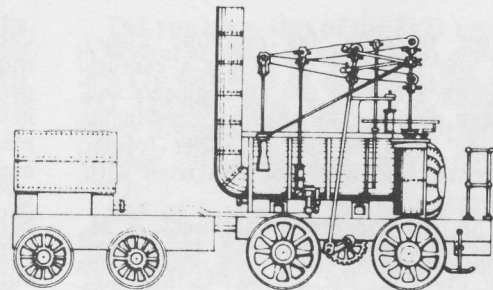


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Autumn 1983

Number 35

## First Community Week in new-look Institute

The widespread support given to the events which were held to mark the official re-opening of the Institute in May confirmed the interest of the whole village in its future, which had of course been demonstrated by the tremendous backing given to the Appeal.

Whilst the Appeal Fund will cover the cost of the work undertaken to date (some £32,000) we must not rest on our laurels, and money will have to continue to be raised regularly to meet running costs as well as providing for future improvements. The creation of additional useable storage space is now necessary and external re-painting must be done in the Spring.

The success of the Institute can be measured by the amount it is used by local organisations and most have now taken up residence again. Two of the weekly activities, Keep Fit and Tap Ballet are enjoying great success.

This year's Community Week—the first in the 'new-look' premises is from 5-12 November and looks like maintaining the high standard and wide variety of previous years.

*All events are being held in the Institute unless otherwise indicated.*

### Saturday 5th

2 p.m. Jumble Sale.

7.30 p.m. Bonfire and Fireworks Display on Jubilee Playing Field.

### Sunday 6th

6 p.m. Community Week Service in Methodist Church.

### Monday 7th

3.30 p.m. Book Group's 'Witches and Wizards' for 4-9 year olds in Falcon Centre.

7-10 p.m. Junior Disco (9-14 years old).

### Tuesday 8th

10 a.m.-6 p.m. Exhibition of Floral Art on a song title.

10 a.m.-12 noon. Friends of Wylam Coffee Morning and Cake/Produce Stall.

10 a.m.-9 p.m. 'Wylam as it was' Exhibition of old photographs etc.

7.30 p.m. Photographic Society slide show 'Kaleidoscope'.

### Wednesday 9th

2 p.m. Whist Drive organised by Friends of Wylam.

7-9 p.m. 'Wylam as it was' Exhibiton.

8 p.m. Fashion Show presented by 'Busy Bees', Main Road, Wylam.

### Thursday 10th, Friday 11th

7.30 p.m. Grand Community Week Concert.

### Saturday 12th

10.30 a.m. Coffee Morning organised by the Horticultural Society, with Bring and Buy, Produce and Cake stalls.

8p.m.-Midnight. Grand Ceilidh with the Sandgate Band.

Please support as many events as you can—you'll enjoy them and the Institute will benefit.



*Wylam Guides off to summer camp in the 1930s and 'travelling light'? Do they still take as much equipment?*

## Guides seeking help to buy new tents

Lucy Monroe, who has taken over from Maggie McLester as leader of the 1st Wylam Guides, has quite a problem to solve before next Summer—how to raise £600 to buy three sleeping tents, to enable the Guides to hold a summer camp in 1984.

Apparently until last summer the local Guide company was able to borrow sleeping tents, belonging to the three Tynedale Divisions, which were kept in a central pool. However these have now been divided amongst the Divisions, which means that the Wylam Guides can borrow only the two tents awarded

to this Division. To run a camp for 25 or so guides, Lucy will need five tents, and is now having to raise money to buy three new tents, to use with the two which are borrowed.

She is applying to Tynedale District Council and to the Parish Council for grants, but will have to raise much of the money locally, so please support any events the Guides organise to raise funds, and anyone willing to make a donation or help with the fund-raising should contact Lucy at 23 Dene Road (Tel. 2667) or Pauline Elliot at 23 Bluebell Close. (Tel. 2583).

# Castle Hill architect's scheme for London Cathedral

Just to show (as everyone knew) that the residents of Wylam a century or more ago were not all engineers and railway pioneers, we hope to occasionally include short articles on other former residents, who were not associated with railways!

The first concerns an architect, A. M. Dunn. Archibald Matthias Dunn was born in 1832, the son of Matthias and Margaret Dunn. His father was a colliery viewer who was actively concerned with the problems of accidents in coal mines, and later became one of the first Government Inspectors of Mines in 1850.

The family were staunch Catholics and Archibald was educated at Ushaw College, Durham, and Stonyhurst.

He received his architectural training in the office of Charles F. Hanson of

Catholic churches and schools in Northumberland and Durham. It is perhaps particularly appropriate that Dunn should have been responsible for designing memorials to two of Wylam's famous engineers, George Stephenson and Nicholas Wood. The Stephenson Memorial Schools at Willington Quay were built between 1856-60 on the site once occupied by the cottage where George Stephenson lived, and where Robert Stephenson was born in 1803.

Neville Hall, on Westgate Road, was designed by Dunn and opened in 1871. It incorporates the Wood Memorial Hall, and was built for the North of England Institute of Mining Engineers, who established the College of Physical Science there. The College was the forerunner of Newcastle University.

but was described in his obituary as being of Castle Hill, Wylam.

As far as is known Dunn did not design any buildings in Wylam other than Castle Hill, although he did work at Prudhoe for Matthew Liddell, a fellow Catholic who was responsible for much of the colliery development in the town in the 1860's. Liddell became a wealthy landowner and built Prudhoe Hall in 1868, to which a private chapel was added shortly after. When the Hall was sold in 1904, the chapel was dismantled and re-erected on Highfield Lane, where it now forms the town's Catholic Church. A document discovered in the foundations during the dismantling named Dunn as the architect.

It is also known that Dunn designed the former Catholic school in Prudhoe, built by Liddell in 1875.

If Dunn was Liddell's architect for the chapel and school, was he also responsible for Prudhoe Hall itself?

Can any of our local architectural historians or those who work at Prudhoe Hospital (which of course incorporates the Hall) shed any light on who built the Hall? Please let us know.

We would also like to find portraits/photographs of both A. M. Dunn and his father Matthias Dunn. Can anyone help with information please?



*Castle Hill, built by A. M. Dunn in 1878 for his own occupation. Sold in 1901 to F. Stirling Newall, whose sons gave the property to the R.V.I. in the 1930s, and who now use it as their 'Country Branch'.*

Clifton, Bristol, one of the pioneers of the Gothic Revival Movement.

Dunn set up his own practice on Tyne-side in the mid 1850's and by 1871 when he took into partnership Edward J. Hanson (only son of his former principal), had built up a good practice with a number of interesting buildings to his credit. The partnership was successful and expanded, opening offices in Victoria Street, London. In 1887 Archibald Manuel, one of Dunn's two sons, joined the practice, six years before his father retired from the firm.

When during the early 1890's consideration was being given to building an R.C. Cathedral Church for Westminster, Dunn made a study for Cardinal Vaughan of a cathedral in Gothic style, which he estimated would cost £230,000. Although a different architect and another style (Byzantine) were eventually selected, Dunn's scheme was later highly regarded.

Dunn and his partners designed a number of interesting public buildings throughout the country, but mostly

Another memorial designed by Dunn stands in Earsdon Churchyard, and commemorates the 204 men and boys who died in the Hartley Colliery disaster of 1862. His father was Inspector of Mines for Northumberland at the time of this tragedy.

Seven years after Neville Hall was opened, work began on building Dunn's own house, Castle Hill, Wylam, which bears the date 1878 above the main entrance.

The 1881 census records Dunn (48) his wife Sarah (39) (a daughter of Hugh C. Armstrong of Newcastle), and his two sons Matthias (18), a solicitor's clerk, and Archibald (17), an architect's clerk, as living in the main house, together with five servants.

Dunn inherited land and property at Ryton and Stella, and in 1887 built St. Agnes' Catholic School in Crawcrook.

The Duns left Wylam c. 1901 (Selling Castle Hill to F. Stirling Newall), and spent much of their time in Bournemouth. A. M. Dunn died there in 1918,

## Councillors elected

The District Council elections were held shortly after the last issue of this newsletter was published. The village maintained its excellent record of high polling at local elections and more than 80% of those electors in the village on polling day went to vote—the highest poll in the county.

Philip Brooks, 20 Bluebell Close (Tel. 3520) and Charles Heslop, 2 Ingham Terrace (Tel. 2259) were elected as our new district councillors for the next four years. Don't hesitate to contact either of them if you have any problems concerning the services provided by Tynedale District Council.

The names and addresses of the members of the Parish Council who came into office in early May were given in the last issue.

Philip Brooks was re-elected Chairman of the Parish Council with Alan Jones as Vice-Chairman. Clive Morphett and Carol Moore have been appointed by the Parish Council as Governors of Wylam School. Felicity Reed and Ann Thomson represent Wylam's interests on the Ovingham Joint Burial Board. This little known organisation is responsible for the cemetery at Ovingham which serves the parishes of Wylam, Ovingham, Ovington and Horsley. The costs of running the cemetery are met by the four parish councils, and in 1983/84 the cemetery is costing Wylam ratepayers £1284.

## Village included in Tyne Valley plan

Tynedale District Council has now published the long-awaited local plan indicating where new developments are likely to take place in the Tyne Valley during the next ten years.

There are no plans to allow major developments in Wylam, and any new housing is only likely to be restricted to infilling within the built up area of the village.

The most significant change is the proposal that the area bounded by Holeyn Hall Road, Acomb Drive, Day-hole Dene and Bluebell Lane (enclosing the field opposite the farm and that behind the houses in Holeyn Hall Road) should be included within the Green Belt.

Several long-standing minor road improvements which have been planned by the County Council for several years are shown on the plan—including the improvements at the Elm Bank Road/Station Road junction, the Bluebell Lane/Holeyn Hall Road junction and the need for a footpath alongside the Ovingham Road between Howdene Burn and the Waterworks. Although shown on the plan, no one can guarantee when these improvements will be carried out!

The District Council will be publicising the arrangements made for local residents to comment on the draft plan, probably early in 1984.

## Mill into flats scheme

After several months of speculation as to what might happen to Wylam Mill premises, work on converting the building into seven flats began in mid-September.

Whilst the attraction of a new light industry into the building might have provided local employment, few firms expressed interest in it, and there is no doubt that most of the residents living close to the mill were relieved and pleased when the scheme to convert the building into flats was publicised. The removal of the ugly lean-to building at the rear of the bakery, and the general renovation of the main building will improve the appearance of the area for the benefit of residents in Tyne View.

Many people had expressed the hope that the shop unit would be retained and this is to be done, although it is not known at present who will occupy it.

## Will you be a friend to an older resident

The Stanley Burn Home for the Elderly on Station Road would welcome local people who would be prepared to befriend a resident there. There is much that can be done to make life of residents there more interesting and pleasant by regular visiting and friendship.

Anyone who would like to help is asked to contact the Vicar, David Wood (Tel. 3254) in the first instance.

Incidentally with the work done by the Friends of Wylam as well as the Churches we hope that there are no elderly people in the village, particularly the housebound, who are not regularly

visited if they would like to be. If there is anyone you know of—please tell us.

If you are over 60, the Friends of Wylam extend a warm welcome to you to join them at their coffee mornings on alternate Tuesday mornings in the Institute and on Wednesday afternoons during the winter when they get together for a game of cards or bingo, a film show or some other entertainment. In any event please make a note of the Christmas lunch, which this year will be on Wednesday, 14 December to which all are invited. If you would like to know more please contact Judith Furniss (Tel. 2341).

## “Revs” settling in well

We welcome the Revs. David Wood and Malcolm Adams and their families who seem to be settling in well to life in Wylam.

## Local gifts and cards

Looking for something to give a friend for Christmas? Well, the shop at Beamish Museum has been selling some attractive metal trays bearing a coloured picture of Wylam locomotive ‘Puffing Billy’—very reasonably priced at £1.50. Why not call at Beamish to buy one?

Incidentally the wide range of booklets, postcards, badges, key rings, bookmarks and other special ‘Wylam Souvenirs’ make ideal Christmas gifts. All are obtainable from the Post Office, Wylam Crafts (Dene Terrace) or from Maureen Gillis, the Parish Clerk.

Don’t forget to buy your Charity Christmas cards at the Coffee Morning in the Institute on Saturday 19 November. A wide selection of cards and gifts will be available from various charities.

## Relic of old Wylam industry discovered

A reminder of one of Wylam’s oddest former industries—lead shot manufacturing—came to light during August when work was in progress clearing the stackyard at Wylam Hills Farm.

In levelling the yard the contractors removed the concrete capping which covered the top of the old shot pit shaft. Robert Graham reported that the shaft was approx. 6ft in diameter, about 90 feet deep, and brick lined.

The establishment of a lead-shot manufacturer in the village resulted from the Blackett family’s close links with lead mining in Allendale and Weardale.

The firm of lead manufacturers Locke, Blackett & Co., was founded in 1797, and two years later on 18 November 1799 an agreement was made between Joseph Locke, a Newcastle merchant, Christopher Blackett of Wylam and Richard Welton a glassblower of Newcastle, whereby Welton was to be paid 23/- (£1.15) per week for seven years for his services as a shot maker in the manufacture of lead shot at Wylam.

Instead of building an expensive shot tower (as was done at Elswick) use was made of the disused pit shaft to the north of Wylam Hills Farm stackyard, an ingenious and presumably much cheaper alternative.

Local directories show that the firm of Locke, Blackett and Co., remained in Wylam until at least 1834. They became important lead merchants on Tyneside and joined the Associated Lead Manufacturers group in 1950.

The departure of Locke, Blackett & Co. did not mark the end of shot manufacture in Wylam for in October 1868 a Newcastle merchant, Gerhard Lampen (German by birth), took a ten year lease ‘of the old shot pit situate at Wylam Hills with the building above same, and the use of a cottage for a workman . . .’ at an annual rent of £25.

At the time of the 1871 Census, Lampen aged 45 was living in Brewery House with his Dutch wife Johanna, and their two 16 year old children. Lampen was described as a Patent chilled lead shot manufacturer employing eight boys and two men. The Census shows that four of the boys lived in Wylam. Three twelve year olds, Robert Wilkinson, James Gibson and Joseph Pigg, were employed sifting the shot and a fourteen year old John Waugh was a shotmaker.

Lead shot manufacture in the village probably ceased just over a century ago, but only with the work clearing the stackyard this summer has it been necessary to fill the shaft in which the shot was made.

## Village Diary

### NOVEMBER

5th- 12th. ‘COMMUNITY WEEK’.  
19th Charity Coffee Morning Wylam Institute 10 a.m.-Noon.

### DECEMBER

2nd Shelter ‘Ceilidh’ at Close House.  
6th Photographic Society—Ian Hume, ‘The seeing eye’. 8 p.m. Institute.  
9th Wylam Parent/Teacher Association Christmas Fayre. School 6 p.m.  
14th Friends of Wylam Christmas Lunch, Wylam Institute.  
16th Cricket Club Dance—Close House.

## Can your dog read?

Following requests from many organisations (including the Parish Council) Tynedale District Council has recently taken action to publicise the by-law which makes it an offence to allow a dog to foul a footway.

A number of notices have now been displayed on lamp-posts in villages throughout the district, and although dogs in Wylam cannot read any better than those elsewhere most of their owners should be able to do so! There is no excuse now for dog owners to allow their dog to foul a footway, verge or indeed any open space or area where children are likely to play, or people walk.

## Anything for museum?

'Setting a good example' is something that the local Brethren would always want to do, and they were certainly doing that in the Spring when renovating and redecorating the upper rooms of the Assembly (the old school) themselves.

During the renovation two fireplace grates had to be removed, and have been stored in the museum. They are thought to date from 1854 when the school was built.

Are there any other items of local interest in the village suitable for preservation and possible future display in the museum, which might otherwise be destroyed?

## Good support ensures successful playscheme

This year the Summer Playscheme has concentrated on just four trips, two to the Sunderland Leisure Centre, one to Warkworth Castle and beach, and another to the Roman Wall and Haltwhistle baths.

The Leisure Centre outings, one at the beginning and one at the end of the programme, included both swimming and ice skating, and on the last occasion, a trip to Seaburn beach as well. In addition to a walk along the Roman Wall, the children visited the Roman Military Museum at Carvoran and were given a lively and interesting talk by a Warden from the Museum on the live and work of a Roman soldier. The outing was concluded by a visit to the Haltwhistle open-air baths. It was lovely weather for the trip to Warkworth and the day was much enjoyed by those who went along.

The Playscheme Reunion Evening took place on 2nd September but the weather broke that day and was too wet and windy to use the inflatable castle booked for the occasion. However, many children and parents came along and took part in the games of football and rounders, tug of war and races,

## Hospital memories

Next year Prudhoe Hospital will be celebrating its 70th anniversary, having been set up in 1914, and the hospital authorities are hoping to arrange a small exhibition to show the changing face of the hospital during that period.

Joanne Robinson, the Voluntary Services Organiser at the hospital is trying to collect information and memories from local people who have worked at, or known the hospital during its history.

Anyone who has recollections of the hospital, and who feels they could help Joanne is invited to contact her at the hospital (Tel. Prudhoe 32501).

## Bulls Bank accident

Although there have been previous accidents at Bulls Bank on the Ovingham road, the one in June which involved the school bus caused considerable concern among local councillors and parents, and the County Highways authority has taken some immediate action to improve the road surface and erect additional warning signs. As motorists will know, the road up the bank itself is narrower than the stretches above and below—making it difficult for two large vehicles to pass, and creating a potential hazard. The County Surveyor is investigating the possibility of minor widening of the road on the bank, to make it the same width as the length of road which leads into the village.

accompanied by a plentiful supply of hot dogs and sticky buns. Our thanks go to the Guides and Scouts and to those helpers who turned up and gave a hand with both games and snacks.

Some young people prefer a degree of activity as well as general interest in outings, and it is hoped that next year, perhaps a wider range of activities to suit specific age ranges might be arranged.

The Wylam Playscheme is run by volunteers and is dependent on parents being able to give some assistance with the activities, and many came forward to help this year. The future of the Playscheme rests on this help being assured and also, the continued support of Wylam Parish Council and the Tynedale District Council, without whose financial assistance this programme of activity and interest to the younger people of the village would be impossible.

Our grateful thanks must go to Mr. Merridew who has been responsible for organising the trips so successfully, and to Eleanor Carrick who took on the task of parent co-ordinator.

Jane Thicknes.

## Fancy that!

Did you know that of the 2171 people in Wylam at the time of the 1981 census, 356 (16.4%) were of retirement age and 533 (24.6%) were aged 15 or under? These compared with a Tynedale District 'average' of 20.0% and 20.6% respectively.

Out of a total of 793 houses in the village 700 were in private ownership and 93 belonged to the District Council. Although in 1971 there were 17 households without a bath, by 1981 this had reduced to only two. Five households had no inside W.C. in 1981 compared with 32 ten years earlier. On car ownership the census disclosed that half of all private households in the village had a car, with 26% being without any car—and the remaining 24% having two or more cars.

## Any Country dancers?

Details of Ovingham Country Dance Group classes and Barn Dances can be obtained from G. Wilson, 16 The Dene.

## Boys Brigade Centenary

Since October 4th this year was the 100th birthday of the Boys' Brigade, it is an appropriate occasion to thank those who run the local Wylam Company of the Boys' Brigade for the work they do. The Wylam Company was set up in 1922 and run for many years by Dr. Alfred Swindale. It continues to thrive under the guidance of Mrs. Evelyn Wilson, but now needs to recruit an officer or two between the ages of 21-100. Are you interested and willing to help? For further information please contact Mrs. Wilson (Tel. 2131).

## New residents welcome

Some years ago it was suggested that we might issue 'letters of welcome' to all new residents. Although this idea was thought to be impracticable, we do extend a warm welcome to everyone who comes to live in the village, and hope you enjoy your time in Wylam. We pride ourselves on being a caring and friendly community, but if you need any assistance or advice at any time, please don't hesitate to contact one of your local councillors or the Clerk, Maureen Gillis, and we'll do our best to help.

All houses should have a village Information Card, listing public services, local societies, clubs and organisations—if there isn't one in your house, a copy can be obtained from Maureen Gillis, 27 Dene Road.

*The Wylam Globe - Autumn 1983.*

# Does Wylam take enough interest in its teenagers?

'Please help to relieve the boredom of teenagers in the village. I used to go to the Youth Block in the Falcon Centre, run by the Prudhoe Youth Association, but it was pointless because we never did anything really interesting and only eight people at the most usually go!

I don't have the money and neither do my friends, to travel to Newcastle, Hexham or even Prudhoe.

Discos in the Institute are few and far between and aren't really good anyway because it's so big and most of the people who go are under fourteen. If

they were advertised in Prudhoe and even the newspapers, maybe a few more interesting people might turn up, I mean what's the point of going to a disco to meet people, when everybody there are people whom you see every day? I don't expect an ice-rink or a cinema—but please take a bit of interest in those in the 14-18 age range'.

Is this plea, written by a Wylam teenager, a view shared by others in the village? If so does more need to be done, and by whom?

This is an important issue which needs

to be discussed by all those interested in the future of young people in the village, and the Parish Council has arranged an open meeting in the Institute on Wednesday 23 November at 8 p.m.

Representatives of the Youth Service, of village organisations and local councillors are being invited to the meeting—but most importantly we want all teenagers living in Wylam, their parents and anyone interested in helping young people to come and express their views.

Now's your opportunity—please let us hear your views—come to the Institute on 23 November at 8 p.m.



The news that the Parochial Church Council has begun to think about the centenary of the Parish Church in 1986 prompts us to show the only known photograph of the laying of the foundation stone on 1st January 1885. The group includes George and William Hedley, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Clayton of Wylam Hall.

## Wylam in Bloom? Help needed to brighten village

Many towns and villages now cast envious eyes on the superb variety of flowers displayed in the public parks and roadside verges in nearby Whickham and Ryton.

These displays are provided and maintained by the local authority (Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council Parks Department) and paid for, and appreciated by local ratepayers—doing much to improve the image of these towns.

In Wylam—apart from the daffodils—no one could claim that we were ever likely to win any prize, or even dare to enter a Britain in Bloom Competition!

Faced in the past with the impossible task of trying to find anyone in the village willing to look after flower beds and do any gardening, successive Parish Councils have been forced into doing away with flower beds which require regular maintenance, and grassing areas instead, which can be easily cut by the District Council (even if not always as frequently as we would like!)

Today the only garden areas left which still need maintenance are the Institute garden, the rose beds at Blackett Cottages, the shrub beds at Swindale Cottages and the border around the War Memorial.

None of these areas is satisfactorily looked after at present, and the Parish Council is looking for someone, or perhaps several people, who would be willing to 'adopt' and regularly look after one or more of the flower bed/shrub areas, either voluntarily or for a small payment.

There would be no grasscutting responsibilities and the Parish Council would provide and pay for any plants etc. needed.

Are there any kind gardeners willing to spend a little time helping to look after one of these areas, thereby making the village more attractive?

Offers of help please to Maureen Gillis, Clerk to the P.C., 27 Dene Road (Tel. 2503) or to any Parish Councillor.

If there is sufficient support we would like to start this scheme early next year.

Another idea which has been suggested is that the shopkeepers in the village might get together with the Parish Council to provide some tubs of flowers (perhaps on Post Office Green?) and hanging baskets to help brighten the centre of the village.

The Parish Council would welcome any ideas, views or offers of help, so that if there is sufficient backing these ideas could be introduced in the Spring.

## Anniversaries in 1986

With wise forward planning the Parochial Church Council has been discussing ideas for celebrating the centenary of the Parish Church in 1986. The foundation stone of St. Oswin's was laid on 1st January 1885 by George Hedley and the church was completed and consecrated in November 1886.

Another important anniversary also occurs in 1986, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Timothy Hackworth, son of the Wylam Colliery blacksmith, who became a famous railway engineer—contemporary of Stephenson and Hedley.

So 1986 is likely to be another busy year with events being planned to celebrate these two important anniversaries in Wylam's history.

## Keep it clean and tidy

Although disappointed by the amount of litter which is dropped around the village, the Parish Council is making determined efforts to improve the situation by increasing the number of litter bins available. The number has recently been doubled with five new concrete bins being fixed in key positions in the village—near litter 'black spots'.

The new bins are being well-used and several more will be acquired and installed in the Spring.

Before dropping that cigarette packet, ice cream wrapper or beer can, remember that you could be fined £100—hardly worth it, so please put them in a litter bin, or better still, take them home.

## Keen photographer?

Wylam Photographic Society meets on the first Tuesday in the month from October through to May '84, at 8 p.m. in the Blackett Room of the Wylam Institute. New members are most welcome—further information can be obtained from the Society's Secretary, Mrs. C. Falkender, 21 Dene Road.

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