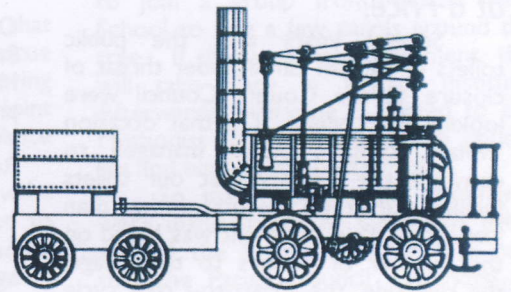


THE WYLAM GLOBE

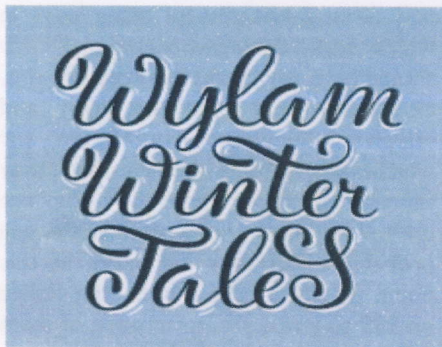
Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Winter 2015

No. 119

Winter Tales Festival



Wylam Parish Council is pleased to be supporting this exciting initiative by Wylam residents Gareth Davies-Jones, who is a professional singer/songwriter and Simon Hackett, an art therapist working in the NHS.

They write "January and February – the Christmas lights have been put away, the short days and cold weather lingers on. It seems winter may never end and the warmth has gone for good. That is until now!"

With a passion to bring a sense of shared community and celebration, the inaugural Winter Tales Festival is here. Hoping to be the spark to ignite your imagination it will be a Festival that provides a range of arts events to help brighten things up at the darkest time of the year.

So, put **Saturday 30 January to Friday 5 February 2016** in your diary as an oasis of creativity and fun between the doldrums after Christmas and the lull before the Spring. With something for all ages there will be events happening every day and evening throughout the week, right here in the village. With a range of different venues, you can take your pick from storytelling, music, poetry, film, craft, the Big Book Club and local history. Some events are free and the rest are very reasonably priced for all. For more information and to book tickets please visit www.wylamwintertales.co.uk.

Tickets are also available from Wylam Post Office and The Queen's Hall in Hexham. You can also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wylamwintertales Please help us to make things a success by booking in advance -

There are some reductions if you get your tickets before January - and they'll make great Christmas presents!" If you would like to support the Festival or be a volunteer at events during the week, please email wylamwintertales@gmail.com

PROGRAMME:-

Sat 30 Jan - Wylam Institute

1.00 & 3.00pm Two performances by the amazing *Upfront Puppet Theatre Circus*.

7.30pm We screen the classic film "Whisky Galore", and a wee dram while you're watching!

Sun 31 Jan - Wylam Institute

2.00pm Come and make your own lantern at our lantern workshop.

6.00pm Enjoy the *Playback Theatre Company* who improvise their entire performances based upon audience suggestions.

Mon 1 Feb - Wylam Library

7.00pm The *Big Book Club* with North-East author *Ann Cleeves*. An opportunity to listen, discuss and explore, with a successful professional writer.

Tues 2 Feb - Wylam Library

3.30pm Children's activity – book making.

Tues 2 Feb - St Oswin's Church

7.00pm Storyteller *Malcolm Green* performs a magical evening of *Northumberland Folk Tales*, accompanied by harpist *Roberta Ritson*.

Wed 3 Feb - St Oswin's Church Hall

7.30pm Settle in at the *Silent Movie Café* for a mid-week mix of Chaplin, live pianist and comedy cocktails.

Thurs 4 Feb - Wylam Library (starts)

2.30pm "Bridge Over the River Tyne". Join our local historian *Philip Brooks* for a history walk and learn about this fascinating stretch of river.

3.30pm Children's activity – calligraphy.

Thurs 4 Feb - French's Café

7.30pm Enjoy the incredible musicianship of jazz/folk fusion duo *Landermason* in the warm, intimate surroundings of *The Acoustic Café* at *French's*.



Friday 5 Feb - Wylam Institute

7.30pm *Rhyme, Rhythm & Song*, an uplifting end to our Festival celebration as renowned poet and BBC broadcaster *Stewart Henderson* joins forces with singer/songwriter *Gareth Davies-Jones*.

Demolition Starts

You can hardly have missed the fact that demolition of buildings on the former farm site at Wylam Hills got under way at the end of October.



This picture was taken soon after the work began.

The first stage of demolition was restricted to the former milking parlour, the adjacent dairy and two cottages but we understand from the developers, *Gentoo Group*, that demolition is planned to resume this month (December), continue into the early weeks of 2016, with building of the new houses expected to begin in March.

Toilets Kept Open at a Price!

Several years ago, the public toilets in Wylam came under threat of closure as the County Council were looking for savings. On that occasion Wylam Parish Council managed to convince the County that our toilets fulfilled a strategic function, rather than just local. This argument was based on the number of visitors to the village, the riverside, the Coast-to-Coast cycle route and use of the waggonway by others, either on foot or cycle.

However, under more recent financial pressures, Northumberland County Council issued Wylam with an ultimatum. We were offered three options, and just a few weeks to make a decision:-

Option 1: The toilets would be closed between 1 November and Easter.

Option 2: The County Council would pay the Parish Council £2,000 but we would have to arrange year-round daily cleaning and supply the consumables.

Option 3: The Parish Council would pay the County Council £2,000 and, in return, NCC would not close the toilets over the winter period and would continue to clean and service them throughout the year, as at present.

Faced with these options the Parish Council has chosen the third. No money had been allocated in the current year's budget, but the proximity of the Playing Field, which is well-used throughout the year, convinced members that this was the right action to take in the interests of the community.

We hope that local people will agree with this decision, which will be reviewed for next year when at least it will be a planned expense rather than one forced upon us.

Tree Warden

We are pleased to report that Sam James, who volunteered for the position of Wylam Parish Council Tree Warden, has now been formally appointed. Sam succeeds Peter Fisher, who stood down from this role several months ago.

Sam will advise the Parish Council on tree related matters. This is a purely voluntary position and, over time, Sam will no doubt apply his own style to the task, as have his predecessors. We trust he will find the job interesting.



Wylam Remembered

A packed united service at St Oswin's Church on Remembrance Sunday, led by Rev Canon Robert McLean, was followed by the usual procession through the village to the War Memorial for the Act of Remembrance and the laying of wreaths.

In spite of a dull day with rain just beginning, it was wonderful to once again see a crowd of several hundred assembled to pay their respects.

We were delighted this year to welcome a contingent from 3 Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, the Regiment that has recently returned from Germany and is now based at Albemarle Barracks.

Several of the soldiers expressed appreciation for the welcome they received in Wylam and admitted it was nice to be able to converse with local people in English.



Men of 3 Reg. Royal Horse Artillery in Wylam

Wylam Post Office

You will probably remember that in our previous issue we reported a situation relating to the Post Office which meant that Steve Loveday, as Sub-Postmaster, was facing increasing pressure to vacate the business as part of a countrywide initiative by Post Office Ltd to move almost all Post Offices into convenience type stores, which are open for longer hours seven days per week.

Sadly we can now report that Wylam Post Office, as we know it, will close in the near future. The exact date of closure is still unclear, but from April 2016, Steve Loveday would not be paid any "core tier payment" (salary) by Post Office Ltd and the business as it stands will no longer be viable. As owners of the property, but not the business, Wylam Parish Council is supporting Steve as best it can as he considers various options available to him.

The good news is that Doug Bergstrand has agreed to provide Post Office services within the Spar shop, so the village and other local communities will not lose out entirely. Efforts are being made for a "seamless" change-over to ensure that local Post Office services continue without a break. Only time will tell how these separate businesses will cope with this change but we wish them both well.

Beware of Bogus Callers!

Although we probably all say, "It would never happen to me", the fact is that most of us can be gullible at times.

We frequently receive warnings from the Police not to let people into our homes without first verifying their credentials. All sorts of ruses are used by thieves and fraudsters and in one recent incident, not far from Wylam, two men called to say there was a burst water pipe locally and they urgently needed to check the safety of the water supply in the house. We think you can imagine what one man got up to while the resident took the other through to the kitchen.

This is just one of many ways in which such thieves operate. If you should have any doubt in a case like this, close the door on the men and telephone Northumbrian Water, (or whichever service they say they represent), for confirmation. If they are up to no good this action alone will probably mean they will leave at this point, in which case, phone the Police on 999 to give a greater chance of them being caught red-handed.



X84 Bus Changes

Following a funding review of bus services by Northumberland County Council, you may already be aware that all Sunday services on this "Tynedale Links" route between Hexham and Newcastle, were withdrawn from 11 October. Fortunately the remaining timetable for this service was not affected.

As we have said previously when public transport issues have been reported here, these days it's a case of "use it or lose it"!

Go North East, who operate this service, have informed us that they are investing in new buses for "Tynedale Links" routes in the new year and that these will feature the latest low-emissions engines and greater levels of comfort. At least there's some good news.

The Search is On!



Do you possibly have a few cups and saucers of this pattern, or know where you can get your hands on some?

This might sound like an odd request but at Wylam Institute, where the stock of this design has become halved over the years, they are trying to find replacements.

If you have a few, even just one or two that you would consider donating, please let them know.

The original manufacturer was the Newcastle China Company and the pattern is called "Blue Harebell".

Rail Franchise

For more than 10 years the Tyne Valley Line has been operated by Northern Rail, which is a partnership between Serco and Abellio, the Dutch National Railway Company. Although Abellio has tendered for the new franchise, the present group is now standing down and at some time in December the new operator is expected to be announced from a short-list of three. The new franchise will operate from April 2016.

At present it is difficult to assess how local services will be affected in the longer term but, with a significant increase in passenger numbers over recent years and recent pronouncements by the Department for Transport, a more frequent service could be expected and replacement of all the old "Pacer" trains by 2020.

eMagazines Now Available for Library Members

Library members in Northumberland can, without charge, now download eMagazines without any risk of overdue fines.

A range of more than 30 popular magazines are now available to download on-line. These include, Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, BBC Good Food, Digital Photographer, Auto Express, Prima Baby and many more.

To access the magazines you need to go to the website:-
<https://www.rbdigital.com/northumberland/service/zinio/landing?>

Co-Response is Coming Our Way

We have been informed that Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, in common with neighbouring services, is about to undertake a joint trial with the North East Ambulance Service.

When a call is made to the ambulance service which is deemed to involve a life-threatening situation, and especially where the person is alone in their home, a fire appliance and crew will be dispatched at the same time as an ambulance.

This may appear at first sight to be an over-the-top reaction but it appears that paramedics quite often get to a destination and then have to send for a fire crew to break into the premises. Another reason is that all fire appliances carry oxygen and defibrillators and the crews are trained to a high level in emergency first aid. Not only that but sometimes a fire appliance can get to a call more rapidly than an ambulance, and we should all understand how speedy intervention can save lives.

We are told that fire crews will wear red boiler-suits rather than their usual emergency gear when responding to these calls.

This scheme will only operate from stations that are permanently manned and so this means that Wylam will be covered from West Denton rather than Prudhoe. We are also assured that calls to fires will always be treated as priorities.

Christmas is Coming

We are, once again, indebted to Lois and Tom Martin, of Wylam Nurseries, for very generously providing the Christmas tree at Charlie's Corner.

Seats In All Parts

We are very grateful to two Wylam residents who have recently provided new bench seats in memory of loved ones. One, provided by Margaret Halfpenny in memory of her husband Brian, is located overlooking the river beside the Wylam road bridge. The other, provided by Christa Harrison, in memory of her husband Don, also overlooks the river but further west, below the Nature Reserve.

The Parish Council is also about to provide two new seats. One will be within the bus shelter at Charlie's Corner and the other in the play area at Hagg Bank. We hope that all of these seats will contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of both local residents and visitors.



Everyone is invited to come there on Friday 18 December for 10.30am, to join a group from Wylam First School to sing a few carols around the tree. If the weather is inclement, this will take place in Wylam Institute. Afterwards, everyone is invited to the Methodist Church Hall, where coffee/tea and biscuits will be available.

So many appreciative comments were made about the Christmas lights around the Institute garden last year that the Parish Council intended to modify and further extend the lights this year. Unfortunately, due to one or two technical difficulties, the necessary work has had to be put off until early next year. However, this means it should be all ready to go for Christmas 2016.

Playing Field Development Plans

After a period of careful research and consideration, the Wylam Community Playing Fields Association has accepted a quotation to develop part of the former tennis court area on the Jubilee Playing Field.

Approximately half of the area will be marked out for a range of ball sports, which will include goal posts and basketball nets. The other half will remain as a "free play" area for younger children, potentially for bike or scooter riding. This area may be developed in future.

In addition, a basket swing is to be installed on the site of the previous bridge and the surface under the roundabout is to be relaid.

The work is expected to be carried out early in the new year.

Building Gets Under Way

Work on the planned extension and related improvements at the Methodist Church began towards the end of last month and are expected to continue until the end of April 2016.

The present frontage between the church and hall is being brought forward, creating a larger and brighter entrance with the provision of additional rooms. A final phase will see the church floor raised to eliminate the present steps and, similarly, graded landscaping to the new entrance will make access easier for everyone.

During construction, for which the main contractor is T Manners & Sons from Bishop Auckland, church activities are planned to continue as normal although there will inevitably be some adjustments between rooms.

The church apologises that, during construction, occasional short-term use of the church car park by shoppers may have to be restricted.



Christmas Bells

By the time you read this the bells at St Oswin's will have been rung to mark both the installation of Revd. Canon Robert McLean as Canon at St Michael and All Angels Cathedral in Mampong, Ghana on 6 December and the Right Revd. Christine Hardman as Bishop of Newcastle on 12 December.

The bell-ringers continue to practice every Monday, 7.30 to 9.00pm and to ring for Sunday Services, 9.30 to 10.00am. As we mentioned in the last issue, if you are interested in a ringing being dedicated for a special anniversary or other date, contact Andrew Cairns, Tower Captain, andrew@anycairns.co.uk or 07890 506 941



Ovingham Bridge

As this issue of "The Globe" was in preparation we heard that recent flood conditions have led to a further few days delay in the planned re-opening of this bridge, after nearly 18 months of refurbishment. The re-opening is apparently now expected on Thursday 3 December and the bridge should therefore be open by the time you read this.



However, this picture, taken not long before the end of November appears to suggest that a lot still needs to be done. Nearly 30 men were seen working on the site on this date, which is more than we have ever seen before, so let's be optimistic.

We hope the re-opened bridge will make for a reduction in traffic passing through the centre of Wylam and that residents of Wylam Wood Road will get some relief from what has clearly become a heavily used "rat-run".

Forthcoming Events

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

Wed 9 Dec

Men at Home, "The Building of Durham Cathedral", Michael Jackson, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Sat 12 Dec

Film Club, 7.30pm, "Paddington"

Mon 14 Dec Parish Council, 7.00pm

Frid 18 Dec

Carols at Charlie's Corner, 10.30am

Sun 20 Dec

Village Carol Service at Methodist Church, 6.00pm

2016

Sat 9 Jan

Playing Fields Association Jumble Sale, 2.00pm

Mon 11 Jan Parish Council, 7.00pm

Wed 13 Jan

Men at Home, "The History of Bell Ringing", Andrew Cairns, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Thurs 21 Jan

Gardener's Soc. "Barking up the Wrong Tree", Diane Nichol-Brown, 7.30pm

Sat 30 Jan

Organ Recital by Marc Bryant, St Oswin's Church, 12 noon

Mon 8 Feb Parish Council, 7.00pm

Wed 10 Feb

Men at Home, "The Artist Reporter – Sir John Lavery", Ken McConkey, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Thurs 18 Feb

Gardener's Soc. "A Year in the Secret Gardens at Birkhead", Christine Little, 7.30pm

Sat 20 Feb

Institute Annual Members' Coffee Morning, 10.00am to 12 noon

Wed 9 Mar

Men at Home, "Ephemerally Speaking", Julian Harrop, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Mon 14 Mar Parish Council, 7.00pm

and looking further ahead....

Sun 22 May

"Jump for Joy", St Oswin's Church Hall and grounds

Please note: In addition to the above events, Coffee Mornings in aid of Wylam Institute will, from January, change from the 2nd to the 4th Wednesday of every month, 10.30am to 12 noon, and "Friends of Wylam" Coffee Mornings continue fortnightly on Tuesday mornings from 10.00am.

Deadline for material for the next "Wylam Globe" Monday 8 February

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