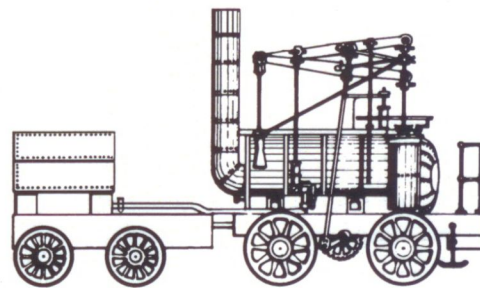


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Winter, 2007

Number 87

## That Other Bridge!

You may be aware from press reports that towards the end of 2006 Northumberland County Council commissioned consultants to carry out an appraisal of Ovingham Bridge and to look into the possibility of a new bridge across the Tyne somewhere in this part of the valley. Although local Parish Councils had been warned that money for a new crossing was unlikely to be forthcoming, five options were studied, one of which would potentially have a significant impact on Wylam. That particular option was to link the A695 Prudhoe bypass from the roundabout to the east of the Industrial Estate passing through part of Horsley Wood and fields on the west side of Wylam, to either join Holeyn Hall Road about a quarter of a mile south of the junction with the B6928 or to cross Holeyn Hall Road before sweeping around the east side of Holeyn Hall to connect to a new roundabout on the south side of the A69.

The other options were; a) a route from the same point but joining the A69 west of Horsley; b) the replacement of Ovingham Bridge with one from the same point on the south side but to a point further east of the current bridge; c) a route from the west side of the SCA factory, passing east of Ovingham to the A69 west of Horsley and; d) a route from a point west of the "Badger" roundabout on the A695 passing east of Ovington to join the A69 at the Mowden Hall junction.

The first option described above, was almost identical to one promoted some years ago, which at a public meeting in Wylam at that time received overwhelming opposition from local residents.

It is probably sufficient to say here that when the Consultation Report was finally published in October this year, the main conclusion was that none of the options offered a viable solution. Assessment had to be based primarily on criteria set for determining regional transport priorities relating to "Business", "People" and "Place" which include issues such as employment, regeneration, air quality, and environment, with a "points scale" of -3 to +3. The "Wylam option" received an overall score of -1 on this scale, with the others scoring -1, 0, -1 and -2 respectively.

Needless to say, although it has been argued that the assessment criteria were designed for more urban situations than those applying to this area of the Tyne Valley, none of the options, most of which it was estimated would cost approximately £25 million, would receive funding support in the foreseeable future.

So, what about Ovingham Bridge? Well, to the dismay and disappointment of many, especially Ovingham residents, the consultants concluded that in spite of local opinion, the existing bridge will, with routine maintenance, last at least another 30 years and probably much longer.

This is not however the end of the story. Wylam Parish Council was not alone amongst local councils in suggesting that the most sensible answer is likely to lie with more modest improvements to existing roads, particularly to the west and

east of the current Prudhoe- Crawcrook bypass, rather than "drawing" traffic across the Tyne in this area. To this end, a further phase of the consultation has been agreed, which is to carry out a detailed origin and destination survey of traffic using all the roads and bridges within an area bounded by the A1, A69, A695 and A68. This will identify which bridges are being used as "rat-runs" and which for local access and will also assess the use of the A69 and A695 for local and strategic traffic movements. Of course this survey cannot take place until well after the re-opening of Wylam Bridge, and so it will be some time before we are likely to hear of any possible remedial measures.

## Please Support Wylam Angling Club

*Simon Brough writes:-* Some residents of Wylam may be unaware that Wylam Angling Club has been in dispute with Network Rail for almost four years over ownership of the fishing rights on the south bank of the Tyne at Wylam.

In 1975 the Club bought the fishing rights from the Blackett Estates following the death of Christopher Blackett, who had controlled the fishing for many decades. Network Rail claim that they acquired the rights when their predecessors built the railway in 1838.

Wylam has a long tradition of Salmon fishing, both with rod and line and, until the 1930s, a commercial netting station operated by local people and rented from Christopher Blackett. Some older residents will remember this.



*Part of the river bank which is in dispute*

The Club is now in the process of taking Network Rail to court to assert our ownership of the fishing. We have researched our case and believe we can win and have asked our solicitors to appoint a barrister to take the case forward.

Although the Club has raised a substantial sum of money from existing members, legal action is extremely expensive and the Club would appreciate any help and support that the local community can offer.

The fishing is a valuable amenity that is available to residents of the Parish. If you live in Wylam you can join the Angling Club by contacting Rory Noble (Treasurer) at 2 Chapel Lane or Simon Brough (Secretary) at 38 Woodcroft Road (854277).



## Wylam Bridge

We are sorry for those living close to the bridge who have had to put up with so much noise during the demolition stages of the bridge work. As we prepare to go to press the demolition is coming to an end and we hope that things will be more tolerable. Thankfully the work is just about on-schedule for the bridge to reopen to traffic on 21 December or even a few days earlier.

It was perhaps too much to expect that controversy about the bridge would disappear once work got underway and the appearance of the new barriers has without doubt been upsetting to many people. However the Spring issue of this newsletter did warn people that the appearance of the bridge would be changed for ever and that, for many people, this would be a matter of considerable regret. Wylam Parish Council has always accepted that safety is of greater importance than the appearance of the bridge and was satisfied with the County Council explanation that it is to satisfy current standards for safety while retaining the structural integrity of this particular bridge that dictates the type of barriers that have been installed. The height, at 1.5 metres, is the height we had always been told they would be and the warning description of them being "more like a motorway bridge barrier" was certainly justified.

Some people have expressed fears that the modifications to Wylam bridge will encourage more heavy goods vehicles to use it, or even that the alterations are part of a "plot" to avoid building an alternative bridge. Please be assured that there is no evidence whatsoever of either. Firstly, the bridge had no weight or width restrictions before the work and the nature of the rest of the route through the village, quite apart from the bends on the Crawcrook side, are hardly likely to appeal to drivers of such vehicles. It may help your understanding if you also read the pieces in this issue titled "That Other Bridge" and "Crawcrook Quarry", which add to the wider picture.

## Additional Safety Measures for Wylam

We mentioned in the last "Wylam Globe" that Northumberland County Council had responded to discussions with the Parish Council by agreeing to supply an interactive speedwarning sign which would be moved at intervals between three locations within the village. An apparent misunderstanding about who would pay for each movement of the sign if it was to remain in Wylam rather than be included in a regional scheme, has led the County Council to agree to a compromise. We are now to receive two signs which will remain at permanent locations, one on Holeyn Hall Road and the other on Station Road. We have asked for solar-powered units which will flash "30" when activated by approaching traffic and it is hoped that they will be installed soon.

Several other improvements have been agreed and these relate to dropped-kerbs, the type of road surface, road markings, alignment and signage on the approach to the north side of the bridge and safety bollards at the Fox and Hounds corner. Other suggestions were raised with the County Council's Consultant and although some of these were considered and rejected, others have been carried forward for consideration in the future. It was always understood that action would be restricted by limited funds.

The expectation that Main Street was to be resurfaced all the way from the bridge to Charlie's Corner, was optimistic and we now understand it will only be as far as Wylam Garage. Station Road is also to be resurfaced and drainage problems at the crossing addressed.

## Clara Vale "Matters" are helping "Rug Aid"

Billie Turnbull asks us to let you know that Clara Vale "Matters" are giving an exhibition of their work to support "Rug Aid", a charity in Gambia. The aim of "Rug Aid" is to teach blind and deaf children to make rugs out of recycled materials which they will then sell to help support themselves.

Heather Ritchie, the founder of "Rug Aid" is a renowned rug maker having taught the craft worldwide. Heather carried out a successful feasibility study in February 2007. "I was amazed", she commented, "how quickly blind children and adults could learn the craft and it was wonderful to see the joy they get from making a rug."

"Clara Vale Matters", a group taught by Margaret Clayton, have been working together on Thursdays during term-time since 2003. Beamish Museum invited the group to exhibit during their Georgian Weekend last August. The exhibition was very successful and they were invited back.

The exhibition of work which includes rugs, soft furnishings, wall hangings, Christmas decorations

and much more will be on Saturday 9 February in Wylam Institute. It will include a soup lunch and a talk by Heather Ritchie. Details will appear on posters nearer the date. Anyone wanting information about the exhibition or interested in learning the art of rug making can ring Billie Turnbull on 852127.



Members of the group with some of the rugs displayed at Beamish

## Surely a First

When we welcomed Melanie Dunnett to the Parish Council a few months ago we hadn't bargained for Eleanor, the newest member of the Dunnett family also making an appearance at a recent budget-setting

meeting, at just 4 weeks of age! We were delighted to see them both (and hardly a sound from Eleanor). It also served to illustrate Melanie's dedication to her parish duties. We offer our congratulations to Melanie and husband Julian and our best wishes to all the family.



## Crawcrook Quarry

The Crawcrook Quarry, which lies just north of Crawcrook, off the road to Wylam and just outside our parish, is likely to undergo a transformation over the next few years. Use for waste disposal ceased some time ago except for one tanker removing leachate for treatment. Further use of the site for landfill, if at all, is likely to be many years away as current sites in use within Gateshead are estimated to have around 15 years of life remaining. 'Cemex' will continue to use the site for some time to produce concrete, although the location of this facility is not now considered particularly convenient to supply Tyneside or to receive materials, some of which are now brought to the area by sea.

Reclamation and landscaping of the northern part of the site closest to Wylam should start by the end of this year and continue for 2 to 3 years. The southern part, nearer Crawcrook, will be configured in such a way that, subject to the necessary agreements, it could be reopened but with a new access to the south of the site and closer to the bypass. Overall it is expected that these changes will lead to a significant reduction in lorry movements through Wylam.

## We Remembered

A packed congregation at St Oswin's Church on 11 November this year was followed by a procession through the village to the War Memorial where many others awaited the traditional Act of Remembrance. It was a cold but dry and bright autumn day and a crowd of some 300 people of all ages followed the moving ceremony as the sound of "The Last Post", expertly played by young Edward Patterson, broke the two minutes silence to be followed by the laying of wreaths on behalf of many of the uniformed organisations and other sections of our community.



## Calor Village of the Year

It was reported in the last issue of the "Globe" that Wylam had been awarded a Certificate as runners-up in the Calor Northumberland Village of the Year Competition. Brian Japes, Chairman of the Parish Council, recently received the award from the Duke of Northumberland at the Annual Meeting of "Community Action Northumberland". Sue Nicholson, Chairman of Wylam Institute Community Association, who with Brian made the original presentation before the judges, was unfortunately unable to attend the presentation. The winning village was Acklington and, as you may have read in the local press, last year's winners, Allendale, went on to win the national title.



Brian Japes receives the Certificate from the Duke of Northumberland

## Playing Field

At the recent AGM of Wylam Playing Field Association, Jennifer Power stepped down as Chairman but will continue in that role until the football and cricket clubs bring forward nominees for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. Alan French and Tony Mitcham agreed to continue for a further year as Treasurer and Secretary respectively, although both expressed their intention not to stand next year.

Having secured planning permission earlier this year an appeal has been started to raise £40,000 to extend the pavilion to provide more storage facilities for sports equipment and to make other minor improvements. In the meantime, £1,800 has recently been spent on drainage work at the south west end of the field, to hopefully cure problems that have persisted there.

General fund-raising continues and we are reminded of the Jumble Sale on 12 January and Burn's Night Event on 26 January, for which tickets are obtainable (Phone 853328).

## Wylam Film Club

John Kirkbride reports:- Wylam Film Club has recently had some good news! We have recently received a grant from Tynedale Council and Wylam Institute which enables us to buy our own equipment.

Currently the Club shows films on a monthly basis, using equipment loaned from Queen's Hall in Hexham. Having our own equipment will mean we can show films more frequently and widen the service that we offer to village residents.

We are keen to make the equipment available to other groups in the community and would welcome approaches from them with ideas. Some of the suggestions that we have come up with are:- Children's Matinees, after-school or Holiday Clubs, fundraising shows for sports clubs and a film studies course.

If you have other ideas for use of the equipment or want to get involved, please contact John Kirkbride (852626) or Andy Haddon (854626).

We welcome new and existing members to our films. The next film is to be "Hot Fuzz" on Sunday 9 December. Entrance costs £3 and, there will be a festive glass of wine and mince pie.

On 19 January the Oscar-winning film "The Lives of Others" will be showing and on 16 February, "The World's Fastest Indian" starring Anthony Hopkins. All performances start at 7.30pm in the Institute.

## Wylam Green Street - an update

**Book-and-Go Car Scheme.** Wylam Green Street has joined forces with a local Social Enterprise Company to start a pay-as-you-go car scheme in Wylam, which they hope to have on the road by Christmas. Owning a car can be an expensive business quite apart from the negative environmental impact. This Scheme will have benefits on both fronts. People will be invited to become members for a joining fee of £25 plus an insurance deposit. Depending on the type of car used there will then be an hourly charge of £4 to £6 (or £36 to £54 per 24 hours) and a mileage rate of 15 to 17p (which includes fuel). These figures give an outline of the cost of participation but full details of the Scheme and how you can apply can be obtained from "Greenstreet", as described below.

**New Website.** We are invited to go to [www.wylamgreenstreet.co.uk](http://www.wylamgreenstreet.co.uk) for information about 'WGS' projects and to find out more about ways we can make ourselves greener! If you're interested in joining the car scheme or would like more details, or if you would like to get involved with other projects, please email the group on:- [wylamgreenstreet@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wylamgreenstreet@hotmail.co.uk)



## Celebrate Christmas as a Re-connected Community

To mark the re-opening of the Wylam Bridge and we hope a symbolic re-unification of our community, the newly formed Wylam Business Forum invites everyone to come along to Charlie's Corner at 9.30am on Friday 21 December to join in carol singing around the Christmas Tree which is to be erected there. Clergy from St Oswin's and the Methodist Church will lead the event here, which children from Wylam School are to join. Santa is also expected to make an appearance!

If it should be too wet, the singing will take place in Wylam Institute and, after this, refreshments will be served in the hall at the Methodist Church where the raffle will also be drawn.

We are very grateful to Tom & Joe's (Wylam Nurseries) who have kindly donated the Christmas tree and to Corillion, the main contractors for the bridge work, for providing the permanent site anchorage for it.

## Christmas Lights

We hope that you are enjoying the new Christmas lights that are illuminating one of the trees in the Institute garden. The old lights were becoming perished and had to be replaced and we have gone for a modern LED system that is designed to be left in-place for at least three years and can be extended in future if we wish. We hope they will be appreciated but do let us know what you think.



## Wylam Calendars

Following the success of the first Wylam Calendar in 2007, Wylam Pre-school Playgroup have produced a Wylam 2008 Calendar showing scenes of the village throughout the year. This will be on sale from the beginning of December, priced at £5.

## Nature Notes

*Peter Clarke, our Tree Warden and Nature Reserve Manager writes:-*

The most notable occurrence this Autumn has been the change in the colours of the leaves on the trees and the rapid loss of the deciduous ones. It is difficult to remember a season when there was such a rapid and spectacular change. At the time of writing, the grand show is almost over, apart from a few horse chestnut trees and a few other species.

Of course the seasons this year have all been strange, with the migration of birds occurring at unusual times and haymaking delayed in some cases for several weeks. Our own meadow in the Nature Reserve had to wait until September instead of being mown in late Spring. It now appears however that summer has at last ended!

We were happy to receive a donation of a sack of daffodils from Wylam Nurseries, accompanied by some welcome physical help! Ten volunteers, two professionals and the Tree Warden turned out to plant nearly 400 bulbs at the side of the Country Park Car Park. What a treat awaits us next spring.

Nature lovers and others will be familiar with Collins "New Naturalist" series and will be interested to know that the latest to be published is "A History of Ornithology" by Peter Bircham. It's a lovely book with many splendid illustrations and an entertaining text which I can recommend.

**Wylam Parish  
Council wishes  
all of our  
readers a very  
Happy  
Christmas and  
New Year**

## Forthcoming Events

Most events of which we have been advised are mentioned within the text this time but to summarise:-

### Sun 9 December

Film Club 7.30pm "Hot Fuzz", in the Institute

### Sun 16 December

Village Carol Service, 6.30pm  
Methodist Church

### Fri 21 December

Wylam Business Forum - Carols at Charlie's Corner 9.30am followed by refreshments and raffle draw at Methodist Hall

### Sat 12 January

Playing Field Association - Jumble Sale, Institute.

### Sat 19 January

Film Club 7.30pm "The Lives of Others", in the Institute

### Sat 26 January

Playing Field Association - Burn's Night, Institute.

### Sat 9 February

Exhibition of Craft Work by Clara Vale Matters in the Institute.

### Sat 16 February

Film Club 7.30pm "The World's Fastest Indian", in the Institute.

## Cancer Support

Macmillan Cancer Support and Citizens Advice Bureau have teamed up to provide free and confidential Welfare Benefits Advice to cancer patients, their families and carers in Northumberland. Help is available relating to:-

- Applying for Benefits or making appeals
- Entitlement calculations
- Additional health costs such as prescriptions
- Transport concessions
- Benefits for carers
- Issues relating to debt, housing and employment

For more information or to make an appointment, contact Steve Ridd on 01434 606770

**Deadline for the next  
"Wylam Globe"  
is 2 February 2008**

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

*Mrs. D. Carney,  
The Clerk to the Parish Council,  
Wylam Institute, Church Road,  
Wylam NE41 8AP.  
Tel: (01661) 852498*

*e.mail: wylampc@btinternet.com  
Printed for Wylam Parish Council by  
The Gilpin Press,  
Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4BA.*