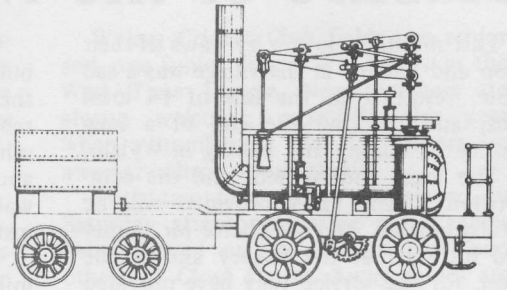


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Spring 1983

Number 34

## “New-Look” Institute to be reopened in early May

The event you have been waiting for for weeks—the official re-opening of the ‘new-look’ Institute, will take place on the evening of Friday 6th May. Other events are also being held that weekend to celebrate the re-opening. A Coffee Morning on the Saturday (in the new double-size downstairs room), followed by a Celebration Dance in the evening. For the young people and teenagers a Junior Disco is planned for 7 p.m. on Monday, 9th May.

Few people have had the opportunity to watch the progress which has been made in recent months in improving the inside of the Institute, but we’re sure that when you see it at the beginning of May you’ll be most impressed with the results. We’ll not describe all the improvements since that would spoil the surprise, however local architect Jim Coulson and contractor David Fisher and his men seem to have done an excellent job, on a very tight budget.

It is inevitable when altering a building of the size and age of the Institute, that unforeseen problems requiring attention will arise as work progresses, and which will add to the cost of the scheme. The estimated total cost of all the work carried out by the builder; the replacement of guttering and down pipes; the redecoration of the interior (as necessary) by young people under one of the MSC programmes and some by volunteers; architects fees etc., is likely to be around £30,000, some £3,500 more than the preliminary estimate given last October.

The Institute Appeal Committee is therefore continuing their fund-raising efforts and hopes that all local residents, societies and businesses will consider whether they could make an additional donation to the fund to help meet this extra cost. Institute Treasurer Fred Parker, The Haven, Elm Bank Road, would be most grateful for any additional donations.

Within the past few weeks a further substantial grant of £2500 has been received from the Blackett Village Trust (in addition to the £5000 already given) and the Special Gift Auction held on 26 March raised more than £600 for the Appeal Fund.

The small rooms in the Institute will need curtains and floorcoverings, and offers of these would be very welcome as there is no money for buying new at present. Offers please to Mrs. Beattie, Mrs. Parker or any member of the Institute Committee.

Although there will be opportunity at the re-opening to personally thank those people who have worked so hard in planning the improvements to the Institute; in raising the funds to do it, and then in carrying it out, it is appropriate here to publicly record our thanks.

Of the numerous people who have helped with the Institute appeal projects none would deny that Fred and Lorraine Parker, Jean McCallum and Jim Coulson are four who deserve our very special thanks. There are many others, more than we could name, who have contributed greatly to the success of the appeal; your satisfaction is the knowledge that your efforts have helped to secure the future of the Institute—something for which present and future generations will always be grateful.



Work in progress, transforming the two ground floor rooms in the Institute.

### THE READING ROOM

Extract from the Parish Magazine for August, 1894

“A suitable site having been given jointly by Mr. J. B. G. Tottie, Esq., and Major Blackett, it is proposed to erect a building to include reading room, recreation room, public room for entertainments (to seat 300), bath rooms, and caretaker’s cottage. All will be vested in trustees, and managed by a committee chosen by the members, and as every precaution will be taken to work the scheme on non-political and unsectarian lines, it is confidently expected that permanent benefit to the village will result. The total cost will be about £1,700, exclusive of furnishing, which is estimated to bring the total to about £2,000. Subscriptions already promised—Norman and Mrs. Cookson, £1,000; B. C., per N. C. Cookson, £25.”

*This shows the major contribution made by the Cookson family to the scheme for building the “new” Reading Room (Institute). Mr. and Mrs. Norman Cookson lived at Oakwood. They were the grandparents, and B. C. (Bryan Cookson) the father, of Mr. Roland Cookson who now lives in The Brow. The Reading Room was opened to members in May 1896.*

# Closure of the Mill marks the end of an era

Last month's closure by Laws of their shop and bakery in the village was a sad blow, resulting in the loss of 14 local jobs, and marking the end of a long history of milling and baking in Wylam.

The local employment and the competition which Laws provided will be greatly missed, and we thank Mr. Limer and his staff at the bakery and in the shop, for the service they have provided to local residents over many years.

Following my letter to the 'Hexham Courant' regarding the mill closure several people have expressed interest in further information on the history of the mill, so I have expended the details given in that letter.

The very origins of the name of Wylam itself may relate to the presence of a water mill. The Oxford Dictionary of Place Names defines 'Wylam' as being derived from the old English 'Wil' meaning a trick or contrivance indicating the existence of something mechanical such as a watermill or fish trap. Wylam = 'the village with a wile'.



Mill owner, Edward Young (in overcoat) with his employees outside Wylam Mill in about 1903. A fine photograph kindly lent by Mr. Harry Shipley.

From the 11th or early 12th century Wylam belonged to the Priors of Tynemouth and there are various references to the mill in the records of the Priory.

As well as paying rents the villagers had various duties and responsibilities to the Prior and amongst the entries for 1295 are the following, 'Robert Long holds 8 acres, rent 3s. He shall reap in the Autumn as much as shall be necessary for the Prior's food once a day. He shall hoe once in the Summer. He shall make hay. He shall do days work at the mill when necessary.'

'Dolfin pays for his house 12d yearly and 5 work days in Autumn. He shall make the hay and shall be with his neighbours at the mill for one work day'.

During this period the village suffered severely from Scottish raids but the Scots could not be blamed for the following problems of 1378;

'The (water) mill is totally dry and built twice at great expense, and again the water is dry, nor till now has it been rebuilt, and it pays nothing. The coal mine is destroyed on account of the abundance of water . . .' (It seems the water was in the wrong place—in the mine instead of at the mill!)

Little is known about local mills or millers in the years following the Priors of Tynemouth ownership of the village until the mid 19th century, except for the names of two or three corn millers (e.g. W. Oliver 1762, George Tweddell 1832 and 1836, John Hall 1848). Whether these were millers at Wylam Mill or Bradley Mill is not definitely known.

At the 1851 census John Brown (44) was miller at Wylam Mill, with his wife Ann (32) a young son and three servants Edward Milburn, John Burn and Mary Ann Laws. Within a few months John Brown was dead. His widow, Ann, took over the running of the mill and in May 1859 she and Margaret Hunter, 'spinster of Wylam', leased the mill from E. A. Blackett for 21 years at £105 per year.

It was described then as a water corn mill with three pairs of grindstones.

Part of the water necessary to drive the mill came from the Oakwood Burn, but the lessee of Wylam Colliery was also required to conduct the water pumped out of the pit to the mill. The mill tenant was allowed whatever coal he required for the mill and house, at no cost, and he was also entitled to cross Wylam Bridge free.

Ann Brown died in 1865 at the age of 46 and Edward Milburn subsequently leased the mill from Blackett in 1871. One condition was that he must convert it from a water mill to a steam driven mill within one year. It was presumably then that the chimney was built. This served as a local landmark but was demolished after the fire of 1931.

The mill clearly prospered, and when Ingham Row was built in 1891, many of the new houses were occupied by

mill employees. In 1889 the whole of the mill was reroofed at a cost of £37.10.0.—how prices have changed! Milburn's nephew Edward Young took over the business at the turn of the century. He leased the mill together with the separate stable block (now used by Alan Conley's garage) for an initial rent of £85 per year, the same as his uncle had paid thirty years earlier (inflation was scarcely a problem then).

Young had plans for a new house (where Dr. and Mrs. Spriggs now live) approved in July 1901, with additional plans for a coach-house and stable the following year. The old mill house stood facing east and next to No. 1 Tyne View, (the houses in Tyne View were built in 1888). It was later used as offices for the mill.

'Ned' Young was one of the early Institute trustees, and is remembered today by several of our older residents.

T. G. Dyke and Son, a well known firm of millers and grocers with premises in Horsley and Throckley, acquired the business in the early 1920's and it was during their ownership, on the night of August 9th 1931 that the mill was totally destroyed in a spectacular fire, still recalled by those who lived in the vicinity of the mill.

The mill manager at that time was Edward Weightman. His nephew, Harry Shipley, who now lives at Horsley lent us the fine photograph of Edward Young and his employees outside the old mill, as well as several other interesting early photos of Wylam.

Dykes rebuilt the mill after the fire and continued to use it for milling until the death of Mr. Dyke in 1948. For two years the premises were used by Messrs. Rodford and Peel as a bottling factory but after they went into liquidation in 1950, it was purchased by a former Wylam resident, Mr. J. M. Wallace. It was at that time that the bakery was established under Mr. Limer. Laws acquired the business in 1953.

At the time of going to press the main mill building and the former stable block are being offered for sale at £60,000 (how much would they cost to build now?) and their future is still uncertain.

As far as we know, no relics of the days when the building was actually used for milling survive, but Mr. Limer has kindly donated a small selection of items used by the bakery, which will be preserved as a reminder of part of the village's history.

## Rail report protests

Protests have been made by the Parish Council to the Minister of Transport and to local M.P. Geoffrey Rippon at the devastating effect which the Serpell Report could have on the rail network in Northumberland. Indeed almost all the options put forward by Serpell show the Newcastle and Carlisle line to be closed.

## All change!

For probably the first time in its history the village will be welcoming both a new Vicar and a new Methodist Minister at almost the same time.

New Vicar of St. Oswin's is the Rev. David Wood, at present Rector of Cramlington, where he has been for the past eleven years. He and his wife Betty will be moving into the new vicarage in June.

Our present Methodist Minister, Rev. Glynn Lister will be leaving in mid July. The Listers came to Wylam in 1975, and their stay of eight years has been longer than any other since the village first had its own Methodist Minister in 1903.

We thank them for the valuable contribution they have made to the life of the village during their period in Wylam and wish them every happiness at their new home in Carshalton.

The new minister to replace Glynn Lister is the Rev. Malcolm Adams who has been Superintendent Minister at Bideford, Devon. Mr. Adams and his wife Tricia will be moving into the Manse in late August.

We're sure that everyone will welcome the Woods and the Adams and help them settle into the village.

## Garden improvements

The Community Task Force has been carrying out various welcome improvements to the Institute garden in recent months, relaying edging around the borders, clearing several years' accumulation of compost and rubbish, and extending the area of lawn. This should help to make it easier for the Guides and Brownies to maintain the flower borders in the Spring and Summer.

Incidentally, several sections of the garden railings are either missing or in need of repair; is there anyone in the village who could repair them? Offers welcome.

## New planting planned to replace lost trees

Plant a tree in '83 should be the slogan for all Wylam residents this year.

The elm trees which have had to be felled in the riverside plantation are only a small fraction of the hundreds of elms throughout the parish. Those in the woodlands around the village can be left to decay naturally, but others like those in gardens and along the roadside in Station Road, Wylam Wood Road, and Ovingham Road, could cause dangers to public safety and residents are urged to have these elms cut down before they fall.

Inevitably the loss of mature elms will produce a change in the landscape, and that's why many young trees must be planted now, to replace them.

With generous financial aid expected from the Countryside Commission, and advice from the County Council Landscape Architect, the Parish Council is planning to plant more than 500 trees

## Thanks ...

... to Beth Mills' daughter and son-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. Lempiere for another generous gift of daffodils which were planted in front of Swindale Cottages and Blakett Cottages, and have brightened the village in recent weeks.

... to Keith Shaw for help in copying some of the old photographs displayed during Community Week, and to everyone who lent photographs for that exhibition. It is hoped to display some of them again in the library later in the year.

... from the Guides and Scouts to everyone who supported their recent Coffee Morning and Jumble Sale.

## Bumbler Box cottages

Can any of our older residents remember the three cottages which stood next to the Bumbler Box pit (officially known as Haugh Pit cottages) in the corner of the playing field?

The late Mr. Jim Smith of Tyne View told us some years ago that he had lived in one of the cottages as a child in the 1890's and that at that time one of the cottages was occupied by John and Jacob Appleby and the other by William Amos, a local joiner.

Were these the last people to live in them, and when were they demolished? Please tell us if you know.

The rubble from the cottages, and other rubbish which had been dumped has recently been cleared, creating a great improvement in the appearance of that part of the playing field.

Work on tidying the plantation, and improving the path through the wood and along the riverside, will continue during the next few months. Some new trees and shrubs will be planted during the autumn and the area disturbed by the earth moving will be seeded.

(large and small) along roadsides, on the riverside, and in open spaces throughout the village during the next two years, and this will be followed by more planting in subsequent years. The first sites for planting will include the verges on the road linking Holeyn Hall crossroads to the by-pass, the wide verge on Holeyn Hall Road between the Waterworks cottage and the Wylam Hills cottages; the riverside from the Points Bridge along to Stephenson's Cottage and along parts of Wylam Wood Road between the tennis club and Hagg Bank.

Trees of varying species, and differing sizes will be planted and the planting will be professionally done, to try to ensure they're given a good start in life!

We hope that all residents with large gardens, and space to plant trees will do so, and that landowners and farmers will allow trees to grow in hedgerows and the corners of fields.

## Budding Bothams?

Wylam Cricket Club fields two senior and one junior (under 17) teams in the West Tyne League. New members are always welcome, especially this year when a number of our star players are away at college or university!

Forty-two over games are played on Saturday afternoons, some home games being played on the Jubilee Field and others at Close House. Away games are played at a number of attractive grounds within an area bounded by Allendale, Haltwhistle, Stamfordham and Wylam.

Nets are held on the field on Wednesday evenings—any interested players can attend these or contact the Secretary Fred Nichol, 14 Hackworth Gardens (Tel. 3868).

## Cubs seek helpers

The Wylam Cub Pack is looking for additional (or new) leaders.

The pack of some 20 boys aged 8—10½ years meets from 5.45—7.15 p.m. on Friday evenings in the Church Hall, but will shortly be returning to the Institute.

If you feel you can help in any way (previous experience not essential) please contact Lorraine Parker, The Haven, Elm Bank Road (Tel. 2575).

## Village Diary

### MAY

- 5 Parish and District Election.
- 6 Official Re-opening of the Institute, 8 p.m. Wine and Cheese.
- 7 Coffee Morning, Institute.
- 7 Celebration Dance, Institute, 8 p.m.
- 9 Junior Disco, Institute, 7 p.m.
- 11/ Wylam School Charity Concert.
- 12
- 13 Tynedale MIND Ceilidh—8 p.m. Institute.
- 14 Prudhoe High School Spring Fayre.
- 17 Play 'A Fine and Private Place', Institute.

### JUNE

- 11 Village Field Day—Jubilee Field.
- 22/ Drama Society Play.
- 24
- 24 Prudhoe High School Parent Association Treasure Hunt.
- 25 St. Oswin's Garden Fete.

### SEPTEMBER

- 24 Friends of Wylam Jumble Sale.

## Caretaker wanted

The Institute Community Association will want to appoint a new caretaker to commence work at the Institute from September. Anyone interested in the job should contact Fred Parker, The Haven, Elm Bank Road. (Tel. 2575) for further information.

# Major changes as Parish and District Councillors retire

Polling day for the District Council election is Thursday, 5th May.

Both our present District Councillors are retiring. Peter Bennett has represented the village on the District Council for 12 years, firstly on the former Hexham Rural District Council and on the Tyndale District Council since 1973. As well as being Chairman of the District Council for a year, he has also been Chairman of several council committees. He has served the village well and built up a reputation as an effective and independent-minded member. Alan Butterfield joined the District Council in 1976 after retiring from the British Gas Corporation. His financial experience there proved of benefit during his period as Chairman of the District's Finance Committee.

On behalf of the village we thank them both most sincerely for the time and effort they spent as our district councillors—perhaps they can now enjoy genuine retirement!

On the Parish Council five of the present members are retiring.

Harry Helm has been a member since 1973 and Vice-Chairman for the past four years. As a lifelong Wylam resident his local knowledge and experience have been invaluable and we are sorry that he feels the time has come to have a rest. Joan Taylor is retiring after two sessions on the Parish Council where one of her special interests has been the village youth club.

Alasdair Kemp is moving to Ryton shortly, and Glynn Lister is departing in

the summer. Alasdair has represented the Parish Council on the Playing Fields Association, and Glynn has helped to put the Burial Board on a sound financial footing. Bruce Reed (having put Hagg Bank back on the map) is taking early retirement from the Parish Council.

The village owes a debt of gratitude to these five retiring members who have spent much time on the work of the Parish Council. We thank them all.

There were only eight candidates for the eight seats on the new Parish Council so all of those are returned unopposed. The new Council comprises Philip R. B. Brooks, 20 Bluebell Close. Judith Furniss, Dunmore, Elm Bank Road. Alan W. Jones, 19 Tyndale Close. Carol E. Moore, 13 Parsons Road. Clive Morphet, 5 The Dene. Lynne Petrie, 8 Stephenson Terrace. Felicity Reed, 11 Front Street, Hagg Bank. Anne Thompson, Lynton, Elm Bank Road.

We hope that the village will continue to maintain its record of having a high turnout of electors voting at the District Election. There is a good selection of candidates standing—sufficient for most tastes, so please make sure to vote on 5th May to ensure that whoever are elected as our new councillors are the choice of most of the residents, not of a small minority.

## Postman Dennis retires

Our thanks to Dennis Knowles of Woodcroft Road, who retired earlier this month, having served Wylam well as a village postman for more than 30 years.

## Allotments available

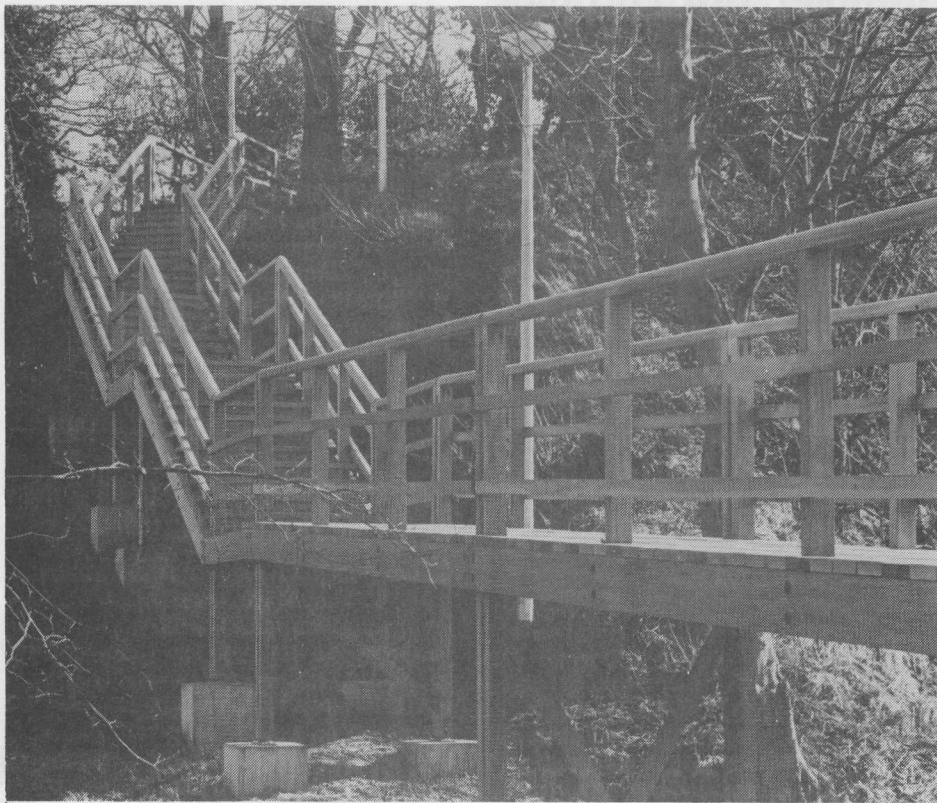
There are several vacant allotments on the riverside, awaiting new tenants to offer them some tender loving care. Growing your own vegetables is one way of saving money, as well as being an enjoyable relaxation. Anyone interested in renting an allotment should contact Bill Robson the Allotment Association Secretary, 16 Dene Road (Tel. 3533).

Bill reports that some residents who exercise their dogs on the walkway and riverside, are allowing them to run over the allotments. This is clearly unfair, and dog owners are requested to keep their dogs away from the allotments. Incidentally the paths passing through the allotments are not public rights of way, and walkers should keep to the footpaths around the edge of the area.

The provision of new gates and improvements to the allotment fencing is being considered, to keep dogs (and unauthorised people) out.

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

Newsletter Editor: Philip R. B. Brooks.  
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## Footbridge at Castle Hill wins major award

A new footbridge, rarely seen or used by many local residents, has won a special award presented by the Civic Trust, for good design.

Those who use the station will know that last year the old footbridge and steps which lead from the end of the platform up to the Castle Hill Convalescent Home were replaced, by a most attractive new bridge—designed by engineers Ove Arup & Partners. Congratulations to the designers, builders and the clients (the Northumberland Area Health Authority) for creating something (however small) which improves the appearance of the village. I'm sure our local architects and engineers would confirm that good design is not necessarily any more expensive than poor design!

Incidentally this footbridge is actually outside the Parish of Wylam, as the Tyne

and Wear/Northumberland County boundary follows the burn which runs under the Station platform just west of the new footbridge.

## Signs help visitors

Efforts to put Wylam 'on the map' as the village where railways were born have been increasingly successful in recent years, and it now receives mention in many guides and railway books.

However the lack of any signs showing the location of Stephenson's Cottage has caused problems in the past, and we are grateful to the National Trust for providing several signs which should enable visitors to find their way to the cottage without difficulty.