

# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

Number 6

October 1974

## DR. SWINDALE'S "50 YEARS"

Undoubtedly, one of the most successful "special events" held in the village in recent years was on July 6th, when the village had the privilege of showing Alfred Swindale what it had thought of having him here for the past 50 years!

The generosity of everyone in contributing both time and money towards the presentation — and the enthusiasm with which people helped, was a clear indication of the affection which Wylam has for him.

He has asked us to include the following letter expressing his thanks.

*"I am very grateful to the Editor of the "Globe" and his colleagues on the Parish Council for allowing me to use the newsletter as a medium for expressing my heartfelt thanks to the people of Wylam and district for their tremendous celebration of my Jubilee as a family doctor working here amongst and with you.*

*My 50 years in Wylam have been very happy ones. I have grown up with you and shared your joys and tribulations. That in itself is a great privilege and I thank you for it.*

*Saturday, July 6th, 1974, will always remain with me as one of the great days of my life. As I walked down to the field that afternoon, I wondered what was going to happen, for you had all kept it a great secret. For the first time in 50 years something was happening that I hadn't a clue about!*

*It was a great day — the rain ceased and the sun shone, you all came, friends old and young took me back over the years.*

*I thank you all for "The Book", the beautiful antique silver tankard and the generous cheque. "The Book" is magnificent and a priceless treasure. What thought and effort has gone into it. What talent it contains. I thank you all for the affection it exudes.*



*Perhaps my words are inadequate to express my thanks to you all for being so identified with the celebration and presentation, but I am very honoured by you all.*

*I hope you will feel it proper for me to especially thank Mr. John Stephenson who made the presentation, and the Organising Committee of which he was Chairman. I am sure you would also like me to express thanks to Mrs. McCallum, who first proposed the idea of "The Book" and worked so hard to bring it to reality."*

## A CHILD KILLED?

Several parents of small children living on the top stretch of Dene Road have expressed serious concern at the speed at which some motorists drive through the estate — and fear that it is only a matter of time before a child is killed or seriously injured.

The Parish Council (which has no direct powers to solve this particular problem) has written to the County Council Road Safety Officer and to the Chief Constable asking them to investigate this problem as a matter of urgency and try to suggest practical ways of solving it.

However, some of the main offenders (i.e. those who drive at 40 m.p.h.+ through the estate, instead of a more reasonable speed of 15 m.p.h.) live on the estate and have children themselves, and ought to realise the potential dangers.

By travelling at 40 m.p.h. instead of at 15 m.p.h. along the full length of Dene Road you will save a maximum of one minute on your journey time.

Is it worth the risk? Surely not!

## PARKING OF COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

It has been noticed that several residents on the Council estate have got into the habit of parking vans or trucks on the verges and ornamental borders in front of houses. As well as being unsightly, this spoils the borders and is a nuisance to other residents. There are one or two suitable places on the estate where these vehicles could be parked *without* being a nuisance to others — please use these areas.

## BURIAL BOARD

Mr. F. G. Newman of Acomb has just retired from the post of Clerk to the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee after giving 25 years valuable service. Many do not realise that the cemetery which serves the parishes of Wylam, Ovingham, Ovington and Horsley requires quite a lot of administration, but all Parish Councillors who have come and gone over the years and who have served on this committee will agree that the stable presence of Mr. Newman and his cheerful and efficient manner has been invaluable. Thank you Mr. Newman.

Mr. G. E. Short of Ovington has been appointed as his successor.

## HOLIDAY PLAY SCHEME

One of this summer's successes has been the Play Scheme arranged during August.

The idea of the Scheme had hardly been discussed at the time that the last issue of the "Globe" was printed, but it resulted from discussions between mothers on the needs of children — particularly those in the 7 - 11 age group whom, it was considered, would benefit most from a suitable scheme.

An effort was made to contact all of the local children in that age group, of whom there are about 150. Almost all of these children took part in some of the activities arranged and 37 parents acted as helpers, providing a wealth of parental talent and interest.

The programme was specially planned and included a wide range of events, with bus trips to Blaydon Swimming Baths twice a week and all-day visits on four Wednesdays to Tyne-mouth Priory and Ice Rink, Beamish Museum, Chesters Roman Camp and Featherstone Castle and Haltwhistle Nature Trail. The combined attendance at all these outings was over 400.

The County Council kindly allowed the use of the old Primary School for a great variety of activities on Tuesday afternoons. These attractions included playing football on the field, modelling, painting, singing, volley ball, chess, drama sessions, dyeing, weaving, music and movement etc. The popularity can be judged from the fact that the average attendance was 60 each Tuesday.

All of the activities were supervised by interested parents as volunteers and there was no paid help, although valuable assistance and support was given by Mr. McKie, Headmaster of the school, Mr. Keith Walker and other staff of the County Youth Service, and Mr. Pattinson, the Caretaker.

Both the District and Parish Councils were happy to make grants of £25 each towards the cost of insurance cover, purchase of craft materials, and operating costs of the scheme.

Much of the credit for the overall success of the project must go to all those parents who helped in various ways, and to the children who participated in the events with great enthusiasm.

Thanks are due to everyone concerned — the village looks forward to another equally successful (perhaps extended?) scheme next year!

## CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

A Children's Book Group has recently been formed in the village following a talk at a Housewives Discussion Group meeting. The broad aims are to encourage an interest in books amongst children and to make children's books more widely available.

At the first informal meeting about 20 interested people attended and it was agreed to hold a series of storytimes in the summer holidays in members' houses (or gardens when weather permitted). These proved popular, particularly with pre-school children, and about 25 children attended each session.

The Group is now affiliated to the Federation of Children's Book Groups who publish a quarterly magazine entitled "Books for your Children", and this can be obtained on subscription.

A Book Agent's Licence has been granted to the Group to sell books and it is planned to hold a Christmas Book Fair on 7th December at the Institute — in time for Christmas present buying! Further details will be announced later (so please don't buy all your Christmas presents before then!)

Anyone interested in joining the Group, please contact Mrs. Pat McChesney, 26 Bluebell Close. Tel. 2399.

## YOUTH CLUB

The club programme was due to have started on Friday 13th (a bad day to choose!) with a dance, but unfortunately the group who had been booked did not appear! Both the group and the organisers apologise to those youngsters who came and were disappointed. Most people made the best of the situation, and danced to records, but the Club apologises to the neighbours for any nuisance created by the noise — much of which came from those waiting for lifts or buses!

There is a full programme of events for the future including more discos — with "live" groups, visits to other youth clubs, swimming at the new Whitley Bay pool, film shows and several exciting mystery nights — and the Christmas party.

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## VILLAGE DIARY — WHAT'S ON

|                 |                                  |   |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>OCTOBER</b>  | Friday 4th                       | "Pop Night" at Church Hall 8 p.m. — 9.30 p.m.<br>(and on first Friday of each month)                          |
|                 | Thursday 10th                    | Horticultural Society talk on "Bulb planting"   |
|                 | Sunday 13th                      | Harvest Supper after 6.30 p.m. Evensong at Parish Church  |
|                 | Friday 18th                      | Conservatives Fashion Show by Andorra, at Institute   |
|                 | Tuesday 22nd                     | Local History Society talk and slides on "Old Wylam", 8 p.m. Institute  |
| <b>NOVEMBER</b> | 2nd — 9th                        | COMMUNITY WEEK — Details will be circulated   |
|                 | Friday 15th                      | Conservatives Champagne Evening — Oakwood House   |
|                 | Saturday 16th                    | Oxfam Christmas Sale 10.30 — 12 noon in Institute   |
|                 | Wednesday 20th                   | Bible Class — special meeting 7.30 p.m. in old school, Woodcroft Road   |
|                 | Saturday 23rd                    | Shelter — Handicraft Exhibition and Sale in Institute   |
|                 | Tuesday 26th<br>28th, 29th, 30th | "Sheriffs in local history" — talk at 8 p.m., Institute<br>Drama Society Production each evening in Institute |
| <b>DECEMBER</b> | Tuesday 3rd                      | Friends of Wylam Christmas Party for over 60's — 2.15 p.m. Institute  |
|                 | Thursday 5th                     | Horticultural Society talk on "Cacti"   |
|                 | Saturday 7th                     | Christmas Book Fair 10 a.m. — 12 noon, Institute  |
|                 | Saturday 14th                    | Children's Christmas Party in Institute   |
|                 | Wednesday 18th                   | Bible Class Carol Service, old school, Woodcroft Road   |

*These activities are taken from those listed in the Village Diary. For further information on the Diary, and on regular weekly Society Meetings, contact Mrs. Hurd, 138 Dene Road, (phone 2563). Any organisations wanting special events publicised in the January issue of "The Globe" should notify Mrs. Hurd by early December.*

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## OPEN SPACES AND PLAY AREAS

While most people seem to have accepted the suggested "guide lines" for the use of the grass areas on the Dene Estate — as mentioned in our last issue — there have unfortunately been a number of individuals who have ignored these, and this has resulted in annoyance to some residents, and damage to several trees.

The idea of introducing bye-laws has again been examined, but there are at present numerous difficulties in making and enforcing them.

Following an inspection of all the areas on the estate, the District Council is being asked to undertake additional work to discourage the use of several areas by the older children and for organised ball games where complaints have arisen. The areas to be treated are the one between the Mini-Market and the townhouses (several low mounds of earth to be planted with shrubs), and two or three substantial boulders to be inset into the small area adjacent to 136 Dene Road. Similarly, large boulders are to be placed in the landscaped area at the back of Nos. 101 - 106 Dene Road.

There is no intention of preventing small children playing on these areas. For older children, the grassed area in the north east corner of the Dene Estate (on the footpath to Rift Farm) and Engine Dene are available. The newly grassed area in Engine Dene has not been suitable for ball games this year, but next year, more frequent cutting of the centre part of the area should make it more suitable.

An area at the eastern end of the Boys Brigade playing field (outside the pitch) is also being made available for "unofficial" games of football.

The Parish Council playground in Hedley Road is, of course, open to all children in the village, but the equipment there is not designed for 15-year olds and over.

In the last issue we mentioned the waste ground between Jackson Road and the Dene which was formerly the Ironworks tip, and which the late Mr. Blackett had promised to give to the village as an open space. The application for planning permission to build houses on the land has been turned down, and the Trustees of the Blackett Estate have now asked the Parish Council if it wishes to acquire the land. The Parish Council has confirmed that it would like to do so, to safeguard this important area in the village, and negotiations will begin shortly.

No detailed plans for the use of this land have been prepared, but it is considered that part might be used as an informal play area, and the remainder landscaped and retained as an attractive open space with seats, etc. The trees and most of the bushes on the Jackson Road frontage would almost certainly be preserved.

If and when the Parish Council can purchase this area, everyone will be given a chance to put forward suggestions and to comment on any plans prepared for its future use — BEFORE any work is started! However, we can't promise to please everyone all of the time.

## CHAPEL CENTENARY

Planning well in advance, the Methodist Chapel is preparing for the Chapel Centenary in April 1976. Whilst part of the existing building (the schoolroom and vestry) are from the original chapel of 1834, the main body of the chapel was opened in 1876 — hence the Centenary.

A special committee has recently been set up to put forward proposals for celebrating the Centenary. These will include a Gift Day and a Garden Party to help raise funds for the celebrations. Further details will be announced later.

It is hoped to arrange for a display of items of historical interest relating to Methodism in Wylam and the Minister, Rev. Frank Howatt, would be very pleased to hear from anyone who has any items of interest, e.g. old class tickets, circuit plans, programmes, photographs, etc. Please contact Mr. Howatt at 17 Stephenson Terrace, telephone 2143.

## BREWERY HOUSE — AGED PERSONS' FLATS

Work started several weeks ago on the Help the Aged Housing Association scheme at Brewery House adjacent to Charlie's Corner, and the following details of the project may be of general interest.

When complete, the scheme will provide 12 flats; 10 for single persons, 2 for couples, a warden's flat, a common room, laundry and a guest suite.

The flats will be linked by an intercom to the warden and it has been suggested that the District Council might wish to connect the existing Blackett Cottages into this intercom system, providing safeguards for the tenants of the bungalows.

In order not to disturb Mrs. McBeath, the tenant of Brewery House, the Housing Association is phasing the work, and no work will be commenced in Brewery House until all the flats are complete (probably next June).

Brewery House and the land were donated to the Association by the Trustees of the late Mr. Blackett. The total cost of the whole scheme is expected to be about £132,000, and the costs of the building work are being met by a loan to the Association from Tynedale District Council and a small bequest from the Blackett Estate trustees.

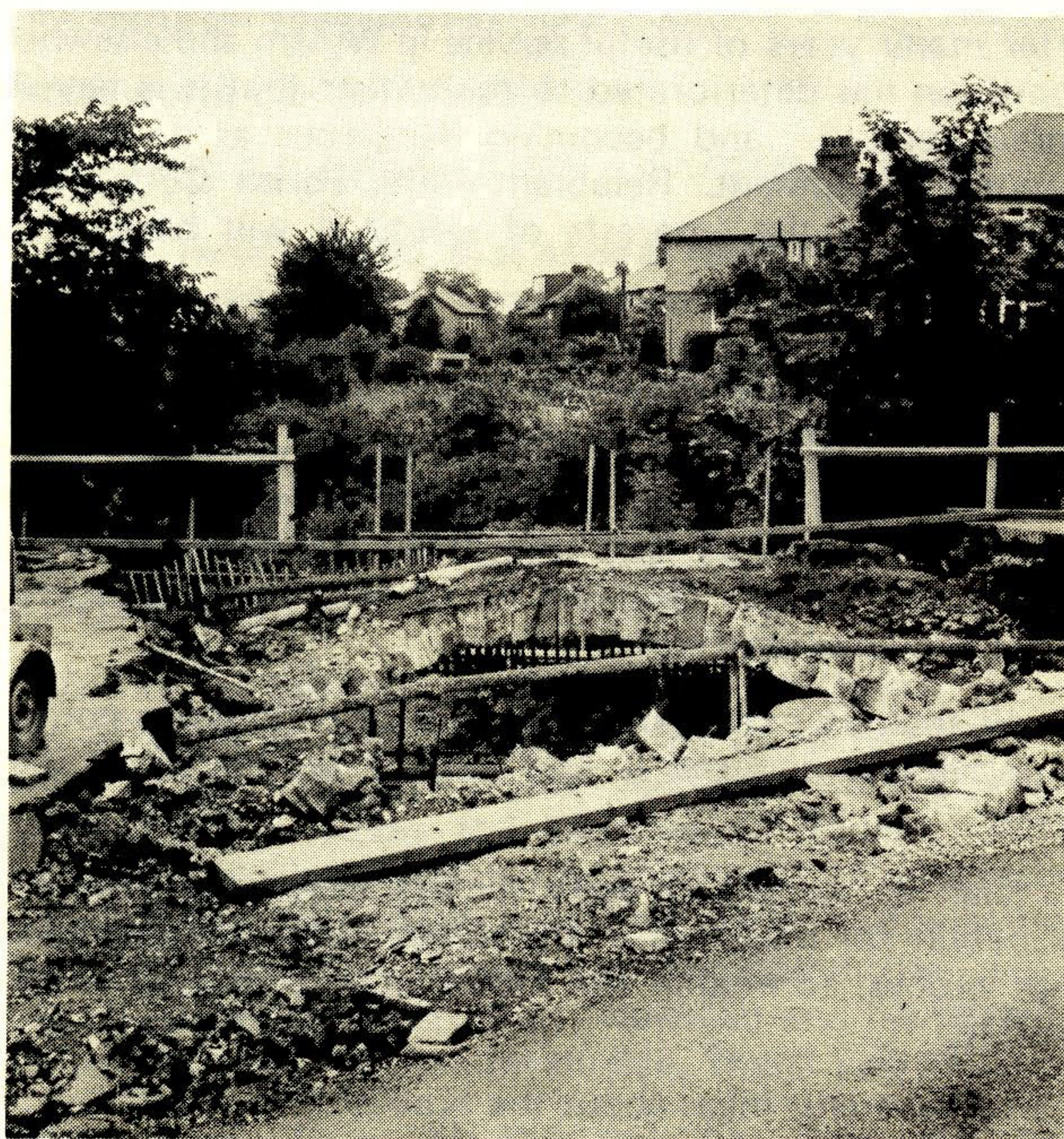
When complete, the flats will be let to local elderly people, at fair rents which will be established by the Rent Officer for the County.

The Help the Aged Housing Association Ltd., which is registered as a Charity, has built groups of flats for the elderly in many towns in the North-East, e.g. at Blyth, Gosforth, Newcastle, Whitley Bay, Sunderland, Darlington and elsewhere. The Wylam project is the only one they have started so far in Tynedale.

We understand that for a contribution of £150 to one of the Association's projects, you can have a flat named after yourself or someone dear to you. This gift also enables Help the Aged to obtain substantial loans to undertake housing projects.

In several of the schemes already completed, local schools and organisations, as well as private individuals, have named flats.

Incidentally, if anyone is interested in further information about the flats, and the possibility of renting one, or naming one, contact Mr. Christopher Leaper, the Regional Manager of the Association, at their offices at 77 Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DH. (Tel. 841511) He'd be pleased to help.



Butchers Bridge — July 1974

## WHERE CAN THEY BE BUILT?

Fairly wide publicity was given in the Hexham Courant to the discussion which took place at the July meeting of the Parish Council about the need for additional Council houses in the village. Our District Councillor, Peter Bennett, took part in the discussion and stated that there are at present approximately 50 persons on the waiting list for local authority houses in Wylam.

Although some doubts were expressed on whether the Council waiting lists accurately reflected the needs for houses in the village, it was accepted that there was probably a need for some additional rented accommodation in the village — both for old people and for families. The Parish Council has agreed, therefore, to support in principle a proposal that approximately 20 new council houses should be built.

Whilst it is easy to say, "Build 20 more council houses", choosing a suitable site for them is much more difficult!

Most people seem agreed on the importance of preserving as many open spaces as possible within the existing built up parts of the village — and the Parish Council is taking active steps to do this. The problems of the Dene Estate (referred to elsewhere) in recent years have emphasised the need for ensuring a satisfactory standard of open space provision, i.e. both landscaped "amenity" areas and play areas, and avoiding the temptation to build on every piece of open ground.

After considerable discussion on possible sites for new housing, it was eventually agreed that the District Council should be recommended to examine the land at the eastern end of Falcon Terrace, i.e. the small field behind the old "Stephenson Arms" inn.

In suggesting this site, the Parish Council was aware of possible problems of access, and asked that the District Council should examine the possibility of a separate access, i.e. not using Falcon or Stephenson Terraces.

Whilst accepting that this was not necessarily an ideal site, it was felt that it was the most suitable one available, being level, well screened and of little agricultural or amenity value, and convenient for the village.

What do you think about this suggestion? Have you any ideas as to other possible sites which could be considered? If so why not write to Mrs. Fairless, at 31 Falcon Terrace, so that the Parish Council is aware of your views.

## THE END OF THE LIFEBOAT

Did you know Wylam had a lifeboat? If not, you've never been to the Children's playground.

After many years of useful service in Wylam and elsewhere its condition has deteriorated to the extent that it is beyond economic repair — and becoming dangerous as an item of playground equipment. Reluctantly the Parish Council has decided that in the interests of safety it will have to be removed.

## INFORMATION LEAFLET

The Parish Council are shortly to produce a "Local Information Leaflet" — giving information about public and local authority services, and about the societies and organisations in the village. This will be of help both to existing residents and newcomers.

It will include names and addresses of officials to contact about particular services — and also of secretaries of local societies.

We shall be contacting some society secretaries shortly to check details for inclusion in the leaflet and would appreciate prompt replies, to enable the leaflet to be produced as soon as possible.

If you have any ideas about the type of information which you would find useful, please drop a line to Mrs. Fairless, the Clerk of the Parish Council.

## WYLAM AND DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

A new Round Table, sponsored by Hadrian Round Table has recently been formed to serve Wylam and the surrounding area. Tablers meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays at the Ovington Social Club. At present membership is equally divided between Wylam and Ovingham.

The two main aims are to form a fellowship and to give community service in the area. A number of successful community service projects have already been carried out, including raising money for children's homes and hospitals, and helping members of the community. Two of the most enjoyable projects were a Guy Fawkes fireworks display and barbecue, (to be repeated) and a trip to Flamingo Park Zoo — both were held for children from a children's home in the area.

Fellowship has ranged from disco and stag nights (and one curry evening) to five-a-side, a quiz team and taking part in "It's a Knockout". The only victory gained was one for a liquid refreshment competition held at the Black Horse, Beamish!

Any general enquiries, or community service suggestions should be made to the secretary, Mr. John Lynch, 11 Piper Road, Ovingham, telephone Prudhoe 33055.

## LET THERE BE LIGHT

After a long delay, two new lamps have been erected on the dark footpath between the top of Jackson Road and Hackworth Gardens.

Incidentally, any complaints about faulty street lamps should be made direct to the Electricity Board (phone Hexham 3678), or alternatively give details to Mrs. Fairless, the Parish Council Clerk (Wylam 2538) and she will contact NEEB.

## SAVE WASTE PAPER

Waste paper and cardboard is an important raw material which can be treated, processed and made into new cardboard.

Saving waste paper helps to reduce the need to import material from abroad, and at the same time reduces the amount of rubbish which the Council has to dispose of.

Some local councils have been collecting waste paper for several years, and selling it for cash and from 14th October Tynedale District Council is making arrangements to collect waste paper in certain villages — including Wylam. All local residents are asked to separate newspapers, magazines and cardboard and bundle these together for the refuse collector to pick up when he calls each week.

Remember — collecting and selling waste paper may help the District Council to increase its income — and perhaps reduce the size of the next rate increase — which is to your advantage!

*Note: Please do NOT include: Plastic cups or bottles, polystyrene, waxed or coated containers or polythene because it only needs a very small amount of these to ruin large quantities of waste paper.*

## OLD WYLAM

Due to shortage of space this regular item has had to be omitted from this issue. It will appear again in the January edition, together with another old photograph taken in the village.

*All correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. D. Fairless, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 31, Falcon Terrace, Wylam.*