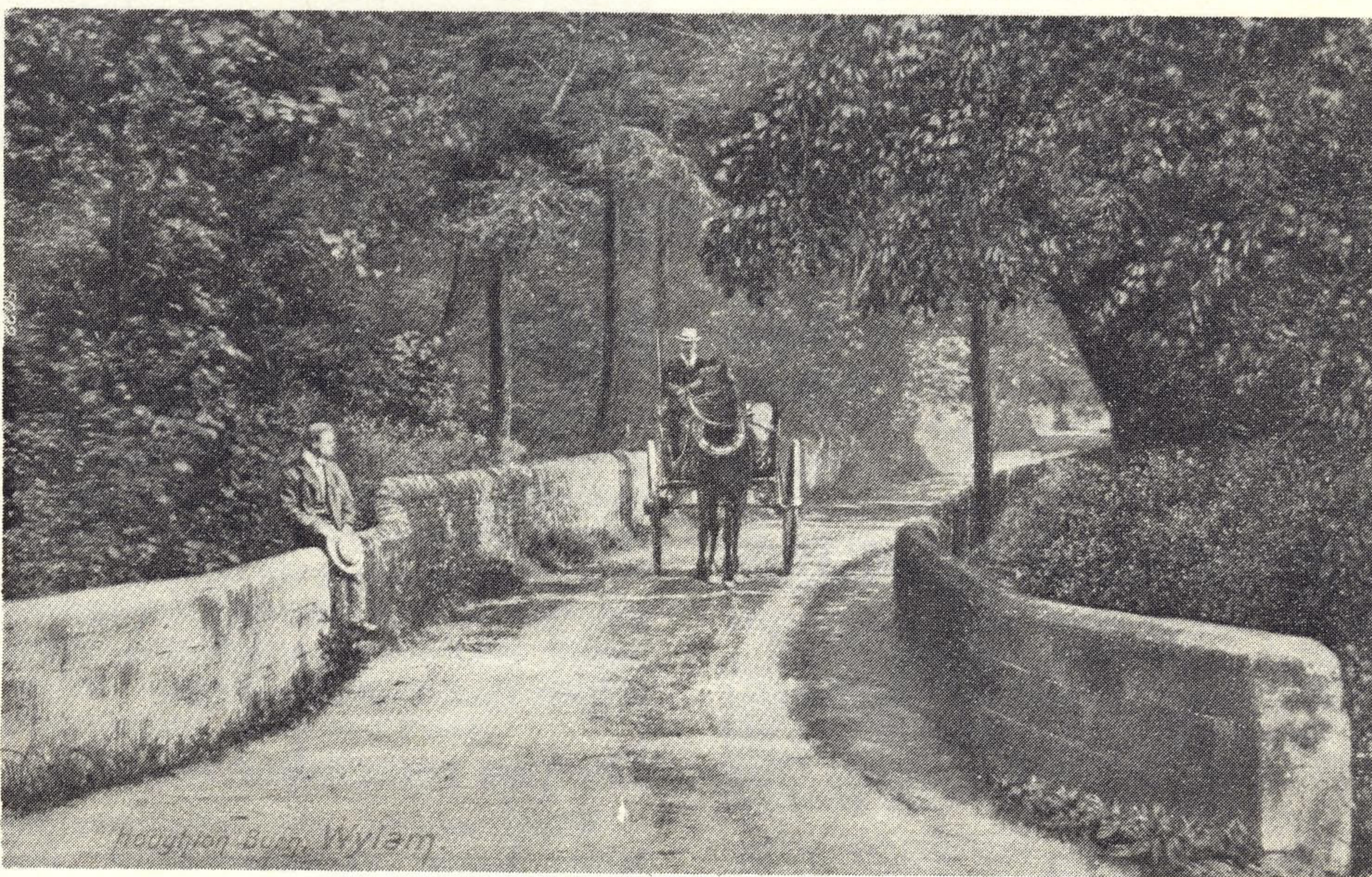
This would be unfortunate since decisions of the European Economic Community (E.E.C.) are having an increasing influence on our lives (for good or ill!) and no one should remain indifferent to it.

It has been suggested that any candidate who could explain in simple language what the E.E.C. does and how it works, would automatically be elected. This may be an exaggeration, but certainly there is widespread ignorance about the E.E.C. — and we hope that the can-

didates will endeavour to rectify this before 7th June.

However you're unlikely to get a personal visit from any of the Euro-Assembly candidates, since the Northumbria constituency for which one Euro-M.P. will be elected, includes the whole of Northumberland, the City of Newcastle and half of North Tyneside—an electorate of over 550,000 people.

With more than half a million voters in each constituency, each European M.P. isn't likely to be visiting more than a small proportion of the voters.



The Wylam to Ovingham road at Hodene Burn Bridge, looking very rural in the leisurely days before the 1914-1918 war.

Falling rocks close riverside road

The hard frosts and heavy rain during the winter have been responsible for loosening the rock, soil and shale from the outcrop at Wylam Scar, resulting in several falls of rock onto the Ovingham Road.

In view of the danger from further falls the County Council have had to

close the road until action can be taken to make the outcrop safe. This could be extremely expensive and involve reducing the gradient of the slope above the road.

In any event the road is likely to remain closed for many months.

Fewer Power Cuts

Aware that residents living north of the river have had more than their share of power failures in recent years, the Electricity Board are taking further action to try and reduce these failures. The Board have obtained permission to construct a small new switching station on the allotments alongside the Bumbler Box Bridge.

For newcomers, this is the bridge leading down from Woodcroft Road to the riverside allotments. The name "Bumbler Box" was given to the old colliery and its waste heap (now covered with trees) because it was shaped like a beehive, "Bumbler Box" being a common Northumberland name for a beehive.

They've not changed much in 93 years!

WANSBECK DIVISION, 1886.

POLLING DAY, WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY.

YOUR NUMBER ON REGISTER IS

Your polling place is the NATIONAL SCHOOL, HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL.

You vote for **Mr. CHARLES FENWICK** by putting a **X** opposite his name on the Ballot Paper

THUS—	1	FENWICK	X
	2	WIGHT	

Do not put any other mark or any signature or initials.

The Poll is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, July 14th 1886.

VOTE EARLY.

Printed by John Davison, Alnwick.

In the General Election of 1886 local electors received this card encouraging them to vote for Charles Fenwick. A miner, Fenwick was first elected as a Liberal in 1885 and remained the local M.P. until his death in 1918. He was the first miner to go straight from the coal-face to Westminster.

Goose's Golden Egg

One of the most popular local fairs is the Ovingham Goose Fair which was revived about ten years ago as a means of raising money for the restoration of the Ovingham Reading Room. It has proved so successful that it has now become a regular annual event with a distinctive traditional and local character, and a most pleasant means for organisations in Ovingham to raise funds. It also has an enviable reputation—of always being held on a fine day.

This year's Goose Fair will be on Saturday 16th June and as usual many Wylam folk will be there.

Nothing Controversial

Although a comparatively quiet meeting—which did not raise any major issues of controversy—several matters were brought to the attention of the Parish Council who are now taking necessary action.

These included the need for handrails on the ramp on Cherry Tree Lane; problems with the lamp outside the Police House; replacement of missing trees and other matters.

New books available

The new extended edition of the story of Wylam's railway engineers, "Where Railways were born" is now available locally.

There are many new illustrations, including two historic posters relating to the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, and the Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam Railway.

Copies can be obtained, price 80p from Mrs. Gillis, the Clerk to the Parish Council, at 27 Dene Road.

"Country Walks in East Tynedale", the guide to local country walks, which has been out of print for several months will be on sale again soon, price 70p.

Home for a mower?

Greg Smith, the Secretary of the Playing Field Association, reports that the Association is buying a secondhand "Turf King" tractor-mower for the field. This will allow them to keep the field mowed regularly throughout the growing season, and at the same time keep down field maintenance costs. Storage of the mower is however going to be a problem,* particularly this year. In the long term the Association will probably have to erect a garage on the field for it, but they would be grateful to hear from anyone who could offer storage space for the mower this year. The mower occupies about the same space as a Mini.

Offers of assistance please to Greg Smith (Tel.: 3622).

Erosion to river bank

Fortunately Wylam suffered little serious damage from the floods in March, although the Oakwood Burn caused some anxiety for residents on Holeyne Hall Road and the Stanley Burn and Bradley Burn both overflowed at points.

Further erosion of the river bank just downstream of the bridge, below the station car park, is causing some concern and the Parish Council have written to the Northumbrian Water Authority and to British Rail suggesting that some boulders should be used to protect this stretch of bank.

Round Table help

At the annual handover dinner of Wylam and District Round Table on Tuesday 24th April at the Duke of Wellington Inn, Newton, the new Chairman, Gordon Smith took over from outgoing Chairman Colin Ferguson. Mr. Ferguson said that despite last year being a particularly difficult year due to a number of Round Table members having to leave the area for business reasons it has nevertheless kept up its tradition of supporting charities.

Following the successful "Super Skate 78" skateboarding event at Albermarle Barracks in July 1978 a donation of £300 had been made to the Multiple Sclerosis Society and more recently the Table has been assisting Ovingham Scouts.

The Scout hut has for some time lacked adequate heating and Wylam Round Table has donated £250 towards a large gas heater which should make things more comfortable next winter.

Such charitable donations are only possible due to the support given by local people to the various fund raising activities of Round Table, which is greatly appreciated by all concerned.

Incoming Community Service Organiser Cliff Thornton is hoping for continued support this year so that Wylam Round Table can keep up its efforts in this respect in 1979.

Village Rail Trail

On the afternoons of Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th July conducted tours of a "railway trail" around the village will be organised—with special emphasis on features associated with William Hedley.

Anyone, residents or visitors, will be welcome to join the walks which will start at 2.30 p.m. from the old N. Wylam Station Yard—now the car park.

Do you remember them?

Would anyone who remembers the Misses Gwen and Janet Waller, who were born in Wylam and lived in the house "Rushmere" at the bottom of Elm Bank Road until about 1920 please contact the Editor, Philip Brooks, at 20 Bluebell Close (Tel.: 3520).

What's On

JUNE

Saturday 9—Methodist Summer Fayre.

Saturday 16—Ovingham Goose Fair.

Saturday 23—St. Oswin's Summer Fair.

Saturday 23—Wylam Tennis Club Dance.

JULY

Saturday 7—P.F.A. Field Day.

Saturday 14—Oxfam — Strawberry Fayre.

Parish Councillors take a well-earned rest

Whatever happens in the Parish Election, there will be at least five changes in the membership of the Parish Council, since five of the present members, Jim Robinson, John Stephenson, Ellen Jacobson, Dr. Monica Rowbotham and Alan Butterfield are not seeking re-election.

Jim Robinson is the longest-serving member of the present council, having joined in 1965 and been chairman from 1976-79, and a member of the School Managers for many years. John Stephenson became a councillor in 1969 and was chairman between 1973 and 1976. Ellen Jacobson has served on the Council for the last six years and Dr. Rowbotham

for two spells, 1971-1973 and 1976-1979. Alan Butterfield was elected at the last election, at the same time as he joined the District Council.

In recent years the Parish Council has been increasingly active and the village owes a special debt of gratitude to these five retiring members, who have individually and collectively devoted much time to the work of the Parish Council and its efforts to continue to make the village a pleasant place for all who live and work in it.

On behalf of the village we thank our retiring councillors and hope that they will continue to help the village in the future as they have in the past.

Anyone you can recognise?



Residents of all ages seem to enjoy trying to recognise themselves on photographs. Here's one for the over 60's - a group at Wylam School in 1920. No prizes offered, but help in identifying faces would be welcome. How many still live in Wylam?

New Day Centre?

Several people have enquired what progress has been made concerning the use of the money left by the late Mr. C. J. W. Blackett, since the item in last Autumn's issue of the Globe.

Following that article the idea of asking Mr. Blackett's executors to use some of the money towards providing an attractive day centre in the village for the use of older residents, received support. Discussions were subsequently held with the Institute Committee on the possibility of converting part of the Institute or building a small extension to provide a day centre.

It was agreed that the construction of a single storey extension on land at the back of the Institute was the most suitable arrangement and a preliminary scheme has now been submitted to the Executors.

However the Executors have indicated that they cannot consider this scheme from Wylam until they have also received projects from the other villages, Ovingham, Horsley and Ovington.

It is anticipated that a decision on the schemes put forward will be made later this year.

Play area goes ahead

Residents of Hagg Bank have recently confirmed their support for the proposal to use a disused allotment as a play area for young children living in the hamlet.

The Parish Council are therefore proceeding with arrangements to have the derelict greenhouse and shed demolished; rubbish removed; the hedges cut and the plot rotavated, prior to grassing.

More memories?

Following our request in the last issue for wartime memories, Miss Frances Foster of Blackett Court kindly sent us some most interesting recollections of the village between 1939-1945, some of which we will include in the next issue. For her efforts she has received a copy of the book "Northumberland Yesterday".

We are sure that many other people who lived in Wylam forty years ago can recall wartime memories which would be of interest. Why not put pen to paper, and send the result to the Clerk, Mrs. Gillis at 27 Dene Road.

Support for shelter

Having received more support than opposition for the idea of constructing a bus shelter at Charlie's Corner, the Parish Council have agreed in principle to proceed. The opposition to a shelter was mainly from residents who felt that it would become vandalised in what is one of the most attractive parts of the village.

Members of the Parish Council are themselves seriously concerned about the problems of vandalism, but feel that if there is a genuine need for the shelter, from those who regularly use the bus services, then a shelter should be provided. However anything built at Charlie's Corner must be to a high standard, and made as vandal-proof as possible.

The present intention, provided that the necessary planning and other permissions can be obtained, is to erect a stone-built shelter near the entrance to Charlie's Corner, close to the bus stop, at the same time setting back the boundary wall and constructing a new pavement to make it safer for pedestrians.

Road Safety Winners

Two schools with Wylam connections did well in a recent Road Safety Competition for County First Schools, organised by the County Council Road Safety Officer. The schools were required to submit a model of the Green Cross Man and a Road Safety collage.

Wylam School was awarded second prize of £30, and was featured in a report on the competition, shown on Tyne-Tees Television. The winners of the competition were Haydon Bridge School, whose headmaster, Colin Smith, lives in Dene Road.

Congratulations to both schools on their success.

Self-help Successful

Where there's a will there's a way. The truth of this old saying was proved again recently when the Nursery School closed down following Pat Bolam's departure from the village.

Anxious not to lose the important facility offered by the Nursery School, several parents got together and raised the money needed to purchase essential equipment and keep the school open. Congratulations and thanks are due to all who helped.

Although an increase in fees has been necessary in order to continue purchasing materials and hire the hall in the Institute, the Nursery School offers good value, and it is hoped that no further increases will be necessary for some time.

The school is now open again and if you would like your child's name included on the waiting list, or require further information, please contact Marjorie Crass (Tel. Wylam 2122).

Commemoration of famous engineers

We mentioned in the last issue that 1979 is the two hundredth anniversary of the births of three early railway pioneers who had close links with the village.

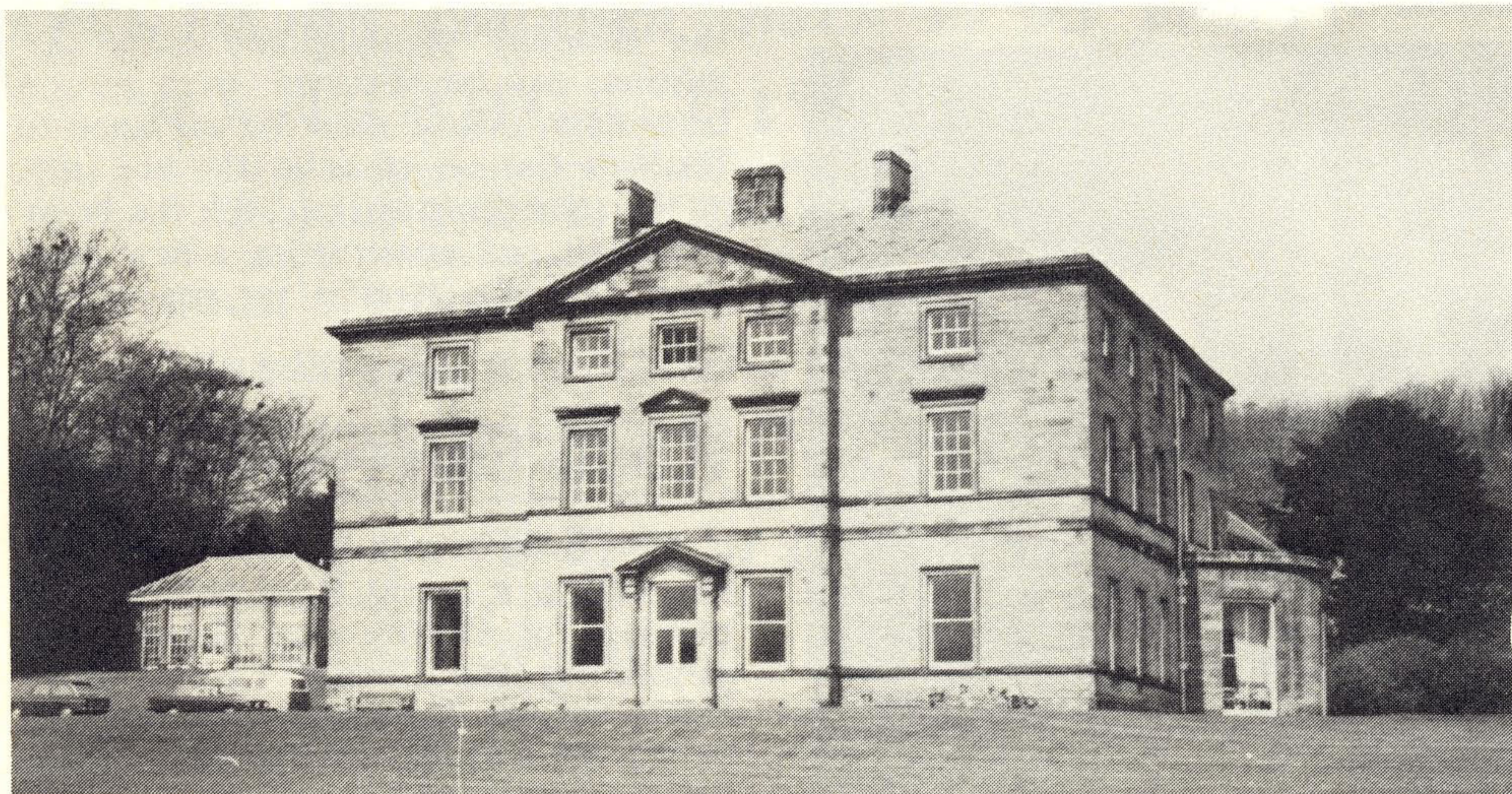
In addition to republishing the book telling the story of Wylam's railway history, the Parish Council—with assistance from the District Council—are providing two plaques to mark the bicentenary of William Hedley and Benjamin Thompson. These plaques will be fixed to buildings associated with these two pioneers.

The one commemorating William Hedley is to be fixed to Mrs. Layzell's house, No. 3 Rose Cottages at the corner of Ovingham Road and Woodcroft Road.

This is one of the houses now occupying the site of an earlier property "The White House" which was almost certainly the residence of the Hedley family during their period in Wylam. The White House was demolished in the 19th century.

Benjamin Thompson founded Wylam Ironworks and was largely responsible for the erection of Wylam Bridge. He also surveyed the route for the Newcastle to Carlisle railway, and supervised part of its construction.

The Tyne and Wear Industrial Monuments Trust who are specially concerned with the industrial history of the region are producing a brochure about William Hedley and his work; this should be available in July.



Built in 1779, Close House is 200 years old this year. The Close House Estate was owned by the Bewicke family from the early 17th century until the late 1950's, when it was acquired by Newcastle University.

Parish Magazine takes on a new look

The Parish Magazine has recently taken on a new and elegant appearance, being professionally printed, with an attractive cover incorporating an illustration by Mr. Bert Ayton, based upon the representation of St. Oswin in the south west window of the chancel in the Parish Church.

Colin Tyson has taken over the task of editing the magazine and to mark the introduction of the new-style magazine he has written a most interesting series of articles about the life and times of St. Oswin. As far as is known, there are only two parishes in England of which St. Oswin is the patron saint; one is at South Shields, the birthplace of St. Oswin, and the other is in Wylam. Here, according to a medieval chronicler, the miraculous intervention of St. Oswin came to the rescue of the people who lived in the village many centuries ago. This story will be recounted in a future issue of the Parish magazine.

In the first article, in the April issue, Colin Tyson sketches the political and religious developments which led up to the commencement of St. Oswin's reign in the Kingdom of Deira, which covered the area between the rivers Tees and Humber.

Anyone interested in early local history of Northumbria, will appreciate these articles and copies of the Parish Magazine containing them can be obtained either from Colin at Woodbury, The Crescent, or from his near neighbour, Mr. Taylor, of Hillcrest, who is responsible for distribution of the magazine.

Fair Comment

Having recently completed various improvements to the Chapel premises, including construction of an enlarged entrance porch, the Methodists are organising two events to help raise funds for further work.

On Friday, 8th June, an evening of family entertainment is being arranged in the Institute and on Saturday afternoon, 9th June, a Summer Fair will be held in the Chapel grounds.

Graham Gilmore, who contributed to the very successful Community Week concert last year, and has been responsible for several concerts and plays at Prudhoe High School, is organising both events, so the standard should be high.

We hope that both events are well supported.

Keep on planting

Tree Planting Week, organised by the County Planning Department is now becoming a successful annual event, when the importance of regularly planting new trees in town and countryside is publicised, and supported by practical help and positive action by the County Council.

This year new trees have been planted in the open space at the entrance to the Dene Estate and in Engine Dene, and also along the riverbank between Stephenson Terrace and Streethouses.

Several residents have given the Parish Council young trees which they no longer required in their own gardens, and these have been planted elsewhere in the village.

If you have any small young trees, capable of being transplanted, which you want removed from your own garden, please don't destroy them, but contact Mrs. Gillis, Clerk to the Parish Council (Tel.: 2503) and arrangements will be made to collect them as quickly as possible.

Open to visitors

For the first time for many years George Stephenson's birthplace, High Street House, is open to visitors—but by appointment only.

Anyone wishing to view the cottage must make arrangements with the tenant (Tel. Wylam 3457) beforehand. The admission charge is 20p.

Another National Trust property which will be opened to the public in early June, is Cragside, near Rothbury. Formerly the home of Lord Armstrong, this was the first house in the world to be lit by electricity generated by water power.

The humble cottage at High Street House provides a complete contrast to the grandeur of Cragside—both closely associated with world famous engineers and both places which are well worth visiting.

Articles welcome

Reports from local organisations about their activities, future events, requests for help etc., etc., are always welcome for inclusion in issues of this newsletter.

These should be sent to the Editor, Philip Brooks, at 20 Bluebell Close, or to the Clerk, Mrs. Maureen Gillis, at 27 Dene Road.

Items for the summer issue must be sent in by 25th June, and for the autumn issue by the end of September.

Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. M. Gillis, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 27 Dene Road, Wylam. (Tel.: 2503).
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