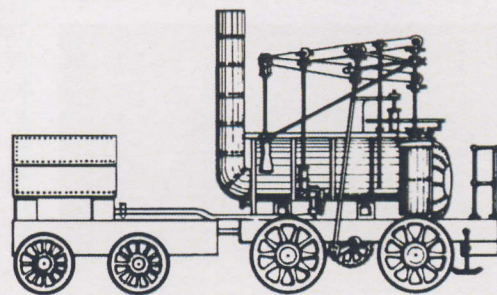


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Spring 2009

Number 92

## Life Returns to the Falcon Centre

Work at the Falcon Centre is at last nearing completion. Since the last issue of the Globe, the building has benefited from complete re-wiring, a fire alarm system has been fitted, a disabled toilet created and a new fully-fitted kitchen installed in a new location. Various minor repairs, chiefly to areas of the floor and to some windows have been carried out and a lot of the building redecorated.

The Library was fortunately able to re-open some time ago and we hope that other areas of the building will soon follow.

The Wylam Playgroup and Toddler Group are now endeavouring to supplement the work with a makeover to the main hall and the former kitchen area - which will be used as a comfy lounge and games area for the Youth Club. Hopefully by the time this article is published, all the work will be complete and the Centre fit for existing users to return, with the additional hope that new users may also follow in their footsteps.

This venue is now a viable option for children's parties, coffee mornings and other small events. If you are interested in booking this part of the Falcon Centre for an event, please contact Lesley Kelly, Area Librarian, on 01661 832540 or by email at [Lesley.Kelly01@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Lesley.Kelly01@northumberland.gov.uk)

The users of the Falcon Centre are very grateful to County Councillor Paul Kelly for ensuring that Council money was made available for most of the work and to Lesley Kelly, Area Librarian, who has found herself acting as an unofficial "Clerk of Works" for much of the past few months. We sincerely hope that the money spent will help to safeguard the building for the foreseeable future.

**Museum:** As we reported in December, the Railway Museum within the Falcon Centre had to be completely cleared for the re-wiring and for repairs to the floor and so the Parish Council has taken the opportunity to have the room redecorated. Some of the exhibits have been returned from storage but the displays for the wallboards are currently being refurbished by Tynedale Council Museum staff. As soon as this work is complete and the displays restored, the Museum will re-open.



*Two of the refurbished areas*





## Still Closed!



This sort of sign seems to have become a feature in Wylam over recent months and it's far from over! In the last issue of "The Globe" we reported that Northumberland County Council staff were to carry out investigations to see whether it would be safe to re-open the Hagg Bank road to traffic moving in one direction at a time, using "priority direction" signs. Unfortunately, although ground investigations under the road have shown that repairs may be possible, there is further evidence that the land is still slipping and so any traffic movement could be dangerous. As a result the 'Emergency Road Closure Order' has been extended until the end of this year. However, a spokesman for the County Council has explained that this is a precautionary step. If the Council's Highways Maintenance Budget for 2009-10 proves to be sufficient, the repair of this road will then be considered against other priority road repairs and work could start within the coming months. There is no guarantee at the moment that this will happen although the Parish Council has continued to press the County to carry out the work, not only in the interests of Hagg Bank residents who have been particularly

inconvenienced, but for all local residents for whom trips to the West Wylam Household Waste Recovery Centre have become just one of the many extended journeys over the past six months!

.....However every cloud has a silver lining and the dramatically reduced traffic on Wylam Wood Road, as well as pleasing the local residents means that its attraction as part of a 'round the village' walk, with views of the Tyne, Wylam and Points Bridge can be enjoyed without the constant fear of being mown down by cars.

Now, in case you think this is all, the Parish Council has recently been advised that the inconspicuous bridge carrying Holeyne Hall Road over the Oakwood Burn (just north of the houses) has been identified as in need of urgent strengthening and that the work will require traffic lights while the work is being carried out - here we go again! At least they are not talking of closing the road - yet!



## Litter Pick Looms

The Parish Council's Annual Village Litter Pick will be held on Saturday 21 March, starting from 10.00am in the Country Park Car Park ("Old Station Yard") when once again we hope to welcome as many local people as possible to lend a hand.

Please come suitably dressed in old clothes and strong boots or wellingtons. We will have some basic equipment to help you but we must remind everyone that health and safety is paramount which, amongst other things of which you will be advised on the day, means that children must be very closely supervised by adults.

The Parish Council will continue the practice of offering a small financial contribution to village organisations that volunteers choose to nominate, provided that the organisation operates a bank account.

Do please come along and help to spruce up the village as Spring approaches.

## More Drama

We are privileged in Wylam to have an Amateur Dramatic Society that for so many years has presented a regular and varied repertoire to such a high standard.

We hope that the Society will continue to receive our support for their next production, "The Chalk Garden" by Enid Bagnold, which will be performed on 7, 8 and 9 May at 7.30pm in The Institute.

The production will be starring regulars Robin Piette, Sue Nicholson, Mark Jones, Stan Smith and Ruth Bevan and will introduce Harriet Rees as the 16 year old central character. This is a funny, intelligent, mysterious and startling play which was recently revived in London to great acclaim.



## Recycling

The Christmas card and 'tetrapak' recycling schemes in Wylam proved very successful, with some 10,000 cards being recycled along with hundreds of cartons. We are very grateful to Wylam Institute for accommodating these collections and particularly the "tetrapak" facility which is still available, inside the Institute porch.

We announced in the last issue that the Parish Council is planning an update of its recycling "Green List" and asked people to tell us if they or anyone they know is currently collecting or willing to collect any of those "fringe" items that tend to fall outside the main list of recyclable materials. Unfortunately no-one has so far responded to this request although we do know that Wylam Nurseries would welcome any pots, packs or boxes being returned to them. We feel sure that many similar such collections are taking place and so, if you or someone you know runs such a project or you are aware of one that already operates in Wylam, do please get in touch through the Parish Council Office.

## Wylam Playgroup

Mid-March sees the return of Wylam Pre-school Playgroup and Wylam Toddler Group to the Falcon Centre and the end of their nomadic lifestyle. These groups are extremely grateful to St Oswin's Church and the many users of the Church Hall for allowing them to squat for what has turned out to be five months rather than the five weeks initially suggested by Northumberland County Council. Fundraising continues to maintain the existence of these groups. 2009 has seen the start of the Children's Film Club, the success of which has persuaded the Playgroup parents to continue until the summer, with another showing on 28 March at 2pm - Shrek the Third and two further films in April and May.

The Playgroup is hoping to mark its return to the Falcon Centre and its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday with a village celebration on 18 April - look out for posters nearer the time.

## Website

The Parish Council website is gradually developing and is now able to offer a link which gives local organisations an opportunity to publish information about forthcoming events. For the time being we will still provide a list in this publication but recognise that a quarterly publication does not offer the benefits of a frequently updated list. We hope that in time, the website will effectively offer a diary of village events which could help to avoid too many clashes. Information for publication should be submitted to the Parish Council Office, details of which appear at the end of this publication.

Why not take a look at the website? [www.wylamparishcouncil.org](http://www.wylamparishcouncil.org)



## All Change

There is little doubt that 1 April 2009 will see one of the biggest ever shake ups of Local Government in Northumberland.

On this date Tynedale District Council will cease to exist along with the other District Councils and full control will move to the new Unitary Authority, although it has now been agreed that this new body will also be called "Northumberland County Council" (rather than "Northumberland Council", which was favoured by some.)

Although the lead-in time to this change has been remarkably short, there has of course been a great deal of activity to ensure that the change goes smoothly. For most of us it will be a case of wait and see before we will really know how well the new arrangements are working. Clearly the expectation is that by unifying the provision of services we will all benefit. Let us hope that this will soon become apparent. It is already clear that the significant budget savings that were predicted under a Unitary Authority will not be seen, at least for a long time, if at all, with current suggestions that some £69 million of savings will be required from the new Authority's budget over the next four years.

The people who will quickly notice the change are our current Councillors. On behalf of the community we take this opportunity to say thank you to cousins Nick and Tom Appleby who have represented Wylam on Tynedale Council since the last election. They will perhaps find themselves with time on their hands but for County Councillor Paul Kelly it will be a different story. He becomes one of only 67 County Councillors, with the functions of over 300 former District Councillors to be absorbed between them.

After a lengthy consultation exercise the Boundary Committee for England has rejected the idea that there should be more County Councillors in the new Authority but consultations continue about the boundaries of the individual constituencies. If you are interested in contributing to this debate you have until 11 May and should email or write to The Boundary Committee for England, Travelan House, Great Peter Street, London. SW1P 2HW.

You may be wondering where Parish Councils will fit into the new structure. We are assured that there will be an even greater part to play in the decision making process but, as so often applies, the proof will only emerge in the light of experience. We do know that Wylam will be one of the Parish Councils represented on the Eastern Tynedale Community Forum, through which there will be regular contact between the parishes and the County Councillors for the area but we have also been promised that direct channels of communication between Parish Councils, County Councillors and Officers of the County Council will also still be open.

## Playing Field

One of the down sides of spring for the Playing Field Association is that the grass on the Jubilee Field will need cutting again! However, bolstered financially by a profit of £913 from the Jumble Sale and £844 from the Burns Night, preparations for the Summer Fair on the fourth Saturday in June (27<sup>th</sup>) have already started. Please note the date in your diary!

In the next few weeks a start should be made on improvements and refurbishment of the pavilion. This will include new steps and handrails to the changing rooms which will be refurbished. Externally, the footpath from the main gate will be extended past the play area to the pavilion, and the foundations and base for the extension of the pavilion to the west built. Later in the year, finances permitting, the extension which is primarily to store sports and maintenance equipment will be completed.

## Fancy a Fish and Chip Supper?

Would you like to do something different? You could enjoy a fish and chip supper with friends and at the same time raise money to help people with spinal injuries and those who care for them. There are some 40,000 people with spinal injuries in the UK and 1,000 every year experience a spinal cord injury.

This year is the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Spinal Injuries Association and 15 May is Spinal Cord Injury awareness day. We have been asked to seek support from anyone prepared to organise a fish and chip supper, either in their own home, at work or in a local community venue.

Help and advice is available from Elizabeth Wright, Donor Development Officer, on 0845 678 6633 ext. 229 or by email at [fishandchips@spinal.co.uk](mailto:fishandchips@spinal.co.uk)

## Wylam Rockets

The Wylam Rockets Football Club is to start "taster" football coaching sessions one evening per week for boys and girls in the Under-six age group (those in Year 1 at school), beginning after the clocks go forward at the end of March. No previous experience of football is needed and any boy or girl living in Wylam or the surrounding area is very welcome indeed to come. The emphasis is on fun as much as on football. For further information please call Adrian Dalton on 01661 852 791.

On 16 January a charity event was held in The Black Bull to raise money for the Club. There was a raffle and a football quiz, and the entertainment was provided by local band "Mid-Life Crisis". Over £750 was made on the night.

## Getting Down and Dirty!

We hear that twelve brave people responded to the invitation to get 'Down and Dirty' at Wylam Nurseries on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. The classes on basic gardening and fruit and vegetable growing began with 'Pots and Propagation' and further classes will be held on the last Saturday of each month, between 10 and 11am. The classes are free and open to all with the only stipulation being that you wrap up warm, wear stout footwear and are prepared to get your hands dirty.



## Village Plan

We announced in the previous "Globe" that the Parish Council would soon be starting the process of reviewing and updating the Village Plan, published in 2003. Although the resolve is still there, we have decided to delay the start of the process by a few months because we feel that involvement of the Principal Local Authority (the new County Council) is important for the success of the exercise and co-operation is more likely to be forthcoming once the Unitary Council has had time to settle into its new role.

The success of the exercise, whenever it begins, will still depend very much on the participation of a wide cross-section of the local community and we would still like to hear from anyone who would like to become involved.



Some of the 'Rockets' in action



## Nature Notes

Peter Clarke writes:-

One spectacular occurrence since the last issue has been the taking up of residence, in the field at the back of Bluebell Close and Dene Road, of a large group of birds. It is a mixed flock, mainly of gulls and rooks, with a few waders and starlings. There must be a total of a couple of hundred individual birds but they seem to exhibit a common behaviour, taking off together, forming a great crowd which then swirls around for a time before they settle together again. This process is repeated every few minutes. Why they behave quite like this has been the subject of some local speculation but it does appear that possibly the same flock is also appearing in other places around the village.

A few residents of Dene Road were fortunate enough to catch sight of a Peregrine Falcon which recently caught and, until disturbed, consumed a wood pigeon within the same field. These birds are relatively rare in this area but, to our knowledge, no further sightings have been reported. We are very grateful to Derek Gillis who was quick with his camera to catch the moment shown here.



Many residents, especially of Woodcroft Road, witnessed a group of waxwings in January. These birds are beautiful and make a delightful spectacle along with their collective noise which is reminiscent of massed sewing machines! Unfortunately they stay around for only a few days before moving on.

The Wylam Bird Club has recently re-formed, catering for all levels of knowledge and experience. The group generally meets at 7.30pm on Wednesdays in the Methodist Church Centre but with many outdoor activities, both locally and further afield. New members are welcome but do check when they are next meeting in Wylam by contacting either Bob Doughty on 853398 or Doug Hamilton on 853300.

Jane Young, who for many years has offered Natural History courses in the village, has decided to discontinue these but is planning other opportunities on an occasional basis. We are grateful to Jane for the delight she has brought to so many and for the contribution she has made to our knowledge on a wide range of subjects.

## Complaints Continue

It sometimes seems to Parish Councillors, although perhaps a little "tongue in cheek", that the greatest concerns within the local community relate to speeding traffic and fouling by dogs. Neither problem has proved easy to resolve, although many people have expressed the view that the vehicle activated 30mph signs have brought some improvement on the speeding front.

As far as the dog fouling issue is concerned, whilst there appeared to be a significant improvement for a time there is currently considerable evidence (literally), borne out by the number of complaints that we have heard, that the problem is getting worse again.

We should not have to remind those who walk dogs that it is an offence, punishable either by a fixed penalty of £50 or, if taken to court, a fine of up to £1000, to permit a dog to commit this kind of nuisance, basically in any public area.

Even when some people clear up their dog's mess they seem to think that throwing the plastic bag into the hedge, bushes or even into people's gardens is acceptable, which of course it is not.

We know that most dog owners take this responsibility very seriously and apologise that we have to make "blanket" appeals of this kind.

For years the Parish Council has provided free "poop-scoop" bags which are available from the Spar, Wine Lodge, Library and the Parish Council Office. Please use these and either take the used bags home to bin them or use one of the many litter bins around the village.

## Cancer Research UK

The Wylam Branch of Cancer Research UK is holding a Spring Fayre on Saturday 4 April in Wylam Institute between 10.00am and 12 noon. Admission 50p. Stalls will include cakes, produce, plants and bric-a-brac, there will be a raffle and the ever popular Easter Egg Tombola. Contributions for these stalls or help on the day will be welcome.

## Wylam Institute Computers

If you need to use the internet and the library is closed then don't forget that the Institute has free Broadband access on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9.30am to 12. On Wednesdays there is a volunteer on duty from 10.00am until 12 to offer any help you may need with using a computer and simple programmes. Regular courses are also run and are advertised around the village.

**Deadline for material for the June "Wylam Globe" is Friday 15 May**

## Annual Village Meeting

The Annual Village Meeting is the opportunity for residents of Wylam to hear about the recent work of the Parish Council, to discuss matters of interest and to question Councillors.

This meeting will take place in The Institute at 7.30pm on Wednesday 13 May. A representative from the North of Tyne Primary Care Organisation will attend this meeting to briefly outline the proposal to create a new specialist Emergency Care Hospital near Cramlington and to answer our questions. Of course all regular meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public and offer a short public question time at the beginning of every meeting. Forthcoming meetings will take place at 7.00pm on:-  
Monday 6 April  
Monday 18 May (Annual Meeting) - all in the Institute.

## Grow Your Own?

Wylam Green Street is hosting a community event in Wylam Institute on Thursday 26 March from 8.00 to 9.30pm to discuss ideas about local food growing/production.

A representative of the Soil Association will be attending to talk about different Community Schemes. If you are interested in a joint community project to source or grow food locally or like the idea of growing your own food but don't have the space, then come along to share ideas.

## Forthcoming Events

**Film Club Programme** (all at 7.30pm in the Institute)

**21 March** All About My Mother

**25 April** Man On Wire

**16 May** Mama Mia

**Children's Films in conjunction with the Playgroup** (now at 2.00pm in the Institute)

**28 March** Shrek the Third  
(With plans for others in April and May)

### Other events

**21 March** Annual Village Litter Pick, 10.00am from the Country Park Car Park

**18 April**, from 11am to 2pm in The Falcon Centre - Wylam Playgroup "Easter Eggstra" and 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party.

**6, 7 and 8 May** at 7.30pm in the Institute, Wylam Amateur Dramatic Society present "The Chalk Garden".

**13 May** at 7.30pm in the Institute - Parish Council Annual Village Meeting.

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  
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