

# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

Number 7

Quarterly

January 1975

**A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**TO ALL OUR READERS**

## HOW ARE THEY CHOSEN?

Several people have asked recently how the Tynedale District Council select tenants for their council houses.

Our District Councillor, Peter Bennett, — in liaison with the Housing Officer, Mr. Forster — has therefore produced the following statement outlining the Council's policy:—

"In Tynedale District, tenants for council houses and bungalows are selected by a Sub-Committee of the Housing Committee. The Sub-Committee is guided by a "Points" System — "points" being given for such factors as — length of time on the waiting list, lack of separate home, condition of present home, etc. Consideration is given to factors such as ill health, homelessness and overcrowding.

When a council house becomes vacant, the Housing Officer prepares a list of applicants on the waiting list who want that sort of home. Unfortunately there is always a considerable waiting list. At Wylam in particular the waiting list is quite a long one. Besides those living in this village, (some of whom have been waiting for years), a list will also contain the names of several deserving applicants from other places.

The Selection Sub-Committee consists of members of the Housing Committee with local knowledge of the place where the house is vacant. If the local District Councillor is not a member of the Housing Committee, he is specially co-opted so that the Selection Sub-Committee can have the benefit of his knowledge and advice. For a house in Wylam, there may be fifteen or more names on the list prepared by the Housing Officer to be considered by the Selection Sub-Committee. All are deserving cases. The Sub-Committee consider the list very carefully but can only select one tenant for one vacant house. All the other applicants have to be disappointed. The selection of the most deserving tenant for a vacant house is a heavy and worrying responsibility."

### NOTE:

*The selection of tenants for council houses is the responsibility of the District Council — who own the houses. The Parish Council are not involved in this difficult task.*

*However, the District Council maintains close liaison with Parish Councils on possible demand for new council houses and on suitable sites on which to build them.*

*Discussions are still taking place about the possibilities of a limited number of council houses or bungalows being built in the village, to meet present needs and we hope to be able to include a further report on this in our next issue.*

## OLD STATION YARD

Work on clearing the disused platforms and the derelict concrete footbridge in the former N. Wylam station yard, is now well under way — a good start to the New Year!

Part of the cleared site is to be laid out as a car park, and the remainder will be landscaped with trees. The walkway along the route of the old railway, through the Station Yard will be improved, as will the path between the War Memorial green and Falcon Terrace.

The Gas Board have recently been given permission to erect a small building in the station yard (to house some of their equipment) so if you see a building under construction in the next few months it could be this one — and not the public lavatory block for which some of you are still waiting!

## LOCAL INFORMATION CARD

The Local Information Card referred to in our last issue has now been produced, and a copy is enclosed.

We hope that you will find it useful — we believe it should help to meet a demand for this type of information to be available in a convenient and handy form — for use when you need it.

The attractive illustration on the cover has been very kindly drawn by a local artist, Mrs. Veronica Valentine, of "Bowmont", Ovingham Road.



## WYLAM HILLS FARM FIRE

Although it is now several weeks since the serious fire on 20th November which destroyed valuable straw and hay stacks at Robert Graham's farm at Wylam Hills, we're sure everyone will wish us to express sympathy — on behalf of the village — at his misfortune. We hope that the destruction of the feeding stuffs at this difficult time will not seriously affect the farm, which is an important and attractive feature in the village.

## RIVERSIDE LAND

Many local authorities, including some Parish Councils, have learnt from bitter experience in the past, that the only really effective way of preserving land as open space in a village — is to own it, and that this should be done wherever practicable.

It is primarily for this reason that the Parish Council is negotiating for the purchase of the area of waste ground south of the Dene Estate shops, and why it also strongly supported the County Council when the idea of acquiring the old station yard, and the disused railway track was being considered for reclamation as an amenity walkway.

Although many of the important areas of open land within the village are now owned by one or other of the local authorities, there is one significant exception — namely, the land on the riverside, lying to the west of the Boys' Brigade field (and bounded on the north side by the old railway line and on the south and west by the river.)

This area of about ten acres, includes the tree-covered pit heap, the various allotments, and the adjoining arable field beyond the allotments — and is an important open area within the village.

Although there seems little prospect of this land being built on, the Parish Council believe that it would be in the long term interests of local residents if it were owned by the village, which would safeguard its future use.

A preliminary approach has been made to the Trustees of the Blackett Estate, the owners of the land, and they have now indicated their willingness to sell, and the advice of an independent valuer has also been obtained to establish the likely value of the land.

This year (1974/75) the actual rate levied for "parish purposes" has been two pence, and on the basis of the advice given, it is probable that WITHOUT INCREASING THE PRESENT PARISH RATE, but just by continuing it at its present level for next year, it should be possible to purchase this land on the riverside, and to continue the other regular functions which the Parish Council at present undertakes.

The alternative means of raising money for the purchase would be to seek authority to raise a loan, but such an approval is unlikely to be forthcoming, and would in any case prove more expensive in the long term.

In spite of the national economic situation, the Parish Council feels that it is appropriate to consider buying this land now that it is available (the opportunity may not occur again) and trusts that the village will support the idea.

So if you have any strong views, please let us know — if you don't, we will assume that you are happy with the proposal, and we will proceed on this basis unless a majority of residents show themselves opposed to it.

Incidentally, if the Parish Council does buy the land, there is no intention of displacing the existing users in the foreseeable future, and if any changes are thought to be desirable in the long term, these would only be carried out after full discussion.

Assuming the present high demand for allotments in the village continues, it may be possible for a small number of additional allotments to be provided here, but clearly this will depend on the willingness of the tenant farmer to co-operate by releasing a small area of land.

## FOOTPATH ACROSS ENGINE DENE

Anyone who has ever got bogged down in the muddy footpath which links the end of Algernon Terrace and Bluebell Close (i.e. along the northern edge of Engine Dene) will be relieved to see that the County Council Divisional Surveyor has quite recently improved the surface of the worst portions of the path by spreading small stone chippings.

## BUTCHERS BRIDGE-ROAD SCHEME

Work on this road scheme was completed at the end of October — much to the relief of local residents and motorists who had suffered inconvenience whilst this project and the sewerage scheme were in progress.

On balance the "improvement" is probably of general benefit and it is certainly an advantage to pedestrians to have a safe pavement on both sides of the road. However, drivers using the Falcon Terrace/Fox and Hounds junction will now need to take extra care, and those on the Main Road must resist the temptation to speed through the village since the road had been straightened and widened!

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## VILLAGE DIARY — WHAT'S ON IN WYLAM

### JANUARY

Saturday 18th	Tennis Club — Cheese and Wine Party, Elm Bank House 8 p.m.
Saturday 25th	Conservative Jumble Sale — Institute.
Sunday 26th	Sunday School Anniversary — Wylam Assembly 6.30 p.m.
Tuesday 28th	"History of Northumberland Agriculture" — Talk 8 p.m., Institute.

### FEBRUARY

Monday 3rd	Community Centre Dance.
Friday 14th	St. Valentine's Dance. C.P.F.A. 9 p.m. — 1 a.m. Institute.
Saturday 22nd	Tennis Club Jumble Sale. 2 p.m. Institute.
Tuesday 25th	"Northumbrian Place-names" Talk by local author, Godfrey Watson, 8 p.m. Institute.

### MARCH

Friday 21st	Blood Donors' Session. Open 2 p.m. — 8.30 p.m. Institute.
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### APRIL

Saturday 5th	"Wylam Fair". Organised by C.P.F.A.
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*These activities are taken from those listed in the Village Diary kept by Mrs. Hurd. All secretaries and organisers are requested to notify her (Tel. 2563) of activities arranged in the village. Anyone wanting events/meetings publicised in the next (April) issue MUST notify Mrs. Hurd by early March to guarantee inclusion.*

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## "FRIENDS OF WYLAM"

In the certain knowledge that there are some residents who have little idea what the "Friends of Wylam" do (and indeed the name does not give one much idea) we asked their Secretary, Mrs. T. N. Pattinson, to outline the aims and activities of the Friends.

"Friends of Wylam" was inaugurated in 1958, when a committee was formed to organise a Christmas Party for the elderly people of the village.

This idea continued for a few years until 1963 when an additional activity, a summer outing was arranged. Money for these efforts had been raised by donations, but that year a Jumble Sale was organised and this has now become an annual event, and the chief source of income.

The first of the Tuesday Coffee mornings took place in 1963 and since then, these have been regularly held each fortnight when fifty to sixty of the village Over 60's get together for coffee and a chat.

The "Meals on Wheels" service began in October 1965, and at first this was subsidised by the "Friends", but by May of the following year the Hexham R.D.C. and Northumberland County Council agreed to pay the subsidy.

Since then funds have allowed both a summer outing and a Christmas Party to be organised each year.

In addition to coffee mornings a Whist Drive and Domino Session is held each month during the winter, and there is also occasional shows of colour slides.

A large number of elderly people live alone and it is the aim of all these meetings to provide friendship and to try to overcome loneliness.

Problems can be talked over, and troubles arising from such things as payment of rates, electricity cuts, conversion to natural gas etc., can be discussed and often alleviated if not solved.

This Christmas has seen the introduction of a new innovation — a Christmas lunch — and last month 125 guests enjoyed a meal and a programme of music by Dennis and Eleanor Weatherley.

"Friends of Wylam" is a community affair, and such is the community spirit of this village that, whether it be a Jumble Sale or Christmas Party, willing volunteers are always ready to help, and for this co-operation the Committee are extremely grateful.

### NOTE:

*The work of the Friends is undoubtedly of tremendous benefit to the village and is widely appreciated — long may they continue to flourish.*

*If anyone would like further information, or wishes to help the "Friends" — please contact Mrs. Pattinson at Wylam Wood. (Tel. 3121.)*

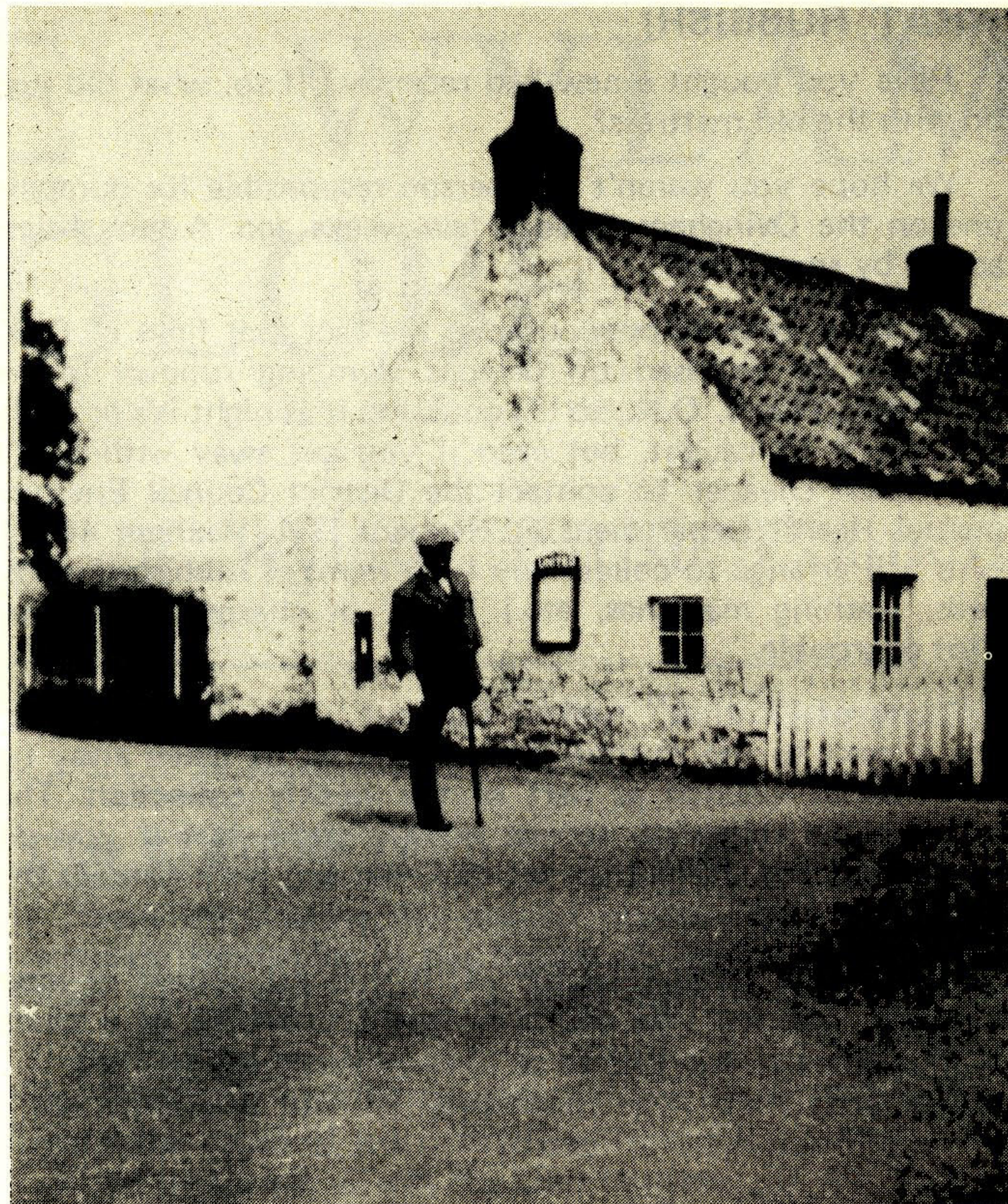
## SPARES AVAILABLE

A few copies of the earlier issues of the "Globe", (Numbers 3, 4, 5 and 6) are still available. If anyone missed a copy or would like another, please contact Mrs. Fairless, (Tel. 2538.)

## FEEL FREE TO COMMENT

If you have any comments about what is being done in the village, or suggestions about what you think needs to be done, please don't hesitate to let the Parish Council know — either by contacting one of your Councillors or by writing to the Clerk, Mrs. Fairless, at 31 Falcon Terrace.

We welcome comments and constructive criticism!



## OLD WYLAM

This month's photograph has been kindly provided by Mrs. Mordue of Horsley Fell. It shows a local character, and a building, familiar to local motorists in pre-war days.

Can you name him, and say where the cottage (now demolished) stood? The answer will be given in the next issue.

If you are able to identify the building, can you remember when it was demolished? If so, we'd like to know, please.

## PARKED CARS — DENE ESTATE

Our comments in the last issue about dangerous driving on Dene Road by some motorists prompted a response from one resident, who, whilst agreeing with our comments about the dangers of speeding, claimed that the way some residents parked their cars created an additional hazard both to small children and to other motorists.

This doesn't invalidate the claim that some people drive dangerously and unnecessarily fast on the estate, but it is clearly also important to park carefully and, wherever possible, off the road.

## A ROUND CIRCLE?

In the last issue we included an item about the activities of the recently formed Wylam and District Round Table. Events have continued during the autumn and funds were raised to finance a successful barbecue and fireworks display for the children at Stelling Hall, early in November.

At the beginning of December the Tablers' "better halves", the Ladies' Circle, held their inaugural meeting, thus adding to the wide range of local community organisations.

We wish both the Round Table and the Ladies Circle success — and hope that they will be able both to continue, and to extend their contribution to community activities and charities in Wylam and District.

*P.S. We welcome news of the activities of any local society or organisation, and will be happy to include short items in the "Globe" (which is printed early in January, April, July and October.) Details to Mrs. Fairless please.*

## WHAT RUBBISH!

Have you bought a new bed recently? If so, what did you do with the old mattress?

We hope you weren't the person responsible for dumping one on the Ovingham Road a few weeks ago. A thoughtless action by some fool!

We have referred previously to the fact that fines of £100 can now be imposed on persons dumping rubbish in unauthorised places. O.K., so if you dump it at night it's unlikely that you'll be caught, but even if you get away with it, it's still much cheaper to contact the District Council Environmental Health Department at Hexham (Tel. Hexham 4011), who will arrange to collect any large items of rubbish (Pianos, beds, washing machines, etc.) FREE of charge, saving you a lot of trouble.

Items of "normal" rubbish put out in polythene sacks or boxes next to the dustbin will, of course, be taken away by the District Council as part of the weekly collection. The local refuse collection service is very good, but if you do experience any difficulties, let us know and we'll contact the District Council.

But please, **DON'T DUMP IT**; if you do, sooner or later someone will see you and that might prove to be a waste of £100!

## OFF GUARD

One of the jobs which the County Surveyor carried out at the request of the Parish Council and as part of the general improvements done to the footpaths and verges in the Ingham Row area, was to remove the old metal tree guards on the lime trees opposite the Mill.

These guards were the originals put up when the trees were planted 70 years ago, but were doing more harm than good to the trees, and their removal and the pruning of the bushy growth at the base of the trees makes a small but noticeable improvement in the appearance of the area.

## NO WAITING – STATION ROAD

Another cause of concern has been bad parking on Station Road, outside the Boathouse Inn.

Parking on this short stretch of road immediately adjacent to the railway level crossing, presents a potentially dangerous traffic hazard, particularly at night.

In view of these dangers, the County Council is being asked to consider making a No Waiting Order along both sides of the road between the level crossing and the end of Elm Bank Road. This is only a short length of road and waiting restrictions here should not create any real inconvenience to anyone, particularly since there is alternative parking space either along the south side of Elm Bank Road, or in the Station Yard. (B.R. willing!)

## REST FOR THE WEARY

The two new public seats which the Parish Council ordered earlier in the year have now been fixed in position – one on Chapel Lane and the other outside the Fox and Hounds.

Various of the wooden benches have also been repaired and one or two are being moved to more convenient sites in the village. Whilst this is scarcely the weather for "sitting out", the seats should be all ready for use when the warmer weather comes.

Thanks are due to Mr. Stroughair, the Tynedale Public Works Officer and his staff for help with the repairing and fixing of these seats.

## COMMUNITY WEEK

With a newsletter which only appears quarterly it is inevitable that some important events occur immediately after one issue is printed – and hence the news is nearly three months old by the time the next one is produced!

Community Week – held at the beginning of November was one major event which fell into that category.

Once again it proved a great success both from a social viewpoint and also financially (raising a total of between £600 - £700.)

The sequence of events followed a similar pattern to the previous year – starting with the Saturday afternoon Jumble Sale organised by the Badminton and Cricket Clubs. (Incidentally where does all that jumble come from to stock the numerous local jumble sales? Mind you they do help residents on the Dene Estate, who have little spare space in which to store any jumble for long!)

The Guy Fawkes firework display and bonfire held on the Boys Brigade field proved very popular. The weather stayed fine and the Keep Fit class kept fit running the barbecue.

The Community Service (an excellent idea) held in the Parish Church on Sunday afternoon was well attended, and the Handicrafts exhibition in the Institute on Monday and Tuesday, proved once again that there is ample talent of one sort or another, in the village.

The youngsters enjoyed their own "Pick of the Pops" session on Monday night, and the following evening the Photographic Society provided a delightful and leisurely armchair tour of the village (although unfortunately the Institute chairs are not quite armchair luxury!), showing colour slides taken throughout the year.

The Community concert with its miscellany of items (you're sure to enjoy at least one item!) played to capacity audiences on Wednesday and Thursday. Friday night was "Whist night" – always popular with the enthusiasts.

The Horticultural Society coffee morning and sale of plants and flowers again did well and raised over £70, and the week was brought to a successful close on Saturday night with the dance organised by the Community Playing Fields Association.

Community Week's success lies partly with the variety of events which are arranged, but primarily with the enthusiasm of the Institute Committee and the Societies and their helpers, and the active support of so many local residents.

1975 is the 125th anniversary of the establishment of the original Institute – and we look forward to another successful Community Week later this year.

## A WORD OF PRAISE

The newly formed Dramatic Society launched their first full scale production – for three nights – at the end of November, and deserve to be congratulated both on their choice of play, and on their performances.

When's the next one?

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