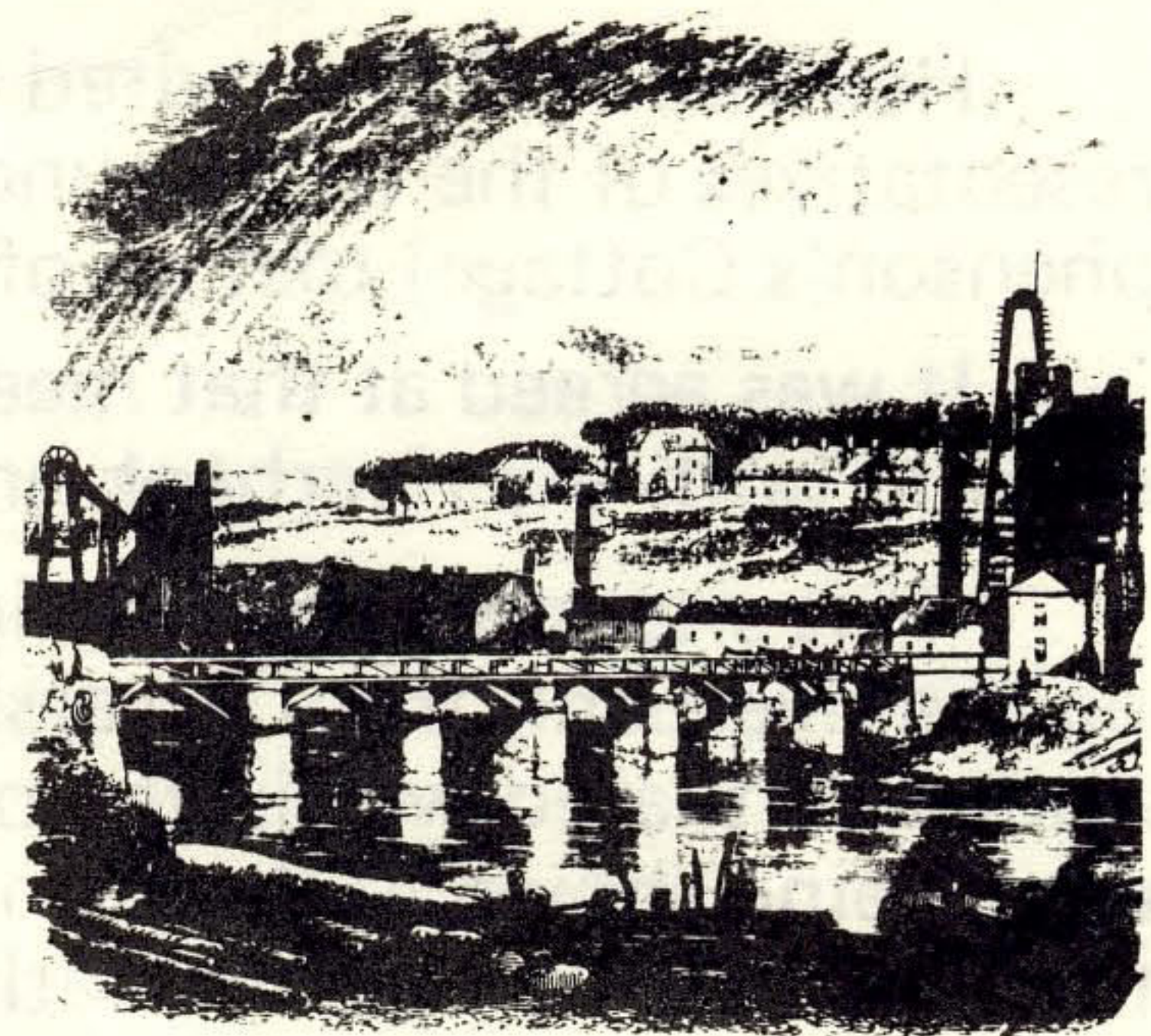


# WYLAM GLOBE

The Newsletter of  
Wylam Parish Council



Wylam in 1860

---

Number 3

January 1974



A happy New Year to all our readers.

1974 will be a challenging year for everyone and especially those concerned with local government where the new Councils will be taking over on 1st April.

Since some of the detailed working arrangements for the operation of certain services are still under discussion, both within and between the new authorities, we will postpone giving an up-to-date statement on "who will be doing what" until our next issue, early in April.

Most of you will know that in view of the national economic situation the Government has recently announced a cut-back in proposed public and local government expenditure for 1974/5

It is not yet certain whether any of the local projects will have to be deferred as a result of this, but this should be known within the next few months.

Notwithstanding this uncertainty it may be of general interest to outline the major projects which are now in progress in the village, or are at present programmed to begin this year.

For many, improved education facilities are of the greatest importance, and building work on the New Primary School (or First School, as it will become on reorganisation) in Bell Road, is progressing well and the buildings should be ready for occupation by Easter.

Much of the existing school will then be "freed" for other uses — including the conversion of part into a much needed permanent sub-branch library (finance permitting!).

Good progress is also being made on the Horsley - Heddon - Throckley by-pass which is carving its way across the northern extremity of the parish, just beyond the existing Hexham - Newcastle road. This project involves the construction of some 13.8 Km (we're going metric) of new road at a cost of £5.7 millions, and should be opened in the summer of 1975.

However with the possibilities of shortages of petrol and the certainty of increased petrol prices, anything which can be done to create more attractive local walks (and perhaps persuade motorists to use their cars less for leisure motoring) is to be welcomed, and the recent decision of the County Council to acquire and reclaim the 4 miles of disused railway between Wylam and Newburn, will be of local benefit, both for the improvement which this will create in the appearance of the village, and the attraction of the walkway itself.

The purchase of the line and the old station yard by the County Council is now complete and it is hoped to begin work in the Spring.

A start on building the new public lavatories in the old station yard has been unavoidably delayed, but work should begin shortly, and be completed so that they are ready for use in the Summer.

Similarly, work on removing the old "Butchers bridge" and reducing the bend will be finished by early summer, and good progress is now being made on constructing the subway-tunnel on the level of the railway track, which is the first part of this project.

Unfortunately the County Surveyor has advised that the making-up of Tyne View and West View (a scheme which has been constantly pressed by local councillors) is likely to be delayed for several months at least, because of pressure of other work.

The laying of new sewers in some parts of the village will also begin in the next few weeks (Some of the new pipes have recently been stacked on the waste ground south of the Dene Estate shops).

This will be part of Phase III of the Mid-Tyne sewerage scheme, which involves work at Corbridge, Stocksfield, Ovington and Wylam. The whole scheme should be completed by September. Several roads in Wylam will be affected by this work including parts of the following - Woodcroft Road, Main Road, The Dene, Falcon Terrace and Ingham Row.

Whilst this may cause some inconvenience over the next few months, it will be of benefit in the longer term.

### GEORGE STEPHENSON'S COTTAGE AND ELECTRICITY PYLONS

Some publicity has already been given to the proposal by the Central Electricity Generating Board to construct a major new high-voltage overhead line from South Durham to a large sub-station to be built north west of Heddon. This will be part of an extensive scheme to improve the electricity supply to meet the increasing demands for power in the region.

Inevitably there are considerable difficulties in trying to find a route for this new line of pylons which will be acceptable to everyone concerned, and after examining several alternatives, a route which will involve a crossing over the Tyne, just downstream of Wylam bridge, and west of Stephenson's Cottage, has been proposed by the C.E.G.B.



Hexham R.D.C. invited the Parish Council to give its views on the suggested route, and representatives of the two Councils, together with Representatives of the National Trust (who own Stephenson's Cottage) met an official from the C.E.G.B. early in December.

It was agreed at that meeting, that any new pylons should be set back, as far north as possible, away from both the riverbank and the Cottage.

This site meeting also highlighted the unsightliness of the existing overhead line which runs along the riverbank from Riverside Nurseries to Streethouses, with several ugly wooden poles and equipment situated within the open area in front of Stephenson's Cottage. With the increasing interest being shown in Stephenson's birthplace by tourists and visitors, and the growing popularity of this riverside area for recreation, both the Parish Council and the National Trust feel that these eyesores should be removed and have asked the North Eastern Electricity Board to consider undergrounding this length of overhead line along the riverside.

If this were done in conjunction with the reclamation proposed for the disused railway track, it would create a considerable improvement in the environment of the riverside east of the village.

## VOLUNTEERS

A successful small-scale exercise involving clearance of the overgrown footpath along the riverside next to the Boys Brigade field was completed by local volunteers early in November.

There are many other similar tasks which need to be done in the village, and could easily and cheaply be carried out by volunteers; e.g. clearance of rubbish and tidying various areas of waste ground, and improvement of the riverbanks.

It is hoped that local residents and societies will be willing to help to do this type of work in the Spring and Summer.

Further details of arrangements will be given in the next issue.

## TREES

New trees have recently been planted on Coldwell Hill, in the Engine Dene and on Station Road - and (given a chance !) they should grow well. Thanks are due to Councillor Peter Bennett for his help in getting some of this work done. The District Council are being asked to replace the dead and dying trees in the Dene Estate landscaped areas, and also to ensure that all of the trees are properly staked and tied. This is a job never satisfactorily done by the estate developers!



## PUBLIC FOOTPATH - ENGINE DENE

The Parish Council have asked Hexham R.D.C. for help in improving the surface of the muddy footpath which runs along the northern edge of Engine Dene. This path, which is a public right of way, links Bluebell Close with Algernon Terrace and Hoieyn Hall Road.

## NEW LAMPS FOR OLD

New lamps have recently been fitted to the standards in Hedley Road, Parson Road and Bell Road, but unfortunately one of them has since been smashed deliberately.

A new lamp standard is also to be erected at the end of Jackson Road, to light the back of the Dene Estate shops and the footpath linking through to Hadworth Gardens.

## COMMUNITY PLAYING FIELDS PROJECT - PROGRESS REPORT

An up-to-date estimate of cost for this project has now been obtained by the Playing Fields Association, and this amounts to approximately £9000 for the drainage, levelling and seeding of the field, and for provision of a hard-surfaced childrens play area, and a car park.

As costs have risen steeply and grants have become more difficult to obtain since the scheme was first prepared, the provision of a clubhouse will now have to be deferred until some future date. However notwithstanding this, the facilities to be provided will be of great benefit to the village, and it is hoped that despite the economic situation, grants will still be available for the scheme and the Association are at present investigating this.

As soon as an assessment can be obtained of the amount of money likely to be forthcoming in grant aid, the Association will circulate full details of the revised scheme to all residents. If at that stage the financial support from the village is sufficient then it is hoped that the project will go forward.

In the meantime the Association will continue with its efforts to raise funds for the project and looks forward to continued local help. Details of some of the activities arranged are mentioned in "What's on".

## ANY IDEAS PLEASE?

At its meeting at the end of January, The Parish Council will be preparing its financial estimates for the forthcoming year, and considering ideas and suggestions about things which need to be done in the village.

Mention has already been made of most of the big projects to be carried out by the County and District Councils — but there are several smaller tasks (e.g. possible provision of more public seats in the village) which the Parish Council might do. The Parish Council also has powers to support local projects of benefit to the community (e.g. the playing fields scheme). If you've any ideas on what you'd like to be done, don't hesitate to let any of your Parish Councillors know within the next week or two, or drop a line to Mrs. D. Fairless, Clerk of the Parish Council, at 31, Falcon Terrace.