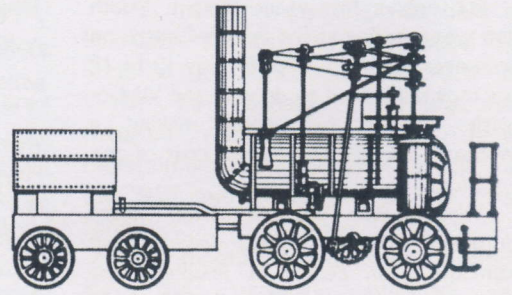


THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Spring 2010

No. 96

Some Winter!

By the time you read this we hope that the worst of the winter will be over, surely! The past few months have been exceptional, with relatively heavy falls of snow and persistent frosts which led to treacherous pavements at times and created problems for many of us. One of the legacies of the conditions has been the state of the roads, with pot holes appearing in many places. Residents are encouraged to report significant potholes via the Council's Contact Centre on 0845 600 6400 or on-line, www.northumberland.gov.uk. The Wylam to Ovingham road has been particularly badly affected in many places and we are pleased to hear that this road is on the County Council's list to be re-surfaced during the coming financial year.

Although the severe weather had many downsides, there were a few positives. One of these was the realisation, if one was needed, that we have excellent shops within our own village, all owned and staffed by dedicated and helpful staff, who did their utmost to satisfy the extra demand from those who normally shop outside the village. This should be a salutary reminder to us all - thank you to our shopkeepers and their staff!

Another positive was the opportunity to see our village in a beautifully different light, with the snow creating some amazing scenery. No doubt many of us have images like the one here to remind us of this.



Church Road on New Year's Day

That Hagg Bank Road!

You could be forgiven for thinking that the saga of this road closure might run and run! Based on information from the County Council we advised readers in our last issue that work to repair the road was expected to start in January or February this year. This has been slightly delayed still further by the potential contractors having to make additional site visits and design modifications but we have once again been assured that the work is imminent and, even as you read this, we are hopeful that work will be underway.

During the eighteen months that the road has been closed we have heard a number of stories, mainly from people living at Hagg Bank, that there have been a number of serious near misses between vehicles and pedestrians.

When the through road beyond Hagg Bank is open again, great care will be needed, particularly with children who have become used to there being very few cars on this road. The County Council has said that measures to slow traffic down will be included in the repair scheme but we have yet to see what these will be or to know their effectiveness.

Christmas Cards for Trees

Thank you to everyone who generously donated their Christmas cards to the Woodland Trust recycling appeal in the Institute in January. Over 9000 Christmas cards were successfully delivered to Marks and Spencer in Hexham for onward distribution to the Woodland Trust. Let's try and break the 10,000 barrier next year!

New Parish Councillor

Bob Whinham has recently decided to stand down after serving on the Parish Council for nearly seven years. During much of this time Bob also represented the Parish Council on the Management Committee of Wylam Institute and the Prudhoe Community Partnership. We take this opportunity to thank Bob for his dedication and service to the Council and to the wider community during this time and trust that he recovers quickly from his recent period of ill health.

As this issue goes to press we are anticipating that a co-option of someone to replace Bob will soon be made from the three people who have confirmed their interest in joining the Council.

Wylam Youth Club

It's only a few years since a Youth Club was meeting at the Falcon Centre on three evenings each week for any 12 to 18 year olds that cared to drop in and Wylam Parish Council has been making a significant contribution to the cost of this provision.

Wylam was one of three village "outposts" covered in this way by staff from the main centre at Prudhoe, the others being Stocksfield and Ovingham. Over the years this provision has been cut back, firstly to two evenings each week and then one, largely due to staff shortages and County Council budget cuts. Following the temporary closure of the Club during refurbishments to the Falcon Centre in 2008-09, the re-opening failed to attract any significant interest and the Club effectively closed, although the Youth Service continued to send "detached" workers to Wylam on a regular basis where they endeavoured to talk to any young people they came across out on the streets.

As mentioned in our December issue, a major review of the Prudhoe Youth Service was carried out at the end of 2009 and it was concluded that the current budget is no longer sufficient to pay for the traditional centre-based provision in the villages. Instead, it is currently proposed to commence a "mobile" service using an adapted caravan which will visit Wylam, Stocksfield and Ovingham, possibly for as little as one hour each on one evening a week. Clearly this is an exceptionally small provision and we remain very sceptical about how successful this will be. However, it is claimed that the caravan will be packed with facilities and that the qualified and experienced Youth Workers that accompany the caravan will be able to help and guide young people in many ways. We hope that local youngsters, who we are assured have been involved in discussions at school about the changes, will look out for publicity about the start of the new arrangement and, above all, give it a try!

The Parish Council meanwhile continues to make a financial contribution to support the Wylam and District Churches in employing a part-time Youth and Children's Worker who organises many activities for children and young people within the village, including an annual Holiday Club which attracted more than 70 youngsters last summer, and two regular "Rock Solid" groups that meet at St Oswin's Church Hall on Wednesday evenings during term time, 4.15 to 5.30pm for 9 to 13 year olds and 6.00 to 7.00pm for 13+ years. More details can be seen on the website

www.wylamanddistrictchurches.org.uk
or you can contact Joanne Birkett, Youth & Children's Worker, on 07725 754260 (email to jbirkett@talktalk.net)

News from Wylam

Pre-School Playgroup

Debbie Nickless, Chair of Wylam Playgroup writes:-

At last! The days of the dark, dusty, worn wooden flooring of the Playgroup's area of the Falcon Centre are over! During the Half-Term holiday, a specialist flooring company repaired, sanded and lacquered the floor, making it light and bright and good as new! Special thanks from the Playgroup Committee go to Wylam Parish Council for funding this work, which was made possible by diverting funds originally earmarked to support the Youth Club. Following other refurbishment work carried out last year, the new floor is the icing on the cake and the area now looks fantastic.

Thank you also to everyone who bought a copy of this year's Calendar featuring historical photographs of Wylam. This has raised a lot of money which will be put towards the running of the Playgroup. Thank you to the shops and businesses that sold the Calendar for us. In contrast, next year's Calendar will be a colour-filled issue based on "Wylam in Bloom". If you have any photographs you feel would be suitable for this, please e-mail them to wylam.playgroup@live.co.uk, suggesting which month you feel they would be most appropriate for. Submissions must be received by 30 September 2010.

Our next fund-raising event will be the "Easter Eggstra". Please look out for posters around the village giving further information.

Wylam Playgroup is now open five mornings a week at the Falcon Centre. Sessions run from 9.15 to 11.45a.m, Monday to Friday. Last year, OFSTED rated Wylam Playgroup as "good with outstanding elements", which is a wonderful achievement. The Playgroup has a strong level of support within the village and we are proud to maintain a high standard of service for the children.



The refurbished floor

Playing Field Association

The Playing Field Association made a good start to 2010 with the 23rd Annual Burns Night Ceilidh, which was attended by over 100 people and raised around £900. The Jumble Sale, postponed from January to February because of the weather, raised an additional £1200. This still leaves a gap of nearly £10,000 to be raised before the extension to the pavilion can be completed. Hopefully, a number of bids to charities for assistance will be successful and a profitable Summer Fair on 26 June might still enable the work to be completed this year. Thank you to all those who bought tickets or helped in other ways.



Some of those that brought 'flavour' to the Burns' Night Ceilidh

Wylam Amateur Dramatic Society

The next production by our very talented Amateur Dramatic Society is to be "Pack of Lies" by Hugh Whitmore, with performances at 7.30pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 6 to 8 May in Wylam Institute.

Tickets, £6 (concessions £5), will be available from Stobo's shop, Wylam Tea Shop and at the door.

The play is described as "a blend of suburban domesticity with high-level intrigue in a quite compelling documentary-thriller".

Falcon Centre Centenary Celebrations

The Falcon Centre, home to Wylam Library, the Railway Museum and Pre-School Playgroup, is celebrating its 100th birthday in December. To honour this momentous occasion we are intending to celebrate with an event and an exhibition of memorabilia in November/December 2010.

If anyone would like to join the Falcon Centre party planning group or if you have any items suitable for display such as anything recording its part in the village's education history or indeed details of the building itself, please would you let the Parish Council know - wylampc@btinternet.com or call into the Institute office. The first planning meeting will take place after Easter - look out for details on the Parish Council website.

Here They Are - Gone!

As advised in the last issue of The Globe, two trees growing very close to Blackett Court on Parish Council land have now been felled. Now be honest, how many of you, some possibly driving past every day, had noticed?

We are always reluctant to agree to the loss of mature trees but there are times when this becomes necessary.

You may also have noticed that the hedge on the east side of the lower part of Holeyn Hall Road has been cut back. The growth of this hedge, which is also owned by the Parish Council, had got out of hand, was smothering the daffodils and hampering the mowing of the grass verge.



Before



After

Setting Up The Applectart

An inaugural meeting was held in February to discuss a proposal to establish a Community Orchard at Wylam First School. The idea has received enthusiastic backing from Northumberland County Council and the staff and governors of the First School.

The meeting heard various options for the orchard, outlined by representatives of the Soil Association and Community Supported Agriculture. It is intended that the orchard should be located at the bottom of the First School playing field and will consist of approximately 65 trees, which it is hoped will be planted in the autumn. The management of the orchard is to be undertaken by a steering committee consisting of members of the orchard scheme. To avoid complications with child protection legislation it was agreed that access to the orchard will only be allowed outside school hours, in evenings, weekends or holidays. Membership of the orchard is open to anyone and no involvement with the school is necessary to participate.

Two funding models are currently under discussion - either a full membership scheme or a sponsorship format. The membership model would require payment of an annual membership fee with each member receiving equal shares (a system adopted for the Clara Vale Community Orchard.) The responsibility for maintaining the orchard would be shared by all members, as would the produce. The sponsorship model would include a minimal membership fee and each member would then buy and maintain their own trees. These alternatives are currently being costed and start-up grants are being investigated. It is hoped that once the trees are established there will be regular community events to support and celebrate the orchard, such as pruning and harvesting days or apple pressing days.

For more information please come along to the next meeting, which will be held at Wylam First School on Wednesday 24 March at 8.00pm, when all will be welcome.

If anyone has any queries, or views on the funding model for the orchard, or are not able to attend the meeting but would still like to be involved, please email

wylamcommunityorchard@googlemail.com.

Bollards!

The bollards outside the Spar shop, erected nearly three years ago as part of a County Council scheme to enhance that location and improve safety, have had a fairly chequered life, with several replacements being needed.

These bollards were designed to discourage drivers from blocking the footpath and to improve the appearance but the ones outside the Fox and Hounds (the remnants of which are shown here) were intended to prevent a repetition of several accidents over the years that had resulted in serious damage to the front of the public house and which could so easily have led to injuries.

It was therefore a shock to find, when put to the test during icy weather this winter, that they too are no more than hollow plastic tubes like the ones at the Spar! When they were installed the Parish Council was advised that they would contain steel reinforcement to prevent vehicles breaking through. Needless to say, the Parish Council is supporting Jane at the Fox and Hounds to have the matter rectified as soon as possible. Unfortunately the frequent icy conditions have also led to several accidents at the other side of the Fox and Hounds, where vehicles have slid from the bottom of The Dene, across the road and into the wall of the pub car park on no fewer than four occasions within a recent two week period.



Wylam Institute

Computer Upgrades Needed

The computers in the Centenary Room at the Institute are in desperate need of upgrading. Three upgrades have very kindly been donated but we are still on the lookout for three more. So, if you are about to, or have just upgraded and if your old computer had XP installed, then we would love to hear from you. The hard drive is not required. Please telephone the Institute office 852498 if you are able to help.

Institute Membership

The Institute Committee hosted a very successful members coffee morning in February to allow people to renew their membership and to invite other interested residents to become members.

If there are existing members who have not yet renewed their membership or any residents who would like to join to support this valuable community asset, please pop into the Institute office to pay. Membership fees are: £6 for an individual, £10 for a family and £12 for a patron. The funding is used to maintain the building for the 25+ organisations that currently use Wylam Institute. Incidentally, since the article published in our last issue, the Institute has now received licensed premises status.

Coffee Morning Fund Raising

As a trial, the Institute Management Committee are holding a monthly fundraising coffee morning in the Institute on the 2nd Wednesday in March, April and May. The first coffee morning was held on 10 March and will be repeated on 14 April and 12 May, between 10am and 12.30pm. It is hoped that many will drop in to support these events.

Pilates Classes

Classes now take place on Wednesday afternoons at Wylam Institute. These are mixed-ability sessions of one hour to suit all levels of fitness. For more details or to enrol, phone Kathryn Libby on 07721 494 315 or 0191 267 4121.

Thank you

to everyone who helped make the Christmas Celebration at Charlie's Corner a success again this year. The children from Wylam First School led the carol singing with Santa arriving on his sleigh, right on cue to add to the spirit of the occasion! Refreshments in the Methodist hall afterwards provided a much need warmer on a cold but thankfully dry morning. Particular thanks go to Tom and Lois Martin of the Wylam Business Forum for organising the event. A collection taken that morning raised £111 for Cancer Research UK.

"Jump for Joy" 2010

This fun event, which has quickly become an annual favourite, will be held in the grounds at St Oswin's Church on Sunday 13 June. Why not start planning ahead NOW and design the best teddy bear parachute ever?

The barbecue starts at 12 noon, with many other exciting stalls and games to play while you register your favourite teddy and wait for it to be hauled up the church tower for its descent by parachute. The bear that stays in the air longest (and lands on the ground) wins a prize. Teas and a huge range of fabulous cakes will be available. All proceeds go to the Wylam and District Churches Youth & Children's Work.

That Other Wylam Map

We included an article in the autumn 2009 issue of the Wylam Globe about a group that were compiling a map showing old names for places in and around Wylam

The map identifies 30 locations, although apparently nobody came forward with any information about the origin of "Wyles Hill", which was posed as a question in the original article.

The map is now on display in the Institute, the Library and at Stephenson's Cottage. Most people are likely to find something that they've never heard of before and A3-size copies of the map can be purchased for £2.50 from the Institute Office, where orders (in writing and with cash please) can be left. All profits will help to support the Institute.

Litter Picking

We usually try to get this "Spring" issue of the Wylam Globe to every house in the village in time to include details of the Annual Village Litter Pick but our timing has gone a little astray this time and so we hope that people will have responded to the posters around the village or to other communications and will have turned out in-force on 20 March! In anticipation, thank you to all who did!

Sadly, and yet another sign of the times perhaps, the County Council turned down our request to provide a skip for the litter pick this year and the Parish Council is considering whether to pay for one itself. We also understand that our litter bins, previously emptied three times every week, are in future to be only cleared twice.

With this background, we are particularly grateful to the many local people who, throughout the year, pick up litter from many areas around the village. This help is invaluable and does much to ensure that when it comes to the annual "spring clean", the task is not too daunting.

Forthcoming Events

The following events take place in Wylam Institute unless indicated otherwise

27 March

Spring Fayre/Coffee Morning in aid of Wylam Branch of Cancer Research UK. 10am to 12 noon

19 April

Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm

28 April

Annual Village Meeting 7.30pm

6, 7 & 8 May

Wylam Dramatic Society presents "Pack of Lies" 7.30pm

10 May

Institute Community Association AGM 6.30pm

15 May

Film Club "Sunshine Cleaning" 7.00pm

17 May

Parish Council Meeting (Annual Meeting) 7.00pm

22 May

Gardeners Coffee Morning 10.00am to 12 noon

13 June

"Jump for Joy" (Teddy Parachute Jump) St Oswin's Church grounds from 12 noon

20 June

Garden Walk in aid of Wylam Housing Group and Shelter North East, 10.00am to 5.00pm

26 June

Wylam Summer Fair (including Book Stall)

5 July

Blood Donor session 1.30 to 7.30pm

Many more events and much more detail is now available in the Diary section of the Wylam Parish Council website:-

www.wylamparishcouncil.org.

To submit entries for this site; go to "Events" on the home page and then to "Submit your local event". A form will appear for you to complete and submit.

Deadline for the next "Wylam Globe" Monday, 10th May

The Parish Council wishes to make it clear that anonymous articles or letters received for the "Globe" will not be considered for publication.

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Printed for Wylam Parish Council by the Gilpin Press, Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4BA.
E.mail gilpin.press@btinternet.com