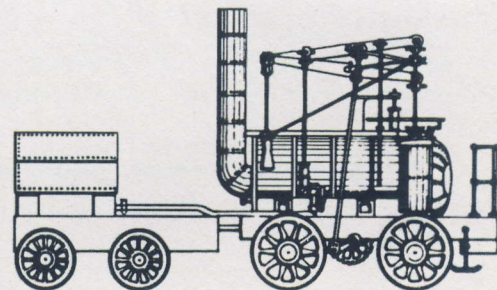


THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Autumn 2013

No. 110

Welcome Home "Puffing Billy"



Puffing Billy Festival

Join in - celebrate the 200th Anniversary of William Hedley's "Puffing Billy".

In 1813 a huge breakthrough in railway engineering took place right here in Wylam. William Hedley developed the first adhesion steam engine to haul coal from Wylam Colliery to Lemington Staiths.

The Puffing Billy Festival, organised by The Friends of Puffing Billy, a group comprising representatives from Wylam and Heddon Parish Councils together with community groups from these villages along with Newburn and Lemington, has organised celebrations in each community.

In Wylam, these events will include:-

A talk about "The Wylam Locomotives, their History, Preservation and Interpretation", by John Liffin. This will be in the Institute on Wednesday 18 September at 7.00pm.

"Scoutrail", an exhibition of model railways, in the Institute on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 September between 10.00am and 4.00pm

The main "Welcome Home" celebrations on Saturday 21 September will centre on the Tyne Riverside Country Park Car Park, near the War Memorial, from 11.00am and at the nearby Falcon Centre.

The "Puffing Billy" replica locomotive from Beamish Museum will be here again on Saturday 21 September.

Further attractions on this day will include fancy dress on a "Georgian" theme; poetry and photographic competitions, a Brownies "Puffing Billy Challenge"; Wylam First School Choir, Hadrian Clogs; Prudhoe Community High School Swing Band; the Cherry Pickers and Elaine Milbourne Dance

Studio; Friends of Libraries in Tynedale; displays by the Robert Stephenson Trust; Tyne Valley Rail Partnership; Beamish Museum; Earth Doctors; refreshments and various stalls run by local community groups.

Further details can be seen within the programme, which is now available, and on posters throughout the village.

Parish Council Now Complete

In the local election in May this year you may remember that Wylam Parish Council had only six nominations for the eight available seats and consequently had to seek additional members through co-optation.

We are delighted to report that these vacancies have now been filled and that Ruth Creighton and Bill Nicholson have now joined the Council and are already using their combination of experience and expertise to good effect. We trust that they will enjoy representing the community in this way. Ruth can be contacted at 84 Dene Road (Tel: 852668) and Bill at 80 Dene Road (Tel:853315). You may wish to add these details to your Village information Card.

Major Additions to Railway Museum

It's now 13 years since Wylam Parish Council received news of a totally unexpected bequest from the estate of Michael Seymour, a retired Cambridge schoolmaster.

Mr Seymour had been a keen historian and steam railway enthusiast, who became aware of the Railway Museum at Wylam in 1981 when the village was celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Stephenson. He also designed the first day cover stamp, issued to mark this anniversary and, in 1985 when the 150th anniversary of the opening of the

first part of the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway was being celebrated, he designed a map of that railway, a copy of which is displayed in the museum.

He was particularly interested in the early locomotives built in Wylam and his bequest was specifically to enable a model or models of these to be built.

As a result, Wylam Parish Council commissioned John Hazle, from Edinburgh, a man with years of experience in this specialist field of model making, to construct two one-twelfth scale models, one of the "Wylam Dilly" and the other of "Puffing Billy". The work has taken years of painstaking effort, using copies of the original drawings where they were available, together with photographs and direct measurements of full-sized replicas in museums. Even the nuts and bolts are to scale!

John Hazle came to Wylam in August to install the models in a special display case in the Museum, which enables the models not just to be seen but to "come alive" at the press of a button.

The project has taken a long time to reach fruition but it could not be at a more appropriate time as celebrations of the bi-centenary of William Hedley's "Puffing Billy" come to a head in Wylam and beyond.



John Hazle making final adjustments to the models before their installation

Been to the Library and Museum Recently?

One of the planned and therefore expected outcomes of the Puffing Billy events in early July was that many people were drawn to visit the Falcon Centre, where the Library contained several special exhibits and the Parish Council's Railway Museum was also open. What was unexpected was the number of local people who confessed to never having been inside the building previously!

Our local Library provides a wonderful resource, which at various times over recent years we have had to fight hard to retain in face of County Council budget cuts.

Although that risk appears to have diminished, for now, the more we use the facility the stronger the case for retention and even improvement.

The Library is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2.00 to 5.00pm and 5.30 to 7.30pm and on Saturdays between 9.00am and 12 noon and offers a very wide selection of fiction and non-fiction (some in large print), books for children and teenagers, audio books, DVDs and magazines. There are also five public access computers. If you are not already a user, why not take a look and perhaps join?

The Railway Museum, with its exciting new development reported elsewhere in this issue, is also open to the public when the library is open.

Another Songbook Course

Ron Guariento is offering another study course based on "The Great American Songbook". This course, commencing at 9.30am on Tuesday 1 October in Wylam Institute, will cover the abundance of 20th Century popular music, its ancestry, development and maturity. The course is for five weekly two-hour sessions and the cost is £15. Anyone interested in booking for the course or requiring more details should contact Ron at: rguariento@btinternet.com or at 29 Falcon Terrace.

Still More Cutbacks Needed

Despite the reminder in our last issue, many hedges, shrubs and trees are still causing considerable nuisance to pedestrians where they are allowed to grow and overhang paths and pavements **Please, please** be a 'good neighbour' and cut back all offending growth! As we have pointed out previously, it is an offence to allow this to occur.

Another Successful Summer Fair



Wylam Summer Fair had a distinctly Victorian feel this year as the village prepared for the "Puffing Billy" Festival. Costumed staff from the Educational Outreach team at Beamish Museum ran a selection of traditional period games for children, which proved to be a great addition to all the usual attractions.

Entertainment was provided by the Prudhoe Community Band, Wylam First School Choir and members of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. The new format for the Bookstall also proved popular and very successful.

The evening music festival was a sell-out once again, with music provided by "Midlife Crisis", "Charlu" and "Riverain".

The Scarecrow Competition, which preceded the Fair, attracted some wonderful and highly imaginative entries, the winner being "Clowning Around", by the Robinson family.

Overall the Summer Fair proved to be very popular again and with the bonus of fine weather and the immense help provided by so many volunteers, a healthy profit was made, which will be ploughed back into the Jubilee Field.

Progress with Allotment Flooding

After years of delay and uncertainty Northumbrian Water eventually accepted responsibility for the serious flooding of the allotments, which regularly occurred after heavy rain and which we have mentioned here in the past.

Once this point was reached, Northumbrian Water and contractors working for them have worked hard to resolve the problem. They located and have now repaired a broken culvert which runs across the site and into the river and added some additional lateral drains to feed into this.

Chambers have been included to provide access for inspection or maintenance, should this be necessary in the future. We sincerely hope that this will be an end to what had become an extremely worrying issue.

Prudhoe Gleemen are Coming "Home"

The Prudhoe Gleemen Male Voice Choir is giving a concert in the Wylam Methodist Church Centre at 7.00pm on Saturday 26 October, in aid of the church "Room to Grow" Building Project.

It's possible that few people will know that this well known choir was actually formed at the Methodist Church here in Wylam in 1903, and rehearsed here for some eight years before moving to its present home in Prudhoe. There were just eight men in the original choir and although membership has fluctuated over the years there are now up to 40 singers, led by their very talented Musical Director, Judith Thompson and accompanist Alison Williams.

So, now in their 110th year, they have kindly agreed to perform in Wylam once again and the church folk are hoping that this concert will be well supported. Tickets are £5, obtainable from church members (or see notice boards.)

The Methodist "Room to Grow" Project aims to provide additional rooms to cater for the growing church and particularly for its work with children and young people, but also for community use. It will also create a more spacious and welcoming entrance and foyer area, remove the present steps into and within the church and see further improvements within the church hall.

"Cold Caller" Warning

Most of us are probably sick of receiving telephone calls from people wanting to sell us something or telling us we might be eligible for some "amazing" offer.

We have recently been advised that one particular company has been using this method to target mainly older and more vulnerable people to part with substantial sums of money for intruder, fire or personal alarm systems, although they frequently start by saying that these are free. What makes this more worrying is that they variously claim to be working with or for the local police service or Crime Prevention UK. Sometimes they claim to be reacting to "recent local crimes" and even quote artificial police crime incident numbers.

If you should receive such a call, be aware that that this company is not registered with any of the Security Industry Regulatory bodies and, if you are concerned, contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 08454 04 05 06.

Ovingham Cemetery and Lodge

Some residents may not know that the general upkeep of the cemetery, grounds and lodge at Tyne Gardens in Ovingham is the responsibility of the Parish Councils of Wylam, Ovingham, Horsley and Ovington.

The four Councils have recently agreed to finance much needed maintenance work required at the Lodge.

Hopefully, by the time this Globe is printed the work should be well underway and will take about two to three months to complete.

The Committee overseeing this work hope that any disturbance to visitors to the cemetery will be minimal. Should there be any problem as a result of the work, the Clerk to the Joint Burial Committee can be contacted on 07968 121247.

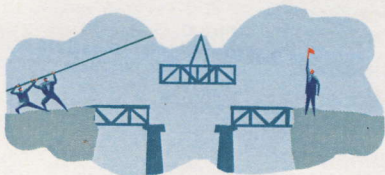
Bridges Opening and Closing

You will almost certainly have seen reports in the press in recent months about the closure of the road and adjacent river bridge at Stocksfield, necessitated by a serious land-slip. This road has now been re-opened.

You will probably have also read about the pending closure of the river bridge at Ovingham, to enable major repair and refurbishment of that bridge. This work is planned to commence in March 2014 and the bridge will remain closed for nine months, assuming there are no serious weather problems.

During the first week of closure the road bridge will take pedestrians only while the footbridge is repaired. Foot traffic will then revert to the footbridge and a "walking bus" is planned to assist children from south of the river who attend Ovingham First School. (We assume that those attending the Middle School are deemed to be able to negotiate the route unaided!)

This closure will clearly generate a marked increase in traffic using the Wylam Bridge but we can only hope that many drivers will find alternative routes to the east or west of us.



"The Best Day Ever!"



This was the reaction of one Wylam First School pupil to the first visit to the village, in July, of the famous "Puffing Billy" replica locomotive from Beamish Museum.

Aided by staff in period costume from the Beamish Educational Outreach team, children from local schools were treated during the day to stories about this early locomotive and what it might have been like to live, work and even to play as a child in Wylam 200 years ago.

With additional displays in the Falcon Centre of work by children of Wylam First School and period games in the old playground there, even the rain late in the day didn't put too much of a dampener on things.

Station Footbridge



By the time you read this the refurbished footbridge at Wylam Station should have reopened and the "tent" in this photograph should be a thing of the past. The reopening was expected several months ago but the initial sandblasting operation exposed far more damage to parts of the steelwork than expected, and the contractors have had to replace additional sections, meaning that the budget for the work also had to be re-assessed and agreed.

The Parish Council has been pressing Network Rail since long before the work began to improve the lighting on the north side of the footbridge, where there is no direct illumination of the steps at night and where accidents have occurred. Unfortunately, but typically in our experience, Network Rail has failed to reply to this request but a conversation with the site manager during the work led to a promise that he would see that a light is included. We very much hope that this promise will be fulfilled.

Tried Using the Bus?



Northumberland

County Council is currently, as required by law, seeking tenders for the provision of bus services on many routes in the county from April 2014. Faced with a budget cut of £0.4 million in the current financial year for these services and the prospect of a further cut next year, the County Council has to make economies and yes, you know what this means, some services are likely to be withdrawn and others reduced!

Perhaps it is fortunate that the two services through Wylam, the 684 service between Hexham and Newcastle and the 686 between Ovington and Prudhoe, both currently operated by "Go-NorthEast" under the "Tynedale Links" banner, are not due to go out to tender until this time next year ready for the April 2015 timetable. At a recent meeting in Hexham to discuss these issues, it was no surprise to learn that it's chiefly the number of passengers using a service that determines its likely protection from cuts, and that decisions are based on usage during the previous year or so. It therefore makes sense that if we wish to see our local services maintained, making good use of them during the coming year could make a big difference.

Surveys have been carried out in several communities in south west Northumberland which, quite surprisingly, reveal that it's mainly a lack of knowledge about the services available and their timetable that deters people from using the buses.

So, for those in the dark here's a very brief reminder of the running times from Charlie's Corner, with other Wylam stops obviously slightly different:-

On Monday to Friday the 684 to Newcastle leaves at 07.21 and 08.16 and then every hour from 09.26 until 17.26. To Hexham the times are every hour from 08.40 until 17.40, with the last journey timed at 18.45. On Saturdays the times are very similar but with the first bus at 07.51 and then hourly between 09.26 and 17.26 and journeys to Hexham starting at 09.10, then hourly from 10.40 to 17.40 with the last bus at 18.45. On Sundays there are only two buses in each direction, 07.56 and 11.56 to Newcastle and 16.56 and 20.56 to Hexham. Return journeys from Newcastle (Eldon Square) mostly leave at 10 minutes past the hour.

The 686 service to Prudhoe via Crawcrook, leaves Charlie's Corner each hour from 09.33 to 13.33 with return journeys from the Dr Syntax in Prudhoe timed hourly from 10.07 to 14.07. This route only operates Monday to Friday but it does of course provide a useful link at Crawcrook or Prudhoe to the frequent No 10 service, operating to Newcastle via the Metro Centre.

Copies of these timetables are generally available from the library or The Spar and can be seen on-line at www.simplygo.com

Dog Owners Beware!

The Parish Council continues to receive complaints that, particularly in some areas of the village, dog owners are still failing to clean up after their dogs.

If you are ever guilty of this offence, be warned that Public Protection Officers from Northumberland County Council are currently cracking down on offenders, with "sting" operations across the county. So far these have seen a 300% increase in the number of £75 on-the-spot fines being issued. Fail to pay up within 14 days and the Council will prosecute, with a potential fine of up to £1000.

Community Orchard Wins Award

We are delighted to report that over the past year volunteers from Wylam Community Orchard have created a wild flower meadow on the orchard site at Wylam First School. In July, these efforts were recognised at the "LOVE Northumberland Awards", where the meadow won the Best New Project category, presented by the Duchess of Northumberland at Alnwick Gardens.

A wide variety of flowers bloomed this summer and numbers of bats, bees and butterflies have increased. Thanks to a generous grant of £3,350 from LEAF (Local Environment Action Fund), a power scythe and 400 wild flower plugs have been purchased.

Everyone is invited to come and see for themselves at an open orchard session on Saturday 14 September, between 2.00 and 4.00pm.

Forthcoming Events

The following events will take place in Wylam Institute, unless indicated otherwise.

Sat 14 Sept

Prudhoe Community Band, afternoon and evening entertainment

Wed 18 Sept

"Wylam Locomotives" talk by John Liffin, 7.00pm

Sat 21 Sept

"Puffing Billy" Festival Day (with return of replica from Beamish) War Memorial Car Park.

Sat 21 & Sun 22 Sept

"Scoutrail" event, 10.00am to 4.00pm

Wed 25 Sept

Quiz in aid of Christian Aid at "Fox & Hounds"

Sat 28 Sept

Giant Macmillan Coffee Morning Film Club 7.30pm, "Song for Marion".

Sat 5 Oct

"Race Night" at St Oswin's Church Hall

Wed 9 Oct

Men at Home, Methodist Church Centre 10.15 for 10.30am, "Reflections on the Brain and Behaviour", Jim Edwardson

Mon 7 Oct

Blood Donor Session

Mon 14 Oct

Parish Council Meeting, 7.00pm

Fri 18 Oct

Playing Field Asscn. "Salsa Night"

Sat 19 Oct

Film Club 7.30pm, "The Gatekeepers"

Sat 26 Oct

Concert by Prudhoe Gleemen Male Voice Choir, Methodist Church Centre, 7.00pm

Sat 2 Nov

Wylam Housing Group Christmas Fair, 10.00am to 12.30pm

Mon 11 Nov

Parish Council Meeting, 7.00pm

Wed 13 Nov

Men at Home, Methodist Church Centre 10.15 for 10.30am, "Ordnance Survey Maps", Bill Bland

Sat 23 Nov

Film Club 7.30pm, "Silver Linings Playbook".

Thurs 28 to Sat 30 Nov

Drama Society Production, 7.30pm

Mon 9 Dec

Parish Council Meeting, 7.00pm

Wed 11 Dec

Men at Home, Methodist Church Centre 10.15 for 10.30am, "Vitamin D, the Elixir of Life", Roger Francis

Sat 14 Dec

Film Club 7.30pm, "Hugo"

Please note: In addition to the above events, Coffee Mornings in aid of Wylam Institute are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month, 10.30am to 12 noon, and "Friends of Wylam" Coffee Mornings are fortnightly on Tuesday mornings from 10.00am

Deadline for material for the next "Wylam Globe"

Monday 4 November

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