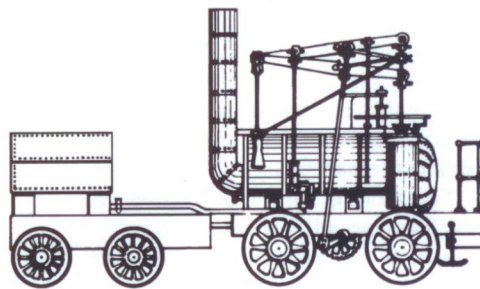


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Autumn, 2006

Number 82

## 684 Bus Service - it's not all good news!

By the time the Parish Council got wind that "Go North East" were withdrawing the 684 (Ovington to Newcastle) bus service, it was too late to persuade them to change their plans. However, we were assured by the County Council that every effort was being made to find an alternative operator and we were soon relieved to hear that the service was to be taken over by "Arriva".

It later became clear that the route of the service was to be changed and, instead of travelling north out of the village, from Charlie's Corner the new service travels to Wylam Station and then on to Crawcrook, Ryton, Blaydon, the Metro Centre\* and from there across to Eldon Square in Newcastle. (\*The 0800 service from Charlie's Corner misses out the Metro Centre and travels via Scotswood Road, calling at the Newcastle Business Park). There is no doubt that this will inconvenience those who previously relied on that bus as it travelled to the



One of the last 'Go-North East' 684 buses at Charlie's Corner

Holeyln Hall Crossroads, Heddon and on through the west end of the city. As you can imagine, the service is also slower than before, taking an expected 43 minutes to reach Eldon Square instead of 37 minutes previously. You may have also seen from press reports, that people in Heddon are particularly concerned that it removes a service which, for many, enabled them to access medical and other facilities in Wylam.

Your Parish Council and representatives of other local communities are currently pressing the County Council and "Arriva" to try to find a way to cover the gap that has been created.



A reminder that although the dairy cows are becoming a distant memory, we thankfully remain a rural village!

## Mystery Digging!

People were recently questioning why a section of Church Road, which appeared to be in a good condition, had been dug up by contractors. For a time, when traffic lights were operating, this created predictable delays for many drivers.

If you are still curious, we understand that the contractors, acting for Northumbrian Water, are in the process of exposing sections of the water main to allow X-rays to be taken of the pipe. This enables the condition of the pipe to be assessed and aids a decision as to whether replacement is likely to be required. We have yet to hear whether any further action is needed or whether the 'patient' is as well as can be expected! If replacement is necessary, no doubt the problems for traffic will increase.



## Library Update

Our previous issue contained worrying details about the threat to the future of our village library. We had expected this matter to be settled by now, one way or another, but at the time of writing the uncertainty still remains.

For months we were assured that no decision would be taken before "full consultation with the community". It was therefore surprising that this opportunity was not offered until late July, when a meeting was invited to consider alternatives to the present library. Behind this initiative is the County Council's wish to consider closure of several libraries that are open for less than 15 hours per week and to use the money saved to improve the resources of the remaining larger libraries.

The principal options that were suggested for Wylam included:-

- Visits by a Mobile Library on a fortnightly basis.
- Use of an alternative "community building or shop" where about 350/400 books would be provided and changed on an approximately monthly basis. Books would be withdrawn using a "self-issuing" system.
- Possible retention of the Falcon Centre building under a 'Community Trust' arrangement, which would still see the size and operation of the library reduced as above, but would enable the building to be utilised for other purposes. It must be stressed that this option was not a formal offer from the County Council and, even if confirmed, would still require significant funds to be raised locally to run and maintain the facility.

Those at the July meeting were asked to consider these and any alternative ideas and a further meeting was to be held four weeks later. We have very recently heard that this meeting has been delayed and is now to be held in late September, after which Library Service representatives will circulate details of possible alternatives to every household in the village, asking for views. Meanwhile, we understand that the County Council meeting at which a decision is to be taken has also been put back until November. You can be assured that the Parish Council, together with other local Falcon Centre user groups, will continue to resist closure of the library and, at the same time, try to ensure that library users get a chance to contribute to the debate about any possible alternatives to the present library arrangements.

## That SCA Decision!

In the last edition of "Wylam Globe" we outlined the planning application by SCA Hygiene Ltd to build an Energy Recovery Plant on their site at Low Prudhoe, which would burn vast quantities of processed paper residues. Wylam Parish Council objected to this application, as did all other neighbouring councils with the exception of Prudhoe Town Council. In addition, Tynedale Council received well over 1200 objections from local residents, two petitions signed by over 130 people and objections from several other groups and organisations.

Objector's concerns related mainly to the anticipated deterioration of air quality and the further spoiling of the landscape by the construction of two flues, one for a replacement boiler house and one for the Energy Recovery Plant. Wylam Parish Council's argument was based chiefly on the question of air quality and its potential effect both on human health and the local environment (including the Nature Reserve). Additional concerns were the possible risk of river pollution and increased lorry movements if the plant should receive material from other paper tissue mills in the future. Our concerns about air quality mainly arose from the fact that all the emission predictions in the application were based on computer modelling procedures for a fuel that is, as yet, untested on a commercial scale. Computer modelling is a widely used technique but well known to be an imprecise method.

Tynedale Council held a special meeting of the Development Control Committee at the Hexham Auction Mart on 23 August and Wylam Parish Council's Chairman was fortunate to be one of only three people allotted time to speak against the application.

After presentations for and against the proposal and statements from the Council's Health and Public Protection Department and their own Consultants, Committee Members discussed the issues and finally voted 15 to 3 in favour of the application.

However, approval was not without conditions, which include the following:-

- A requirement for the applicant to carry out monitoring of particulates and oxides of nitrogen as key air pollutants, both before and for 12 months after the development.
- A stipulation that there should be no increase in vehicular movements as a result of the development.
- That the development should not cause any increase in noise levels at specified locations in Ovingham and the Castlefields area of Prudhoe.

- The Energy Recovery Plant should not create a visible plume on more than 15% of the days in any month, initially for a period of three years. If this level is exceeded it will require an action plan to be agreed with the Planning Authority in order to meet the target.

Having said all of this, SCA still have to pass one further hurdle. Before any operation of this kind can commence, the Environment Agency has to carry out its own investigation under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act and be satisfied that the operation will not breach environmental standards. Only then will it issue an IPPC permit which would allow the plant to operate.

## Nature Notes

*Peter Clarke writes:-*

One of the best uses to which the Nature Reserve can be put is in the area of education. It was a great pleasure to go with the reception class from Wylam First School for a picnic, when 30 five-year olds learned something of our duty to the environment and the study of nature. They brought their own food, sat on the ground to eat it, and an enjoyable time was had by all. They saw what was happening to the trees and the birds and talked about many things that kindled their interest, so perhaps a few will go further and become more closely involved in the Reserve. It was a happy occasion and good to be associated with such beautifully behaved children.

One evening in July, another group of 30 rather more mature folk heard a short illustrated talk on bats by Dr Veronica Howard and then proceeded from the Institute to the riverside to be amongst the creatures and to identify them using electronic detectors. We detected four species that evening and this was considered to be a reasonable "catch" for a first attempt, and we all enjoyed ourselves.

The summer meadow area on the Reserve has been mown. The object of this is to encourage flowering plants to drop their seeds and to grow without being smothered by the dense growth of the coarse grasses, which otherwise take over. We rely on volunteers to remove the cuttings, which is essential to ensure success.

On the subject of flowering plants, two of our most dedicated surveyors, June Pattinson and Sheila Hamilton, who have carried out surveys since the Reserve was set up, have continued their work. They have again listed flowers and birds on the Reserve this year and, in August, counted 34 species of flowering plants and 13 of birds (not really a good month for birds!) In addition to these they have listed 7 fruiting plants and several species of butterfly, other insects and a few escapee plants from gardens. We really need an entomologist to deal with the insects. Will someone please volunteer?

Finally, if anyone would like a copy of the lists made by the surveyors, for interest or analysis, you have only to ask.



## Wylam First School

*In the first of what we hope might be a regular column about Wylam First School, Emma Andrews writes:-*

Pupils are working hand in hand with some of the region's most talented architects to build a very special "Space to Think" at Wylam First School.

A magical combination of architectural expertise and imaginative flair is helping to create a fantastic education and play centre with views across the valley towards George Stephenson's Cottage.

Napper Architects, who designed Alnwick Garden's Tree House and Sunderland's Winter Garden, are working closely with pupils, parents and staff to realise children's dreams and create an inspirational building for the school and local community for years to come.

Three draft designs have already been produced by pupils keen to work in harmony with the countryside around, using natural materials to enhance the local environment.

These designs were showcased at an afternoon to celebrate the completion of the first stage of the project earlier this summer. Local people were also invited to come along to the school and take a look at the plans in early July. Visitors to the school were shown a video made by the children – they were also treated to an exhibition of the pupils' art work in the school hall.

Key features of the draft designs include an outdoor performing space, wildlife observation area, skylight for star gazing, maze, timber walkways, rope bridges and solar panels. The final design will incorporate the best features of all three drafts, ensuring all pupils feel involved.

Napper's vision of "Bringing together professionals and children to stimulate imaginative creativity and enthusiasm for learning" is certainly being realised at Wylam where pupils are relishing the opportunity to work alongside some of the region's most talented architects.

The firm and school have been brought together under the Government's flagship "Creative Partnerships" scheme.

A joint initiative from the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the Arts Council for England, the idea is to give school children aged 5 to 18 and their teachers the opportunity to explore their creativity by working on sustained projects with creative organisations and individuals. These include architects, theatre companies, museums, cinemas, historic buildings, dance studios, orchestras, film-makers and website designers.

Haltwhistle Film Project is also playing a key role in observing and evaluating the project, working with pupils and staff to commemorate each stage of the process on film.

**For more information contact Wylam First School on 01661 852771.**

## Summer Fair Fun!

Just a reminder of what an excellent summer we have had and what a grand day was had by all at the Summer Fair in June.

Over £3000 was raised towards the cost of running the Jubilee Field and many other participating organisations were able to add to their funds. Many thanks from the Playing Field Association to all!

Next year's Summer Fair will be on 23 June but, well before that, the AGM of the Association will take place on Tuesday 17 October at 8.00 pm in The Institute, and this is open to all residents of Wylam.



*The Tug-of-War proved to be a popular spectator sport at the Summer Fair*

## Wylam Bridge

Until very recently the damaged bridge was a sad reminder of the tragedy there a few months ago. The Parish Council had been and still is pressing officers of the County Council to reveal their plans, not only for repairs to the bridge but for improvements to its inherent safety. Officers have advised the Parish Council that there is no "quick-fix" option and that the recent work is intended as an interim step while possible alternative engineering solutions remain under consideration.

In a small private event earlier in the summer, Ivan Burn and Steven Donagain, two friends of James Robson who died in the accident, erected a delightful seat in his memory, close to the river below the allotments. The seat, shown here, had been made by Steven.

## Christmas Charity Card and Craft Fair

This annual event, organised by the local Shelter Group, will take place on **Saturday 4 November from 10.00am to 12.30pm in Wylam Institute.**

It is expected that stalls will include the following charities:

North of England Cancer Group; Children's Cancer; Traidcraft; Guide Dogs for the Blind; Mid-Tynedale Lions; and Shelter. If anyone would like to organise a stall for charities such as Oxfam, Save the Children or others, please contact Margaret Philips (Tel: 01661 853589).

There will be Craft Stalls selling cards and a wide variety of items suitable for Christmas presents. This year, for the first time, there will be special attractions for children, including a Christmas Card competition. Details of this will be publicised nearer the time.

This is a village event, organised by the local community, so please try to go along and give your support.

## Event for Water Aid

Members of the Wylam and District Churches have arranged a special event to raise money for "Water Aid". This will be held in Wylam Institute on Saturday 14 October between 11.00am and 3.00pm.

There will be a range of stalls, food, displays and music, with special activities and games for children. Admission is free and it is hoped that the event will receive widespread support from Wylam people. Please make a note of the date and look out for further publicity.



*Memorial Seat at the riverside*



*River view close to the new seat*



## Walk Tall - please!

It's been a hardy annual in "The Globe" for a long time but when safety is compromised it warrants repetition. We ask all residents to look at the pavement outside your property and imagine that you are either well over six feet tall or passing with two small children, perhaps one in a push chair. Now imagine the same thing when it's wet, when everything is hanging much lower! The growth of overhanging trees and shrubs and those growing through or over your boundary, is a potential hazard to passers by. It is actually an offence to allow vegetation from your property to obstruct the footpath (or road). Your co-operation in cutting back this type of growth will be appreciated by everyone. Thank you.

## Composting Plant at Crawcrook

There has recently been a planning application to Gateshead Council to carry out "controlled composting" at Building Farm, Stannerford Road, Crawcrook (the road to Clara Vale). This is a revised application after one about three years ago had been rejected by both the Council and, on appeal, the Planning Inspectorate.

A packed public meeting at Clara Vale on 14 August heard presentations from Michael Thompson (the applicant), Gateshead Planners and Clara Vale residents.

Some Wylam residents have been concerned about the possible impact on Wylam, particularly from traffic and odours from the plant.

The revised application differs from the earlier one in that it has taken on-board many of the Inspector's comments and there are changes to the type of green material to be composted, now limited to that provided by Gateshead Council's green bin scheme, with which the developer will have a contract.

Re-cladding of the buildings, the use of enclosed composting tunnels, incorporation of a negative air pressure system and 24 hour filtered ventilation, should all help to eliminate smells.

Vehicle movements will be limited to a maximum of 12 return journeys per day and will be routed via Crawcrook and the by-pass to the Gateshead Waste Transfer Station at Derwent Crossing.

The Parish Council has concluded that the impact on Wylam is likely to be minimal and have therefore not objected to the proposal. A decision on this application is not expected until late October.

## Wylam Institute Community Week. 4th to 12th November

Plans are now well under way for Community Week and it is hoped that the events being organised will appeal to most of us.

This is a brief outline of the programme to-date:-

### Saturday 4th

Card and Crafts Fair (see details elsewhere in this issue).

### Sunday 5th

Community Service in St Oswin's Church.

### Monday 6th

Bridge Tournament.

### Tuesday 7th

"Friends of Wylam" Coffee Morning.

A Costume Evening organised by the Dramatic Society, with Alan Graham (formerly of Beamish Museum).

### Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th

An exhibition of paintings, photographs and documents relating to our village and its history, arranged by the Camera Club, Art Class and Local History Society.

### Friday 10th

The Film Club will be hosting a chocolate-themed event, when the films "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "Chocolat" will be screened. Perhaps a taste of chocolate somewhere along the line!

### Saturday 11th

A Table Top Sale in the late morning/early afternoon. This will be like a car boot sale without you having to face the elements! Anyone can "purchase" a table space with the money from sales retained by the vendors. (It should be possible to book tables from early October, so start collecting together those unwanted gifts etc. now.) In the evening there will be a Beer and Band Night, with "Riff Raff", a local AC/DC tribute band who have quite a following in the area.

### Sunday 12th

Remembrance Day Service in the Methodist Church and at the War Memorial.

A Bowls Tournament is also being planned as part of the programme.

A full calendar of these events will be posted through every letterbox in the village nearer the time but why not make a note in your diary now?

## Future Deadlines

Please remember, if there's something you would like to be included in a future issue of "Wylam Globe", whether it's just the date of an event or news about something of interest, the latest dates for material to be submitted in the next few months are as follows:

**10 November for December issue**

**8 February for March issue**

Copy can be sent to or left at the Parish Council Office.

## Information Card

With this issue you should also receive a copy of an updated Wylam Information Card. Every effort has been made to ensure this is accurate but, if you are aware of any errors or omissions, or if contact details change, please advise the Parish Council Clerk. It is hoped that the card will prove useful to you. The next update may not be for three years but, if we are kept informed, we will try to include changes in "The Globe" from time to time. Keep it in a handy place for reference and, if you should move away, please leave it for those who move in.

## For Your Diary

Several forthcoming events are referred to elsewhere in this issue but, for convenience, they are listed below with one or two others:-

### Churches' event for "Water Aid"

Saturday 14 October

### Playing Field Association AGM

Tuesday 17 October

### Community Week

Saturday 4 to Sunday 12 November

### Charity Card & Craft Sale

Saturday 4 November

### Deadline for next issue of "The Wylam Globe"

10 November

In a reversal of venues this year, the **Village Remembrance Day Service** will take place at the Methodist Church at 10.00am on Sunday 12 November, followed by the traditional Act or Remembrance at the War Memorial at 11.00am, and the **Village Carol Service** will be held at St Oswin's Church, at 6.00pm on Sunday 17 December.

*Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to:*

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