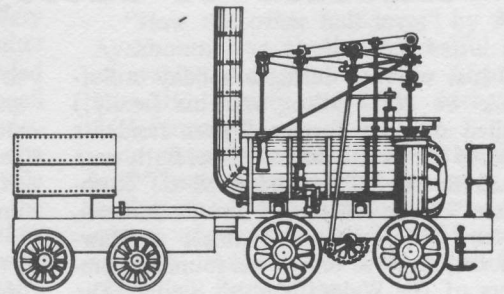


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Winter 1979/80

Quarterly

Number 27

## Local views expressed on possible highway schemes

The County Council exhibition showing some of the transport problems which exist in this part of the Tyne Valley (and their possible solutions) was displayed in the Institute on the 18th and 19th January.

In accordance with its normal practice of trying to ensure that maximum publicity is given to important local events, the Parish Council arranged for leaflets giving notice of the exhibition, to be delivered throughout the village—so that few, if any, people could complain that they didn't know it was being held.

The success of this publicity was shown by the fact that more than 400 Wylam residents completed the questionnaires giving their views on the various options.

Local residents were given an opportunity to express their opinions to the Parish Council at a public meeting held in the School on 21st January. This meeting proved most helpful, both to the Parish Council and to the members of the County Highways Department who attended.

Since many of the transport problems affect several neighbouring parishes in East Tynedale, the Parish Councils of Wylam, Horsley, Ovingham, Ovington and Prudhoe Town Council, together with local County and District Councillors, met the County Surveyor on 31st January to discuss the various schemes and to consider whether there is any general agreement on what are the most satisfactory solutions to these problems.

Comments from the Parish Councils and from local residents had to be sent to the County Surveyor by 8th February, and following consideration of the various issues and possible solutions, the Parish Council has recently submitted the following comments (summarised) to the County Council.

### *Wylam-Ovingham Riverside road*

This road should be re-opened as soon as possible once the necessary works have been carried out to make the scar safe. At the same time a footpath needs to be constructed alongside the road between Howdene burn bridge and the Waterworks cottages.

### *Ovingham Bridge*

A bridge suitable for light traffic (i.e. cars and vans) should be retained at Ovingham.

### *A new "strategic" river crossing and road linking Low Prudhoe to the A69*

On the basis of the very low projected traffic flows and the high cost of this scheme (£4m+) there appears to be little justification for its construction in the foreseeable future.

### *Prudhoe by-pass schemes*

The Parish Council strongly oppose any scheme which would encourage an increase in the number or weight of vehicles using Wylam Wood Road.

It opposes the idea of widening Eastwoods Road as an access to the Low Prudhoe Industrial Estate, and if it is decided to construct a northern by-pass to Prudhoe then there should be no junction or road link which would



*One of Wylam's most popular visitors in recent months has been the young seal which swam up the Tyne to spend occasional days in the river just downstream of Wylam Bridge. In this photograph, taken by Mr. Stone of Crawcrook, it can be seen in the centre of the picture, well camouflaged against a rock.*

However, if it proves to be necessary in the long term then the route taken should be mid-way between Wylam and Ovingham, and NOT on the line running close to Hagg Bank, past Wylam Wall, and onto Holeyn Hall Road.

### *Possible weight restriction on traffic passing through Wylam*

As there still appears to be some doubt as to how much heavy traffic could legitimately be excluded by a weight restriction order (since vehicles requiring access to premises in the village would still be allowed), and there is uncertainty as to the effect such a restriction might have on local companies, the Parish Council have suggested that a more comprehensive study of the impact of a weight restriction should be undertaken before any final decision is made on this issue.

enable vehicles to get from the by-pass onto Eastwoods Road/Wylam Wood Road since that would clearly increase the volume of traffic likely to pass through the village.

The views expressed by local residents, the Parish Councils and other bodies will be analysed by the County Surveyor's department, and considered by the Highways Committee when they make recommendations on the various alternatives at a meeting in March or April.

In due course the preferred options selected by the County Council following the recent public consultation can be considered further in the draft "Local Plan for the Tyne Valley" which is currently being prepared by Tynedale District Council.

# Memories of Holeyn Hall as World War I hospital

Last summer during a holiday in Suffolk we (the Editor and his family!) called on two former Wylam residents Misses Gwen and Janet Waller. Both were born in the village and lived at "Rushmere" at the bottom of Elm Bank Road. Their father was an engineer at Hawthorns, and was one of the founder members of the Wylam Masonic Lodge. The family left Wylam in 1920 and moved back to Suffolk, from where their ancestors came.

Both Gwen and Janet still have a very strong affection for Wylam and many happy memories of their childhood in the village. As well as lending several very interesting early photographs (their father was a keen amateur photographer)—including one reproduced in this issue, Gwen has kindly written down some of her early recollections. Although there will be relatively few residents in the village today who knew the village at the time of the First World War, this recollection concerning Holeyn Hall will be of general interest.

"During the First World War, Mrs. Stirling Newall who lived at Castle Hill (and whose husband was one of the first local residents to own a car), organised a Hospital Supply Depot. Quite a number of ladies in the village met to make gauze dressings which were neatly folded in the prescribed way and tied up in bundles. Yards of calico were torn up into strips for bandages and these were rolled up on small bandage machines. A nice occupation for us youngsters who went to help in holidays.

During the war, Holeyn Hall was used as a Convalescent Hospital for soldiers and it was fortunate to have the great interest and support of Sir James Knott, the shipping magnate who lived at Close House (two of whose sons were killed in that war). The nursing staff were composed of a qualified Matron, Sister and a Quarter Master and about six V.A.D. nurses. I specially remember those nurses—they were all friends in Wylam and prior to the war they thought they would like to have lectures and practical First Aid from the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. I can't remember where the classes were held but I do know that my brother, sister and I were the "victims" they used to practise on when they came to our house, and we were stretched out on our dining-room table to have legs, arms etc. bandaged and splinted! My mother was one of those nurses. Others included Jennie Atkinson of West House, Catta and Bertha Wilkinson of Wylam Cottage, and Kitty Foster of Tynewood (near the Waterworks).

They were all thoroughly enjoying their classes and in due course passed their exams.

It came like a bolt from the blue when suddenly war broke out, and Holeyn Hall (owned by Sir Charles Parsons) became a Convalescent Hospital and those V.A.D. nurses were told

to "man it". They worked on a rota and went on duty for a week at a time either by day or night. They had to perform all kinds of duties, both nursing and menial jobs, and were of course, unpaid.

Shortly after the war ended and the Hospital closed down, the staff at the hospital were invited to tea at Close House, with Sir James Knott. After tea Sir James disappeared behind his piano from which he emerged holding a small package which he presented to the Matron. On opening it she found a beautiful gold watch with jewels around the dial. Sir James disappeared again, and this time came back with a package for the Sister, another gold watch with some jewels (but fewer) on it. Then the Quartermaster received a similar one.

## More about unveiling of the War Memorial

Our photograph in the last issue, showing the unveiling of the war memorial stirred the memories of many local residents, two of whom (Miss Frances Foster and Miss Amy Johnson) kindly wrote giving additional information.

It was also a pleasant surprise to receive a letter from Mrs. Dorothy Catlow of West Monkseaton, whose father, Mr. John Lishman was Chairman of the Parish Council at that time. She was shown a copy of the Globe by the mother of Mrs. Oxford of 11 Stephenson Terrace, and was able to identify several of the people in the photograph. She told us that she was born at Southill, on The Crescent, in the house built by her grandfather. She left Wylam in 1929 and lived in South Africa for nearly 30 years before returning to England ten years ago. Her father was very active in local affairs for many years.

From the information we have been given from various sources we have now identified the following in the photograph. From left to right, Mr. Charles Atkinson (Secretary of the War Memorial Committee), Sir Charles Parsons, Mr. Richard Taylor (Secretary of the Institute and very active in the campaign to free the bridge from tolls), Mr. John Lishman (in long grey motoring coat), Mr. Young (with hand to his mouth. He owned Wylam Mill, and built River House, where Dr. and Mrs. Spriggs now live), Mr. Ralph Brady (with umbrella. He was the village schoolmaster for more than 40 years). To his right is Mr. John Charlton of South Wylam, and on the extreme right, Mr. Matthews who was the village postman for many years.

The unveiling ceremony took place on Saturday 10th March, 1923. The unveiling was performed by Mr. C. J. W. Blackett the Lord of the Manor, and the address was given by Colonel E. P. A. Riddell. The memorial was handed over to Mr. Lishman as Chairman of the Parish Council by Mr. Charles Atkinson. The

The nurses began to wonder whether those packages were going to hold out behind the piano! However Sir James went back and forth, and behold each nurse received a gold watch (but no jewels!) with her initials and "Holeyn Hall Hospital 1914-1919" engraved on the back. I still have my mother's and it still works!

One of the other local benefactors to the soldiers convalescing at Holeyn Hall was Charles Atkinson of West House, who arranged trips in a charabanc (see photograph).

We youngsters were encouraged to help on the local farms at holiday times during the war and I can well remember hoeing up turnips in a field at the right angle corner of Bluebell Lane—a bitterly cold job. We got paid about 3d. per hour!"

Vicar, the Rev. H. A. Barff, was Chairman of the War Memorial Committee.

The selection of the site for the memorial had in fact been the subject of local argument. The village War Memorial Committee were anxious to have the use of the site at the Bridge End, where the memorial now stands. However it was owned by the Blackett family and E. U. Blackett (C. J. W. Blackett's father) who was the Squire (but spent much of his time living away from the village) was unwilling to allow it to be used.

By coincidence when the Committee had almost given up hope of having their chosen site, E. U. Blackett died, in December 1920, and when his son inherited the estate on his 21st birthday in September 1921 one of his first actions as the new "Squire" was to offer the Committee the site which the village wanted.

## Take your rubbish here

One of the improvements which the County Council have made at the West Wylam Refuse Tip, is to provide a special Civic Amenity compound at the entrance to the tip. This will make it much easier for residents to take extra loads of rubbish to the tip themselves—without actually going on to the tip site.

There's no excuse for anyone to dump rubbish anywhere but at the official tip, which can be used free by all householders.

For the benefit of new residents, the tip is situated on Broomhouse Road, West Wylam (Prudhoe). Take the back road to Prudhoe along Wylam Wood Road, past Hagg Bank up the hill into West Wylam and then turn right past Eastwood Middle School. The entrance to the tip on the right.

Incidentally the District Council will remove items of bulky refuse if asked to do so. (Tel.: 0434 4011).

## Sweeping cuts made

Among the cuts in public services which the County Council are having to make to achieve the reductions in expenditure required by Central Government, are cuts in the frequency of high-way sweeping.

At present the streets in residential areas of villages like Wylam are swept 13 times each year (once every four weeks) but the County Council is proposing to reduce this to only six times, i.e. a reduction of 60%. The central area of the village is to be swept 26 times a year.

One inevitable, and regrettable result of these sweeping-cuts, is that the village will look more untidy, unless people make greater use of the litter bins, or take their litter home.



*Treat for the troops! A char-a-banc outing for soldiers from the Holeyn Hall hospital during the 1914-1918 war. The outing was almost certainly arranged by Charles and Jennie Atkinson, who are standing alongside the vehicle, parked outside their home, West House, Ovingham Road. Can anyone recognise any of the other people in the photograph, or identify the make of vehicle?*

## Preschool Playgroup continues to thrive

Ann Stone has provided the following report on Playgroup activities.

"Wylam Playgroup has just celebrated the end of its first year in the Falcon Centre and we are very happy in our new home. The move from the Church Hall went ahead without any serious mishaps.

Our prime concern when leaving the Church Hall was that we would no longer have access to the garden during the summer. However, the children have enjoyed playing quoits and ball games and riding bikes around the "old school yard" (an ideal location for such activities) and have been for many walks along the Nature Trail to the Jubilee Field.

During the year we have held two very successful coffee mornings in the Falcon Centre and we ran a stall on Field Day.

The money raised during the coffee mornings has enabled us to provide new equipment for the playgroup.

Playgroup is held every weekday morning except Thursday. For further

## Sn. Citizens Railcards

The question was raised at the January Parish Councillors' Surgery as to whether a Senior Citizen's Railcard was needed when using Tynedale District Council travel tokens on the train. After discussing this with British Rail and the District Council, we find that people who have the tokens will only get the half fare concession on the train if they have a Railcard. For senior citizens who only make very few journeys on the train, it may not be worth buying the Railcard, in which case they must pay the full fare; however part or all of this can be paid in tokens. There are two different types of Senior Citizen's Railcard, and if you would like further information Lynne Petrie has details. Contact her at 24 Dene Road. (Tel. 2577).

## New play for village

"How the other half loves" by Alan Ayckbourn was another successful and enjoyable production by the Amateur Dramatic Society on 24th, 25th and 26th January.

In complete contrast the Northumberland Theatre Company are coming to the Institute on 28th March to give a performance of a new play "The Reivers" specially commissioned from North East playwright Peter Dillon.

The Company's press release claims: "RIEVERS is brimful of adventure and excitement, a sixteenth century thriller: vivid, violent and packed with action, a marvellous evening of savagery and steel".

If it proves as good as the press release promises it sounds like a lively evening's entertainment.

Like our own Dramatic Society, this full time charitable Theatre Company has built up a good reputation.

It tours throughout the county and in the Borders providing live theatre for rural villages as well as the towns and urban communities.

If they are well supported in Wylam on 28th March, the Company may come to the village again, and by timing their visits to avoid clashing with the Dramatic Society productions, both can flourish—and local residents will benefit from having a wider range of theatrical productions to patronise.

## It's a threepenny one

After being able to keep the Parish Rate at no more than two pence in each of the past five years, the level of inflation together with the recent cost of erecting the new bus shelter and rebuilding the stone boundary wall at Charlie's Corner, has necessitated levying a three pence rate for 1980/81.

## Village Diary

### FEBRUARY

Friday 22nd— Wylam Community Institute Dance.

Thursday 28th— "Turin Shroud". A Talk with Slides—78 Dene Road, 8 p.m.

### MARCH

Saturday 1st— Wylam and District Labour Party Jumble Sale—Institute.

Friday 7th— Womens World Day of Prayer—Service 1.30 p.m., Methodist Church.

Thursday 13th— Work of the W.R.V.S. at 14 Bluebell Close, 8 p.m.

Friday 14th— Playing Field Association Spring Dance.

Wednesday 26th— Mothers' Union Coffee Morning, "Ranmore", Woodcroft Rd.

Thursday 27th— Talk on Radio Council for B.B.C. at 97 Dene Road, 8 p.m.

Saturday 28th— Litter Clearance Campaign (morning).

Saturday 28th— Play "The Reivers", in the Institute.

information please contact Mrs. Julia Koerner (Registration Secretary), telephone 3650. We have a waiting list of those wishing to join".

## School bus services

By the time this newsletter is published everyone who uses the school buses to Ovingham each morning will know that they have been retimed to leave Wylam at 8.20 and 8.30 a.m.

Since four Parish Councillors as well as the Parish Clerk have children attending Ovingham Middle School the Parish Council is kept well informed about school transport! However any problems about the school bus service should be reported either to the school, or to the Director of Education (Tel. 9 850181) or Mr. Wylde, the County Public Transport Officer (Tel. 9 610796).

So far as we know there have not been any difficulties with the bus services to Prudhoe High School, but if problems occur then the same advice applies.

## Litter sweep will help local groups funds

A walk around the village at this time of the year, when the leaves have fallen and vegetation has died back revealing an untidy collection of bottles, cans, bags and other rubbish which has accumulated at the bottom of hedges and elsewhere, is depressing.

The Parish Council is determined to try to clear much of this rubbish, before the Spring and is proposing a novel scheme to do this, which will enable local voluntary organisations to help tidy the village and at the same time raise money for their own funds, or deserving charities.

Local organisations will be invited to participate in this "litter sweep" to be held on Saturday morning 27th

March, and will be paid for the litter collected. The detailed arrangements will be worked out during the next few weeks, and details sent to local organisations, but if any societies or groups are interested at this stage, it would be helpful if they could let Maureen Gillis, Clerk to the Parish Council at 27 Dene Road (Tel. 2503), know as soon as possible.

This will be an ideal opportunity for groups like the Cubs, Guides, Boys' Brigade, Youth Club, Football and Cricket Clubs, Playing Fields Association, Shelter, W.I., Churches, Drama Society and many others to raise money for their own funds, or if they prefer it, to donate the money they "earn" to a charity.

## Stephenson Bicentenary

With the imminence (in June 1981) of the bicentenary of the birth of George Stephenson, the Parish Council will during the coming months be considering ways in which the village might commemorate this important event. Suggestions would be welcome.

The County Council have allowed the garden area in front of Stephenson's birthplace to be extended to enclose part of the former railway track, and a new boundary fence has recently been erected.

It has also been agreed to assist the National Trust in improving the appearance of the area at the back of the cottage.

The possibility of repositioning or undergrounding the unsightly timber electricity poles and overhead lines which pass across the front of Stephenson's Cottage has been discussed with the Electricity Board who have indicated that they could not justify the cost of such work at the present time.

## Congratulations!

Two Wylam residents have recently been appointed to important positions within public services in the Tynedale area.

Patrick Eavis, of Wylam Wood Road, is at present headmaster of Manor Park School, Newcastle but is to be the new headmaster of the Queen Elizabeth High School in Hexham from next September.

David Johnson who lives in Bluebell Close and has been Chief Crime Prevention Officer at the Northumbria Police Headquarters at Ashington, is now in charge of the Hexham Sub-Division of the Northumbria Police.

Anyone who knows either Patrick or David will know they have considerable energy and enthusiasm—both of which they will need in their new appointments. We give them our congratulations and good wishes.

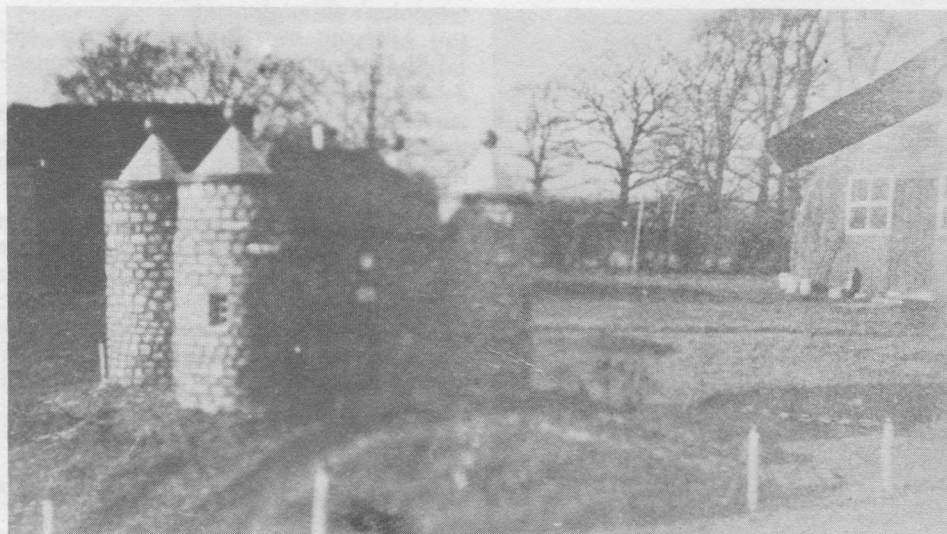
## Help us to help you

Several residents have taken advantage of the Parish Councillors' surgery, now being held once a month in the Falcon Centre, on Saturday mornings, between 10.30 – 11.30.

This is an ideal opportunity for you to bring your problems to the attention of the Parish Council, although anyone unable to attend these surgeries is of course welcome to contact Mrs. Gillis, the Parish Clerk at 27 Dene Road (Tel. 2503) or any Parish Councillor, at any reasonable time.

The next Parish Councillors' Surgeries are to be held on Saturday 8th March and 19th April in the Falcon Centre.

*Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. M. Gillis, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 27 Dene Road, Wylam. (Tel.: 2503).*  
Printed for Wylam Parish Council by The Gilpin Press, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne & Wear.



*This photograph of the model Bavarian-style castle built by the German P.O.W.'s (and referred to in Stanley Blenkinsop's article in the last issue) was kindly lent by Mr. Ramsay of Blackett Cottages.*

## Hagg Bank play area Book the date

A contract has been let for the work to be carried out in clearing and levelling the allotment at Hagg Bank which is to be used as a small children's playground.

Subsequently most of the site is to be turfed, but with a part being paved. This is to be done in the Spring when one or two items of play equipment will also be installed on the site. The Parish Council have asked the District Council to make a grant towards the cost of this project.

## Message to Parents

Eric Ford, Headmaster of Wylam School, writes—

It is very important at this time that I am able to give an accurate forecast of children in Wylam First School as far ahead as September 1981.

To help me to do this, would parents who have children who were born between 1st September 1975 and 31st August 1977, and would like their child to be registered with the school, please ring 2771 or write to the school giving the child's full name, date of birth and address.

To give you all plenty of warning—and particularly those who book events well in advance, the Parish Council have fixed the Annual Parish Meeting (the public meeting) for Wednesday 14th May at 7.30 p.m. in the Institute. Book the date now.

## New Sports Competition

Tynedale Sports Council intend to repeat the very successful inter-village competition held in Jubilee Year. The dates have not yet been finalised but preliminary arrangements are in hand and any interested team or individual competitors should contact Alan Jones (Tel. 2556) who is the Parish Council's representative on the Sports Council.

Wylam and Horsley will be combining to compete against between 30 - 40 other District teams in the following events: Angling, Athletics, Badminton, Cricket, Darts, Football, Golf, Riding, Road Race, Shooting, Squash, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis and Tug of War.