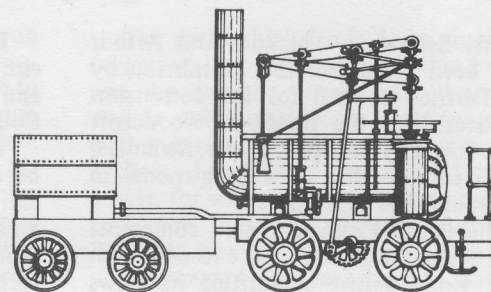


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



October 1982

Number 33

## Great progress, but keep going—Only £3,500 to find!

'Miraculous', 'Unbelievable', was how many residents have described the tremendous success of the Institute Appeal in raising more than £23,000 in little more than three months. No one could have predicted that this amount would have been raised so quickly!

Looking back now, the decision by the Hexham Magistrates in June to insist that major alterations were carried out this year to meet fire regulations, before they would renew the annual 'Music, Singing and Dancing' Licence next April, came as a dramatic shock to the village, but was probably a blessing in disguise.

This threat brought home to all local residents the very real danger that the Institute—the centre of village functions for almost a century—might have to close. The magistrates' decision provided the necessary stimulus to the Institute Committee and Trustees, who then acted with commendable speed.

Recognising that in addition to the essential fire-safety work, some other improvements to the premises were long overdue, the Committee asked local architect Jim Coulson to prepare plans to show what could be done.

To discover local views, and enlist support, a public meeting was held on 16 June, to which village organisations were invited. The problems facing the Institute were explained and two alternative schemes outlined, one involving only the essential safety work to meet the requirements of the magistrates, and the other to incorporate various desirable improvements which could conveniently be carried out at the same time as the essential work. It was unanimously agreed that the village should aim to raise funds for the more extensive scheme of improvements, to include the fitting of fire doors and an external fire escape; much improved toilet and kitchen facilities; conversion of the vacant caretaker's flat to provide additional meeting rooms and changing rooms and showers on the first floor, linked to the main hall; replacement of the outdated heating system and installation of improved emergency lighting.

As so often happens in the village whenever a genuine need occurs, local people are not slow in coming forward and immediately the Institute appeal had been launched, donations and offers of help in organising fund-raising events poured in.

Fortunately the fund-raising got off to a very good start with an early promise of £5000 from the C. J. W. Blackett Village Trust, followed by £3000 from the District Council and £2000 from the County Council. The Parish Council has contributed £2000.

With much of the money being raised so quickly the architect was authorised to finalise the plans (incorporating suggestions made by residents and local organisations) and to obtain tenders from contractors.

Based on the lowest tender received the likely total cost of carrying out all the improvements required is over £26,000, which means that the village needs to raise about £3500 more now, or to delay some of the much needed improvements.



*Without the fine efforts of local residents in the 1890's, we might still be using this building which was the original Reading Room and Institute on Charlie's Corner.*

These contributions are most welcome, and without them it would have taken the village much longer to reach the sum required.

But the speed with which more than £11,000 has been raised by local people, in cash donations or covenants from individuals, businesses, and organisations (many of whom have held, or are holding special events) has been tremendously encouraging for the Appeal Committee, and for everyone concerned with the future of the Institute and community life in the village. Even former residents, who have left the village (one from abroad) have given to the fund.

The Institute Trustees are anxious to avoid being in debt when the programme of improvements is completed, which means that the complete range of improvements can only be carried out when the money has been raised to pay for it.

Therefore although the bulk of the money has been collected in record time, thanks to the splendid efforts and generosity of local people, it will now need a special effort during the next few weeks and especially during Community Week (6-13 November) to raise the last £3500.

(Cont. at bottom of back page)

## New home for Surgery—but no cure for this!

Drs. Swinburn, Thicknes and Arthur have been given planning permission by the District Council for the conversion of Riversdale, the house in Woodcroft Road formerly occupied by Dr. Swindale, into a surgery with consulting rooms on the ground and first floors.

The Parish Council invited comments from residents at the west end of Woodcroft Road before submitting its views on the proposal to the District Council, and are grateful to those who responded.

Parking near the surgery undoubtedly causes periodic problems, as there is no practical or convenient area for parking patients' cars. The Parish Council realises this, but believes that there is no longer an alternative site in the village which is readily available where a purpose-built surgery might be built and which would be much better than the Woodcroft Road premises.

The possibility of an extension to the Falcon Centre was considered, but this has also a number of disadvantages. Other vacant sites which might have been available ten years ago for a new surgery have now been put to other uses.

It seems that residents in Woodcroft Road will continue to have the surgery in their midst, on the same site where a doctor has been living for more than 70 years.

## Painting for pleasure

The Ovingham and Wylam Art Group now meets in the Falcon Centre at 7 p.m. on every third Tuesday in the month. New members will be welcome whether experienced or not. Further details can be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs. M. Britten, Tel.: 2381.

## You 11-16? Don't miss this exciting life!

Frank Phillips, Scout Leader, writes:

The Scout Troop is now a year old and well established in the village as many of you will already know.

We recently returned from a very successful summer camp near Barnard Castle, which was the highlight of a busy and eventful year.

A fair amount of our time has naturally been spent raising funds with which we have purchased several tents, cooking equipment, ropes, spars and various items of training equipment. We would like to thank the Parish Council for their grant aid and also the people of Wylam who have supported our financial efforts so generously.

However, most of our year has been devoted to training the Scouts in the basic skills required to carry out all their outdoor activities—camping, hiking, pioneering, swimming and much more. We have built rafts, and raced them across the River Tees; we spent a weekend in a shepherd's hut in the Simonside Hills exploring the fells; we visited Redesdale

It is nearly ten years since Dutch elm disease appeared in Northumberland and it has now spread throughout the County.

This year many elms in Wylam have been newly infected and nearly 200 elm trees in the village have now been killed or are dying from the disease. Other elms not yet infected will almost certainly become so in the next year or two.

There is no effective treatment and the only action that can be taken is to fell the trees, and burn the infected bark, as soon as possible.

The Parish Council is taking action to cut down diseased trees along the riverside, on the Bumbler Box plantation and on other land which the Council owns.

Residents who have elms affected by the disease in their gardens are recommended to have them felled. If not the dead trees themselves could become a danger when branches begin to fall.

Don't forget to support the village tree-planting campaign (mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter) and plant at least two or three new trees (not elms!) to replace every one that you have cut down.

## Christmas countdown

There will be a charity Coffee Morning on Saturday 20 November from 10 a.m.-12 noon in the Falcon Centre.

Christmas cards and gifts will be on sale in aid of various charities.

Come along and enjoy a cup of coffee while you choose your Christmas cards and presents, and support charities.

Save your bus/train fare and the hassle of shopping in town!

Forestry Depot and helped fell and trim trees and 'log up' spars for our pioneering; we had a pleasant 10 mile hike around Wylam on one of the coldest days last winter; we planted trees in the village, cleared away rubbish and washed the Institute windows (first time for many a year!) The climax of our year was to spend seven glorious days under canvas by the Tees at Sledwich Hall cooking on wood fires, hiking, playing games, an expedition to Cauldron Snout and High Force, a day exploring Barnard Castle and at the end of the week a sing-song and sketches round the camp fire in a clearing in the trees close by the river. A truly magnificent end to a most enjoyable and rewarding year for Scouts and Leaders alike.

If this has stirred the imagination of any of you younger readers, well now's your chance to join us—boys between 11-16 years are welcome to come to our meetings every Friday between 7-9 p.m. in St. Oswin's Church Hall—why not bring a friend along too?

## Jobs for the boys?

Three years ago the Parish Council employed a team of young people under the Job Creation Scheme to carry out various improvements in the village (including building the bus shelter at Charlie's Corner). More recently work has been carried out at St. Oswin's, and in the Church Hall.

To help provide training and employment, and at the same time improve the village, another team recruited by Community Task Force under one of the Government Schemes has just begun work in the village. They will be reconstructing paths in Engine Dene, repointing walls, painting railings, improving the Institute garden, clearing paths and dead trees, fencing and tree-planting on sites throughout the village.

Additionally they will be helping the Playing Fields Association improve the pavilion, and doing work for the Methodists on the Chapel and 'hut'.

## Book school places

Would parents of children who will be five years old between 1st September 1983 and 31st August 1984 and would like their child to attend Wylam First School, please contact the school by 'phone (Tel. 2771) or letter, as soon as possible giving details of the name, date of birth, home address and telephone number.

To comply with the 1980 Education Act, parents of children who will be starting school in the next school year may collect a copy of the school and county booklets from school after 1st February, 1983.

## Lorry ban rejected

A plea by our County Councillor, Timothy Kirkhope, to restrict the flow of heavy lorries through the village, has been turned down by the County Council Highways Committee, who felt that the number of lorries was not excessive, and that the alternative routes, via Newburn, Scotswood, Bywell or Styford bridges would create problems in those areas, and could add significantly to the costs of some hauliers.

## Miss Gwen Walker

Readers of the 'Globe' who have enjoyed seeing many of the old photographs of the village, will be sorry to hear of the death last March of Miss Gwen Walker, who lived with her sister Janet near Woodbridge, Suffolk. They were born in Wylam and lived at Rushmere, Elm Bank Road, until they moved to Suffolk in 1920. She always retained a strong affection for the village, and we were pleased to see her when she came here specially for the Stephenson Celebrations last year. She and her sister very kindly gave us a number of local photographs which their father had taken in the early 1900's and which now form part of the village collection.

We offer her sister, Janet, our sympathy.



## Exodus?—Vicar and Churchwardens retire

The Parish Church has lost more than its fair share of 'key' figures in recent weeks, with the retirement of the Vicar, followed by the departure of the two churchwardens, Tony Hurd and Alan Jones.

Canon Kenneth Boddy retired on 31 August, after more than 17 years in Wylam. The village has grown substantially during this period, and we thank the Vicar and his wife for the contribution they have made to church and community life during their stay in the village, and wish them a long and happy retirement. Although they have left Wylam, they have only gone 'down the road' to Hexham to live and we shall no doubt see them again.

At a splendid supper held after evening on 8th October John Wilson, who has been a chorister at St. Oswin's for more than 60 years, presented Mr. Boddy with a fine inscribed sandwich tray in

Lindisfarne silver, and a cheque, on behalf of local residents.

Tony and Heather Hurd have had to move rather further away, to Bristol, following Tony's transfer to a new job.

Our thanks to Tony, not only for his work as a churchwarden, but also as a Parish Councillor from 1969-76, when he was the first of the Dene Estate 'new-comers' to join the Council. Thanks also to Heather for her help with Brownies/Guides and other village organisations.

The other churchwarden, Alan Jones, will be spending much of the next twelve months enjoying the delights of Turkey, where the consulting engineers for whom he works are to design a new bridge over the Golden Horn in Istanbul.

The new churchwardens are Colin Tyson and Alan Walton, but a new vicar will probably not be appointed until the new vicarage is completed in the spring.

## Path being misused

The path which leads down from the corner of Woodcroft Road (behind what was the doctor's house) onto the walkway is only suitable for pedestrians. It is too narrow and awkward for motorcyclists, horseriders, pedal cyclists or prams, for whom a special tarmac ramped path was specially provided near the Bumbler Box bridge several years ago.

To prevent its unauthorised use by motorcyclists etc., some additional bollards and fencing are being erected, which should help to stop damage to the path and to neighbouring fences.

It might also deter the one or two residents of Woodcroft Road who continue to take wheelbarrow loads of rubbish down that path, dumping it on to the walkway embankment. Since they risk a £100 fine for doing it they must have more money than sense!

## Line to be replaced

During the next few months the Electricity Board is planning to replace the existing overhead electricity line which runs from the sub-station near the Bumbler Box bridge (at the western end of the playing field) alongside the allotments and then across the fields to the Hagg and West Wylam.

The present heavy poles supporting numerous wires are unsightly and although the Electricity Board cannot justify the cost of putting the cables underground, they have agreed to use single poles and fewer wires, and to take away the special additional poles alongside the walkway which were needed when the railway was in use.

Although everyone would prefer it if the cables were completely out of sight, the new line should be a great improvement on the present one, and make this section of the country walkway more attractive.

## Feeling crafty?!

At the end of November, at the same time as the Christmas card sale, the Housewives' Discussion Group are going to hold a sale of work in aid of the Institute.

Please would YOU make something for us to sell . . . knitted, sewn, baked, painted . . . craftwork, pottery . . . jam, pickles . . . a well rooted cutting from a plant . . . an offer of a couple of hours gardening, painting or woodwork . . .

It would help us to do justice if you would indicate a suitable price, and anything donated will be returned if unsold, if it has a name and address on it.

Watch for posters giving date and place . . . we will collect during the previous week.

Please help us to help the Institute!

Mrs. P. Jackson of Iveagh Cottage, Ovingham Road has kindly offered to machine-knit plain jumpers and cardigans, profits to the Institute Fund. Tel.: 2141.



These two electricity poles alongside the old railway track should be removed when NEEB replace the overhead line.

## New gifts for Museum—local item sought

Two excellent early examples of Wylam souvenir china, and a copy of the Parish Newsletter for November 1908, have recently been given to the Parish Council for display in the village library/museum.

The china souvenirs were kindly donated by Miss Davison (formerly of Harby House) who now lives in Cumbria and will be displayed with a souvenir cup previously given by Mrs. & Mrs. John Caudle.

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Fletcher have promised two of the old bridge passes which they have, to add to the one given by Edward Swindale, but offers of more items of local interest will be most welcome.

If anyone has relics of Wylam's past history which they would be willing to give, or lend for display please contact Mrs. Maureen Gillis, Clerk to the Parish Council at 27 Dene Road. (Tel.: 2503).

Things we would like include tools used at Wylam Colliery, or items from local doctors, tradesmen, craftsmen, shopkeepers or anyone else who lived or worked in the village in the past. Old bills, accounts from local tradesmen, programmes referring to local events etc. etc., in fact anything which is part of the history of Wylam and its residents, past and present.

Whatever you can offer (within reason!) we will try and display. All offers please to Maureen Gillis.

## Bythorne Farm latest

Tynedale District Council has told the Parish Council that they have agreed to allow Mr. Dawson twelve months (expiring in June 1983) in which to find an alternative site for his timber storage/sales business and clear the open storage area north-east of the farmhouse.

## Come and see all your Wylam yesterdays!

The plea in our last issue for old photographs brought an excellent response, with many 'new' old photographs being lent to us. Beth Mills, Bob Davison, Stan Irwin, Janet Waller and Miss Davison (whose father built Harby House on Ovingham Road in 1907 and was draper in the village for many years) are among those who have very kindly lent or given photographs recently.

These, together with others collected over the last few years, are being copied and will provide a fascinating display in the Institute during Community Week.

These have been requests in the past from residents wanting to buy copies of some of the old photographs which

have appeared in the Globe and local publications and it will be possible during the Community Week exhibition to order prints of many of these.

Several other residents have told us of old photographs they possess—if you have any please lend them for display at this special exhibition (letting Maureen Gillis at 27 Dene Road, Clerk to the Parish Council have them beforehand, so that they can be displayed properly). Alternatively please bring them in to show us during the exhibition.

Incidentally we hope to include old programmes of local events, newspaper cuttings and items of village interest as well as the photographs.



*One for the record. Not available for inclusion in our last issue, this was taken at the naming of Swindale Cottages in May. Edward and Wendy Swindale (right) with Mrs. Nora Handcock, Chairman of the District Council, and Parish Council Chairman, Philip Brooks.*

## Need new trees to save village landscape

This year the loss of trees due to dutch elm disease, or just old age and decay, has been particularly noticeable. Inspection of the woods and hedgerows around the village has shown that many of the trees are old and have only a limited life.

Unless a positive effort is made to plant young trees in hedgerows, the corners of fields, in gardens and open spaces, the landscape in and around the village will become much less attractive for both present and future generations.

We are now benefitting from trees planted fifty or more years ago, and we should do the same for those who will live in Wylam in the 21st century. Future generations will not thank us for shelving this problem and leaving it for others.

In an effort to remedy the present situation the Parish Council has asked the County Council's Landscape Architect to look around the whole parish and advise on where new treeplanting should be carried out, to improve the landscape.

Once his suggestions are available, the Parish Council will consider them and discuss the ideas with local landowners and anyone else affected. Discussions will also be held with the Countryside Commission on the possibility of obtaining grant aid for a comprehensive amenity tree-planting scheme throughout the village.

## Holidays for OAP's

Last year the trustees of the Blackett estate donated £80,000 to Age Concern—Northumberland, the income from which would be used to provide convalescence holidays for elderly people living in Tynedale District. The holidays are taken at the Convalescent Home, Silloth.

Anyone interested should apply through their doctor, health visitor or social worker.

This Holiday Fund is quite separate from the C. J. W. Blackett Village Trust, although both have been set up to distribute money left by the late Mr. Blackett.

## Trust help elderly

The Trustees of the C. J. W. Blackett Village Trust have taken decisions this year to support two schemes which will benefit older residents in the village.

The first has been to make a generous grant of £5000 towards the Institute Appeal, where several of the improvements will be of special benefit to the elderly, and the second is to assist the Friends of Wylam to purchase new chairs, tables and crockery for use at the various functions which they arrange for the enjoyment of our older residents. These will be purchased in the Spring, once the alterations to the Institute have been completed.

The Blackett Trustees also hope to be able to make another 'Christmas Gift' available to all OAP's in the local villages again this year, and detailed arrangements will be announced in due course.

In the meantime the Parish Council would like to keep the list of pensioners which was prepared last December, up to date. If you are in receipt of a State pension and have moved into Wylam since last December, please notify Mrs. Gillis, Clerk to the Parish Council, at 27 Dene Road. Similarly it would be helpful if she could be told of any pensioners who have moved from the village or died since December 1981.

## All you need to know

The very popular and much appreciated Village Information Card has recently been revised and a new edition (green, this time) is enclosed with this newsletter.

## Institute Appeal

*(Continued from Page 1)*

If you have not yet had an opportunity to make a donation to the Institute Fund (or have perhaps delayed signing a covenant) your contribution is urgently needed now, so that all of the improvements planned can go ahead. Even if you have already given to the Fund, please consider giving a little more.

Please send your donation to F. Parker, The Haven, Elm Bank Road. (Tel. 2575) or to Mrs. E. Beattie, 24 Woodvale Gardens (Tel. 2311), as soon as possible.

Special thanks to everyone who has helped in making the fund-raising campaign such a success so far. Please keep going a little longer! The result will be well worth the effort.

*(P.S. The Institute will be closed from the end of Community Week until next March, so that the conversion work can be carried out without interruption).*

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