



THE HAYDON NEWS

MARCH
2002

Published by The Friends Of Haydon Bridge

Editorial comment

Forgive me if I begin this month with a list of words/phrases taken from this issue or inferred by the contributors.

Reluctance, fall into ruin, reflection on the community, self-image, positive attitude, denial, negativity, tunnel vision, abdication of responsibility, quick fix, superficial.

The great majority of these words are taken from the Church and Doctor's pages and obviously relate to what their messages are in context. But could they not also be used when considering the state and health of our village?

To cite an example, and I hope the family concerned don't mind. Damage to their home recently caused by an out of control vehicle may have left superficial damage, but inside, damage has been caused which will take longer to fix. Could this very worrying case have been prevented by a more positive attitude towards dealing with the unlawful use of the area outside the Co-op and preventing vehicles accessing it. Bollards, raised kerbs. Even substantial planters, which I see, one very considerate and thoughtful Parish Councillor has provided.

Isn't it like this in the village as a whole? Superficially everything seems fine, particularly when the sun shines and there is some warmth in it. But beneath the surface a number of issues lurk which will take longer to fix as they generate a great deal of anxiety, indeed anger in some quarters. The saga of Church Street. First it was the bollards and the pavements. Now it is the 'new' lamps. Yes, it is good for someone to have a theoretical plan of where things should go. But doesn't common sense prevail any more? Don't villagers have a right to have their opinions heard or be consulted before things happen?

We all have the opportunity each month to attend Parish Council meetings as the first part is devoted to Public Matters. A lot of folk were present at the last meeting (see below) and they had their say on issues which directly concern them. The PC has taken note and no doubt actions will follow in relation to those concerns.

If something bothers you, or you would like to inform, or you would like to 'vent your spleen' (apologies to the Evening Chronicle) write to the *Haydon News* but remember to include your name and address even if you would prefer a pen-name.

Oops! I hope that the Haydonian Club will accept my apologies for inadvertently missing them out of the list of establishments last month. You see, my tunnel vision couldn't see round the corner!

Finally. After many years of service to the village and as Clerk to the Shaftoe Trust, John Richardson has taken retirement. We wish both himself and his wife well for the future.

Richard A D Snowdon. (Editor)

***Notes from the Parish Council Meeting held at the Community Centre (Haydon Bridge)
Thursday 28th March 2002 at 7.30pm.***

Present were: 9 Councillors (apologies from 1), Parish Clerk and 11 members of the Public.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Brian Bell who would give a presentation on the findings and possible solutions to the Spa Well problem.

Brian began by outlining the why, what and the consequences of the problem. 'Academy Surveys' had done their work and confirmed that there had been two landslips; 1) August 2001 caused by the flooding of the river at that time and 2) February 2002 when the remaining loose material had slipped.

* the end result is that the river has washed away the river bank, exposed everything in the area, there will be further erosion towards the A69 and as the site is on the bend in the river this process will continue.

* the area can be repaired with the building of a wall at the base then back-filling to stabilise the slope. The wall will need to be about 2 metres in height and then to support wire baskets containing rocks. This will eventually allow the vegetation to re-establish itself and therefore the Environment Agency will be happy.

* access to the Spa Well. 1. To repair and reinstate the footpath following its previous route. The slope will be slight (beneficial to all users) but is likely to cost in the

region of £85,000. There will be extra costs for the design and for the tendering process.

2. To create a new and quite separate approach to the Spa Well from the east. Much of the ground will lend itself to a gradual slope downwards but there will be part where the only remedy is for a flight of quite steep steps. Estimated cost about £15,000 but he felt that there would be little benefit to the general walk (from the village?)

Other parties would be involved in the final decision. Environment Agency and the County Council seem non-committal. Highways Agency seem interested perhaps because work will have to be done to prevent erosion affecting the A69. Incidentally, the old A69 is still classed as a trunk road!! The landowner has a duty to support the road and should have a duty to repair the landslip.

Brian Bell recommends to the PC to 'hold fire' to see what Highways Agency comes up with.

As to funding, the PC was reminded that possible funding for this year has been lost! And there is likely to be lengthy arguments over just who is responsible for what in this area. Unlikely therefore that there will be anything done in time for this year's Jubilee!

Brian Bell was thanked for his attendance and then he left.

Public Matters: 1) David McVay voiced his ongoing concerns regarding the area outside of his house, which is adjacent to the Co-op. His house had been hit by a stolen car and caravan a couple of days earlier which had resulted in damage to the external wall and the part demolition of the garden wall and iron railings. He believes that had there been bollards or the like on the pavement the driver might have been obliged to look for somewhere else to bring his speed down!

David is obviously very annoyed that having brought this matter (parking on the pavement etc. etc.) to the attention of the PC last September, very little has been done. He wants something done. A proposed meeting with all parties has yet to be held. The Clerk read out a recent letter from Highways saying that they were prepared to meet and required a date. David will respond, the PC supports this and Cllr Mitchell will be in contact.

2. Pauline Wallis representing the Shaftoe Park working groups asked if the PC would act as 'umbrella' organisation so that funding could be sought. PC will be delighted to support so applications can go through.

3. Jackie Brown (Railway Hotel) expressed grave concerns over the placing of one of the 'new' lamp-posts on Church Street. It is right outside her house and when lit will illuminate the whole of the inside of the house! Want it moved please. She indicated that if she was prepared to £200 then it could be moved. However, there seems to be dual standards at work. The Methodist Chapel got their light moved and as some lights had been placed among the trees (sensible!!) they would have to be moved anyway, so why not hers? Cllr Smith expressed his annoyance saying that surely common sense should prevail and surely the contractors should make a point of speaking directly to people who will be affected. All in all the HER Scheme is an absolute shambles. Cllr Mitchell tried to assure Jackie that shades would be placed on the lamp only allowing about 5 - 15% of the light into the house. She doesn't want any!

4. Julie Fowler (Showfield) Dog mess in the area is horrendous. Any chance of a bin? Cllr Charlton asked if the offenders could be identified. YES. She then said that leaflets outlining possible fines could then be pushed through the doors to remind people of their duties in clearing up after their dogs.

5. Mrs Armstrong queried the frequency of road sweeping. Supposed to be twice a year.

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters arising: Litter follow-up. If there is a problem then to contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

HERS Audit. Cllr Mitchell had checked with Peter Kemp (TDC) and the report is not to be made public. This caused some discussion particularly as there had been some villagers present at the HERS meeting. So the very people who should know what is in the report are denied the privilege. TDC should be asked to prepare a form of report which the public can see. Some

Councillors were adamant that the HERS group was not led by the PC so could not understand why this group should not have access.

TDC Minutes: Innerhaugh - 41 houses approved. The play area is to stay where planned but to be fenced off from the river. Access will be needed to allow the Water Board to see to sewage etc. Planning as been submitted for installing Low Pressure Gas Tanks in the part of the field not being developed.

Cllr Smith brought forward the problems created by the public crossing fields with their dogs. As farmers now have to have a Quality Assurance Mark one of the criteria is that their dogs have to be wormed 4 times a year. He is calling for ALL dogs to be licenced where worming is a necessity. The worms in dog's faeces are FATAL to sheep.

Cllr Mitchell also mentioned the problem created by horse muck. However, this material is excellent for putting on the garden!

Highways/Bypass: Cllr Charlton indicated that there could be problems in the weeks after 8th April when disruption to the roads around Church Street begins. If anyone has any concerns at all they should contact Cllr Charlton who will inform the Site Manager.

Lighting: No. 116 (John Martin Street) & 133 Whittis Hill. OFF

Any Other Business: Residents on John Martin Street are becoming concerned at the use by vehicles of the grass verges. Can they be put off? PC says YES. Small fence?

Date of next meeting: Thursday 25th April at 7.30pm

RADS

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Held on the 4th Thursday of each month.

The meeting is usually held in the Community Centre but occasionally goes elsewhere. The notice board, next to the Butcher's shop on Church Street always shows the likely agenda for each meeting and the venue.

The General Public is welcome at the first part of every meeting. Have your say - Brickbats and Bouquets!!

HAYDON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCILLORS

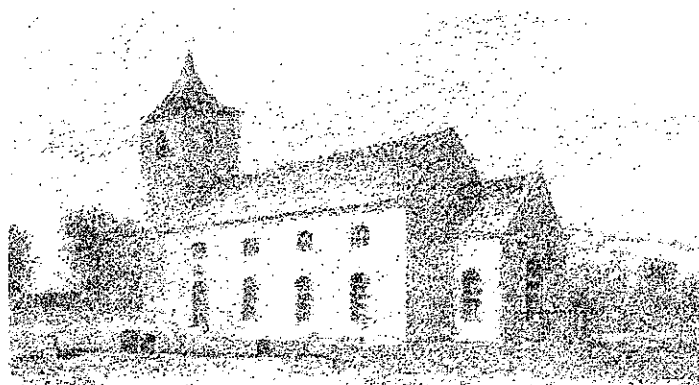
Mr D Charlton	684 505
Mrs E Charlton	684 505
(Chair) Mr E J Faulks	Chesterwood Park
Mrs V A Fletcher	
Mrs E Garrow	684 324
Mrs L Gilhespy	684 632
Mr S B Mitchell	684 980 *
Mr M R Parkin	684 340
Mrs L A Philp	
Mr D C Smith	684 480 *
Mr T J Stephenson	

* also Tynedale District Councillor

PARISH CLERK

Mrs Carole McGivern 688 020
e-mail: carolemcgivern@aol.com

HISTORICAL NOTES OF HAYDON BRIDGE – Dennis Telford



It is most appropriate that I am writing these notes on 20th March, St. Cuthbert's Day.

When the 'St. Cuthbert's Church Renovation Appeal' leaflet dropped through our letterbox earlier this month, I decided to have another look at some of my own documents and publications outlining our church's early history.

A small booklet was published in the late 1950's purporting to record the history of St. Cuthbert's. Unfortunately, the 'new' church in the village was dismissed in a couple of paragraphs in favour of our old church at Haydon. Its ancient history was probably deemed to be of greater interest.

Our church in the village was built in 1795 on land given by the Governors of the Greenwich Hospital. It was opened for worship on 20th July 1796, the adjacent graveyard having been consecrated on 10th July 1796. Like the old church, stone from local quarries was used in its construction. Given that the nave of the old church was partly demolished and removed in 1795, the same year that our village church was built, it is safe to assume that the ancient Roman stones were transported from Haydon and incorporated into the new structure.

In 1883 the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne published a paper by Mr. C.C.Hodges in which he stated that large numbers of stones with, "broached tooling and other indications of Roman handling" were to be seen in the north wall of the new

church. An indication that the materials brought from the nave of the church at Haydon had originally been part of some Roman station, probably Bercovicus.

The 1950's booklet is even more specific stating that, 'the stones

were originally used to build the tiny church by the camp (of Bercovicium). This church, now long since vanished, was used to rest St. Cuthbert's body in the year 880 when the Lindisfarne monks, with their precious burden, were fleeing from the Danes. Whether this specific source can be substantiated is not clear, but it takes very little imagination for a Haydonian to visualise the historic life story of the fabric of our church, which is so in need of repair in 2002, each stone with its own remarkable story!

In the 15th century, Prior to Wessington compiled a list of the churches and chapels dedicated to St. Cuthbert in Northumberland, which he placed above the choir door of his Church of Durham. The list contains only the names of Norham, Bedlington, Carham, Elsdon, Bellingham (or Bellingham) and Haydon Bridge.

The architecture of our new church didn't find favour with everyone. According to John Hodgson in 1840, "It's style is bald and factory-like utterly at variance with the genius of early architecture but it is admirably maintained, and has the rare ornament of a clock, which tells the hour, on the outside of the tower".

C.C. Hodges said that, "A more charming site could not well have been chosen in the neighbourhood (by the waterside) but it is to be regretted that the change (movement of services from Haydon to Haydon Bridge) was made when the taste in matters architectural were at so low an ebb for the church is anything but a beautiful building".

It has also been described by those of eminence as a "plain structure built of dressed stone in the Norman style" and more favourably as, "the elegant and commodious new chapel at Haydon Bridge".

The seating in our new "Chapel" held over 400 people, one quarter of the Chapelry's population of 1,740, the congregation included those in the north and south side galleries and a west end gallery.

The Chapelry of Haydon was formerly in the parish of Warden, until 26th June 1879 when it was constituted a separate parish endowed with a stipend of £300. The Reverend John Heneage Mandell M.A. of Exeter College, Oxford was appointed as the first Vicar, on the presentation of the Reverend George Cruddas, Vicar of Warden.

Even before this date, the residents of Haydon Bridge still had a responsibility for administering the Chapelry. For example, at meetings held in the vestry on Tuesday 1st July 1862 and the 7th October 1863, a rate of one halfpenny in the pound was levied for the maintenance of the fabric of the "Chapel". Perhaps this money was partly spent following a vestry meeting of ratepayers on 28th March 1864, when it was proposed and unanimously agreed that the church be whitewashed and cleaned.

More substantial work on the Haydon Bridge church and funded by the halfpenny rate was agreed at a meeting on 20th April 1864. It was resolved to take steps for improving the sittings of the church, especially those in the gallery, with a view of providing better accommodation for the children attending the schools of Shaftoe's Charity. The object was to provide 200 to 250 children, sight and hearing of the ministering clergy. The north and south side galleries would be removed and the west end gallery extended. The pulpit and reading desk would be placed in a more central situation. A new vestry was to be erected at the north east

corner of the church and existing vestry to be combined into an entrance porch.

A notice was fixed to the church door on Sunday 12th March 1865, giving advance warning of the proposed agenda. On 3rd April 1865 these plans were eventually approved, but modified in such a manner that the whole of the gallery be dispensed with and a new north transept be erected. On 14th March 1866 the church was re-opened following these extensive repairs and alterations.

The later years of the 19th century proved to be a particularly busy period for those involved in the administration of our church.

On Friday 11th June 1869 at a meeting of the ratepayers held in the vestry under the chairmanship of the Vicar of the parish of Warden, the Reverend George Cruddas, it was unanimously agreed to request permission to close the burial ground adjacent to the church and that steps be taken to provide a site for a new burial ground and mortuary chapel. The expense incurred to be defrayed by voluntary contribution. By 19th July 1869, £328 had already been promised and on 16th September 1869 it was resolved that the site of the new burial ground would be one and one half acres of a field above California Gardens, on land granted by the Lords of the Admiralty who owned three quarters of the Chapelry Estate at that time.

On 17th March 1870, tenders were accepted to the amount of £341-9-0 for the building of the new Cemetery Chapel.

The new burial ground was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Durham on 20th March 1871, although it was not until 11th April 1873 that the first tombstone was erected, to the memory of Gavin Anderson.

This cemetery served the village until 1975 even though the present cemetery up the Langley road opened in 1952.

I find it quite remarkable that it is recorded that in the 75 years between 1796 and 1871, nearly 3,000 interments were made in the original burial ground surrounding St. Cuthbert's church. Just consider this fact the next time you walk into the churchyard through the new opening on Church Street.

Once the problem of the burial ground was settled the churchwardens and ratepayers turned their attention again to the church itself.

In December 1877 the old-fashioned narrow and inconvenient pews were removed and the building was re-seated with open pews of pitch pine, a new floor laid, the interior painted and a new heating apparatus put in at a cost of £200.



A new organ was opened for use on 30th May 1885, the previous organ had been built by Browns of York and was new when it was installed in 1838.

On Saturday 24th November 1888 a new 6' diameter double-dial clock replaced the south facing single dial clock and it was placed several feet higher than the original one. The new clock was a permanent reminder of Queen Victoria's Royal Jubilee. (see my notes in the *Haydon News*, May 2000 for more information)

The 19th century ended with a major restoration and alterations to our church. In 1898 flat ceilings were removed, the south facing windows were altered and chancel was lengthened. During the work various interesting Roman stones were found which originally formed part of the old church at Haydon and appeared to confirm that it had been built around 1180.

In 1920 the construction of new vestry and organ chamber was considered, but the work was never carried out due to a lack of funding. Consequently, St. Cuthbert's Church, Haydon Bridge has changed little externally since 8th April 1898 although, in 1937 electricity was installed in the church and church hall.

Perhaps it was a failure of this electrical installation which was responsible for the fire which destroyed the church hall on the evening of 19th September 1963. But that is another story for another day!

One hundred and four years in April, since any major repairs or restoration to the fabric of the church. Is it any wonder then that the structure is in need of major repair now?

As today's Vicar, Vincent Ashwin, points out in the 2002 leaflet, St. Cuthbert's is a focal point in our historic village and is worthy of our support. In the way that the ratepayers of the Chapelry rallied round in the 19th century perhaps!

***Can YOU
spot the differences
between the 1830 engraving
and this March 2002
photograph?***

LANGLEY W. I.

The speaker at Langley W.I. Was Mr Colin Jewitt from Ladycross Nature Reserve whose task was described as "Signs of Wildlife"

Ladycross, he explained is still a working quarry but its motto is "Working with People for Nature". His interest in wildlife coupled with his position as owner and quarry manager, has enabled Mr Jewitt to develop the Reserve over the last 28 years.

The 40 acre site is made up of heath and woodland with ponds and upland meadows. 143 species of birds have been recorded, 17 species of butterfly, 10 species of dragon fly and over 100 species of moth and numerous other insects and plants.

The Reserve also has a population of red squirrels and other woodland mammals.

This fascinating talk was supported by the most interesting slides. Owing to the fact that Ladycross is a working quarry, together with the sensitivity of its wildlife, access is restricted to pre-booked visits only. A members outing has been arranged for the June meeting and we are all looking forward very much to this.

The competition for a Wildlife Book was won by Muriel Brown with Peggy Dakers as runner-up.

Myra Bowen.

OVER 60s CLUB

The speaker at the March meeting was Mrs Pauline Tulip who demonstrated making Easter cards and floral arrangements. The cards were delightful and members were thrilled with the

flowers which were raffled at the end of the afternoon much to the joy of the lucky winners.

With Mrs Tulip's help several members 'had a go' at making their own Easter cards.

During the business it was decided to return to evening meetings from next month.

The April meeting will therefore be from 7pm to 9pm.

Members also wished Mrs Sparks a very *Happy Birthday*.

The meeting concluded with Card Bingo. A most enjoyable afternoon.

Myra Bowen.

Dear Editor

I was very interested in the letter sent to you for the *Haydon News* last month made by (Only A Suggestion) about the walk from the Anchor Hotel car park to the Spa Well.

This was a very much used walk at one time not only for walks but Picnics and Camping.

Unfortunately, the river banks seem to get no attention at all. Every time we have flood water more bankside is washed away.

Very shortly the trees at Brigwood will be washed away and this has always been a lovely place to picnic and for children to play.

Almost to the Spa Well there used to be a lovely row of Birch trees, about a dozen in all. Also sandpit places for children. These also have gone into the river. The bankside further washed away.

We now have to walk on farm land

because hedges were ripped out.

Is anyone responsible for the river banks?

The north and south sides of the river needs to be reinforced and very soon, the underpass beneath the railway will be under water, as huge amounts of land have already gone!

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR RIVER BANKS????

M. Heslop.

The Editor

It was asked at a previous Parish Council meeting if anyone was organising an event to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

This prompted St. Cuthbert's Playgroup into action. Maybe we should open our own plans to the whole village. We proceeded to contact other big groups and organisations in the village, some 18 in all, asking for a representative from each one to attend a meeting to see if there was any enthusiasm to plan an event.

We thank Elena Parkin (Friends of Haydon Bridge) and Joanna Thompson (General Havelock) for their attendance. Father Leo Pyle, although unavailable for the meeting, offered his help also.

Needless to say, with only 4 groups out of the 18 invited, showing any interest in organising an event, we shall not be proceeding further.

**St. Cuthbert's
Playgroup
Committee**

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT 'THE FRIENDS OF HAYDON BRIDGE' MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please find enclosed subscription of to 'The Friends of Haydon Bridge'

Name:

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Minimum donation £1.20. Larger donations most welcome. Cheques payable to: 'The Friends of Haydon Bridge'.

You may leave your envelope with *Marsh's* or *John Clarke's* Newsagents, any Committee member of the FOHB or, you can post it directly to:

The Membership Secretary (Mike Parkin), FOHB, 'The Rambler', Brigwood, Haydon Bridge, NE47 6EX

Yearly subscriptions due by the end of April.
Reminders issued at the end of September.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR A HEALTHY BODY.

HAYFEVER.

One in ten people suffer from *hayfever*. It is caused by an allergy to pollen, fungal spores and dust that cause the body to produce *histamine*. Normally the body produces its own remedy for histamine called antihistamine, but if the body cannot produce enough of its own antihistamine then an allergic reaction occurs.

Our customers use natural antihistamines such as high doses of *vitamin C*. Generally 500mg up to three times a day. *Vitamin B5 (also known as 'Pantothenic Acid')*. I also know gardeners who swear they can't do their job without *Quercetin* which received a lot of good press last year.

There are a number of natural products that may help to ease the unpleasant symptoms of hayfever without causing drowsiness. The *homoeopathic* remedy *Euphrasia* for burning watering eyes. The homoeopathically prepared tissue salt *New Era H* for Hayfever. People report this helps with sneezing and watery eyes. Many find high strength *Garlic* tablets good for reducing catarrh and sinus congestion. *Eucalyptus* or *olbas oil* may be helpful for clearing nasal passages.

The body makes mucous out of acid forming foods such as dairy products, sugar and saturated fat (from meat), so it is helpful to use milk, yoghurt and cheese made from *soya*, and eat fish and plenty of fruit and vegetables instead.

STRESS.

Today stress is a part of our everyday lives. We need some stress to give us purpose and motivation in our lives. It is when we have too much that it can lead to ill health.

Many people find using calming herbs such as *Valerian* or *passionflower (passiflora)* helpful. Studies have shown *St. John's Wort* helpful for symptoms such as anxiety, apathy, insomnia and depression.

Anyone under stress tends to use up more nutrients so a *High Strength B Complex with Vitamin C*, is usually helpful as they are necessary for a healthy nervous system. *Calcium*, *Magnesium* and *Zinc* have successfully been used by some of our customers experiencing stress and insomnia.

When stressed it is wise to avoid stimulants such as sugar, alcohol and caffeine (caffeine can be found in tea, coffee, chocolate, cola and other fizzy drinks). Instead, drinking fresh fruit juices, or drinking herbal teas containing mixes of *camomile*, *valerian*, *hops*, *passion flower*.

Aromatherapy oils for burners such as *Clary Sage*, *Neroli* or *Cedarwood* can be helpful for stressed people as well as making a room smell lovely!

Important: Pregnant Ladies, anyone under medical supervision or taking prescription medication should consult their doctor before using complementary therapies.

Jill I. Henderson. Holland and Barrett.

Haydon Bridge Carpet Bowls Club

A remarkable turnaround from Haydon Bridge almost resulted in the most unlikely of victories. After being around 20 points behind after the first two games against Alston, at the Community Centre on March 21st, Haydon Bridge were trailing by only 5 points with one set of games to go. The home side even made up this deficit and took a brief lead, before letting it slip and losing by four points.

Jean Oliver and Jamie Eales flew the Haydon Bridge flag at Corbridge recently, by reaching the semi-finals of the Corbridge Annual Pairs Competition. Their route to the final was unfortunately blocked by Otterburn, who went on to defeat Newbrough in the final.

The Club's Annual General Meeting took place on Thursday 28th March. News of this event will be given in next months report.

Once again, we ask for anyone who would like to play bowls to come along to the Community Centre on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm. Practice nights and matches are all based on a friendly and sociable atmosphere, and everyone is made to feel most welcome. Admission is £2.00 for adults and 50p for juniors (under 16)

White Jack



the shaftoe charities

The Governors/Trustees wish it to be known that after 18 years of serving the Body, Mr J P Richardson has retired as Clerk.

From 1st April 2002 the position of Clerk will pass to:

Mr R A D Snowdon.

*All communications should be addressed to: The Office,
Shaftoe Terrace, Haydon Bridge
NE47 6BW as usual.*

Telephone: 01 434 688 871

E-mail to: news4shaftoe@aol.com

"IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME!"

Most children need only the opportunity and an imaginative approach to the learning of different languages.

Teaching language through singing is one of the most effective methods Elena Parkin, of Brigwood, knows.

She has written, composed and transliterated a versatile counting song "*Ena Bouli*" as a musical introduction to the Greek language; a new song for Easter or a new nursery rhyme in Greek and English, for children, parents and teachers to share and enjoy together.

Initially, she taught the song to the children of Chillingham Road Primary School, in Newcastle, who received it with such tremendous enthusiasm, even drawing their own illustrations from time to time that Elena has now visited Shaftoe Trust First School and shared the experience with Years 3 and 4. After Easter, she will return to work again with Year 4.

The original idea arose from a glance at a Willow Pattern plate, closely followed by the need to stand in unexpectedly when a class teacher stepped out of her classroom to answer a telephone call. The words of the first verse lingered and the rest of the song grew during a trip to the Trosachs, a few days later.

Because the song was received with such enthusiasm and because its popularity continued, Elena then considered the song's potential as a book but it was not until she met the artist, Sylvia Lynch, that her idea came to fruition.

Now, "*Ena Bouli*" has been published with beautiful illustrations by Sylvia Lynch, which have added a wonderful new dimension to Elena's original idea.

The book was launched at Waterstone's, Newcastle store in Grey Street last month, when children from Chillingham Road Primary School were joined by others to sing the song.

Singing "*Ena Bouli*" together is a fun experience, which will also encourage the many children, who already take their holidays in Cyprus and Greece to develop an interest in the Greek language.

Copies of the book (ISBN 9963-8658-0-1) can be obtained direct from Elena at: "*The Rambler*"

**Brigwood,
Haydon Bridge,
Northumberland,
NE47:6EX**

or from

Chillingham Road Primary School

(e-mail: mike.parkin@chillingham.newcastle.sch.uk)

Cheques should be made payable to the publisher or to the school for the sum of £4.99 per copy (to cover the cost of the book, first class postage and packing)

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THE ADVENTURES OF AN OLD AGE TRAVELLER – by S.E.P**SHELTER FROM THE STORM.**

Moss and ivy snake across the Oak door lintel like curling green fingers, and tall spindly grasses inch their way between the splintered cracks in the ageing door frame. The rain bleaches down against her back as Barbara turns the cast iron ring handle and pushes her heavy bulk against the rotting wood.

Creaking and groaning wea-

rily, the door inches ajar scraping along the ground, taking grass and weeds in its wake. A dank musty smell greets Barbara as she enters the vestibule and the darkness blinds her momentarily. Her eyes soon become accustomed to the blackness and beneath her boots Barbara crunches the leaves and twigs blown in on the wind.

Shaking herself dry, raindrops shower the stone flags, and the clatter of her wood-smoked kettle and tin drinking cup shatter the eerie silence within. Barbara shivers but not with cold, she's used to that. She moves slowly into the main part of the building where snatches of grey light peep in through broken stained glass windows. Neglect and misuse are evident all around her, yet the church offers a haven from the storm and Barbara can rest her weary old body here awhile safe in the tranquillity of timeless solitude.

Then she spies the hunched up figure in the front row pew.

"Another weary soul" muses Barbara, "just like myself, driven inside for shelter".

She shuffles down the aisle her movements causing a noisy rush of wings to flap wildly as a flock of roosting starlings fly from the rafters and flutter to and fro across the eaves.

There is no movement from the hooded figure in the front

pew. It remains oblivious to Barbara's intrusion. Barbara stands before the altar, neglected and unused like the church itself. She experiences a feeling of regret tinged with sadness as she gazes down upon the relics of the past.

The once red and gold altar cloth now reduced to nothing more than a moth-ridden grimy rag. Barbara could almost feel the presence of past worshippers crying out their sorrow at the downfall of their church. Her cold, whiskered hairs stood rigid on the back of her grimy neck.

"You silly old fool" she chided herself heaving her body into the nearest pew seat.

Barbara rummaged inside her jacket pocket for her tinder-box,

"Smoking in the Lords house, who ever heard of such a thing" mused Barbara as she puffed away on dried leaves and a smidgen of tobacco cadged the day before.

Still no movement from her fellow companion across the aisle. From where she sat the crouched up figure resembled nothing more than a bundle of old dirty rags. Barbara sniffed loudly, and snorted her disgust at being ignored. She spat into the aisle while clanking her meagre possessions in noisy irritation.

Still no response. Barbara's curiosity overcame her temper. She shuffled closer. *"You could do with a good meal"* she thought feeling positively obese beside the spider-like form huddled on the bench. As she drew nearer a strange smell of decay filled her nostrils and something scurried over her foot. Probably a rat thought Barbara reaching out to touch the figure at her side. Something fell over the edge of the pew rail and rolled along the stone slabs in front of the altar steps. Barbara watched in silence as the bones collapsed and lay buried beneath the folds of the cloak.

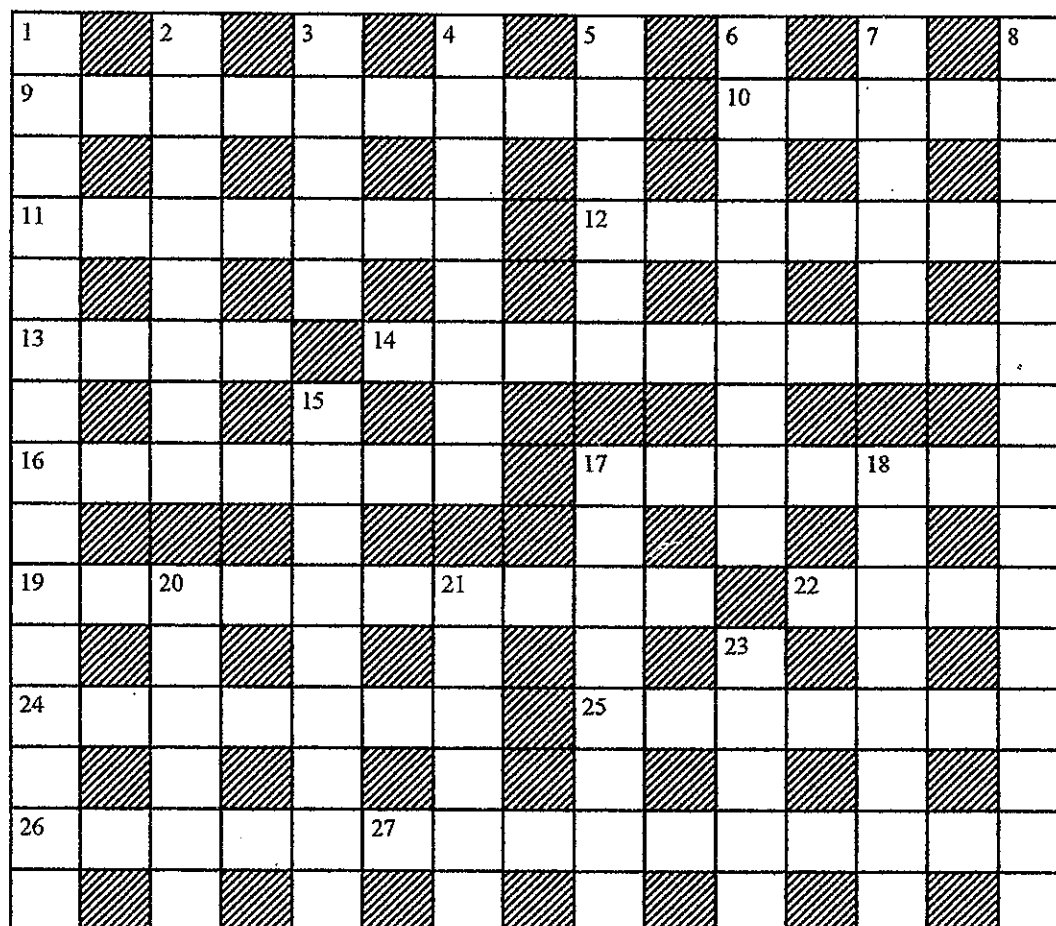
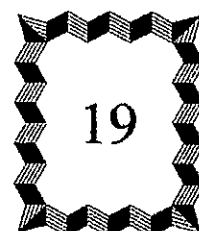
Barbara proved to be as agile as anyone when she wished to be; she scrambled and fumbled her way back along the pew, in such haste, her feathered Trilby fell off. She bent down to retrieve her most treasured possession only to look into the socket-less eyes of the skeleton head lying there. Grabbing the Trilby Barbara turned and rushed back up the church aisle puffing and panting like a worn-out old steam train. Her heart pounding, her head spinning she fled leaving the church door wide open behind her.

The wind was blowing furiously, twirling the leaves and debris along the path while the rain continued its relentless downpour. But Barbara didn't care. She felt safe now, with no dark secrets to haunt her dreams, she was back where she belonged, out on the road.

The £10 Crossword

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Entries to be received by the Editor on or before MONDAY 22nd April 2002.*Best of luck**Please hand in your entry to:**any of the businesses indicated at the top of Page 2**or by post to: The Editor, Wheelsteads, Woodhall Mill, Haydon Bridge, NE47 6AS***ACROSS**

9. Country reputedly has the world's longest coastline. (9)
 10. Invaded French beach. (5)
 11. Britten's Albert cured. (7)
 12. Candlelight? (7)
 13. In which I complete childrens author. (4)
 14. Contains 1 down. (3,7)
 16. Burn fruit loaf. (7)
 17. Old German city. (7)
 19. One of a joke trio or quartet. (10)
 22. Rock. (4)
 24. Well rounded construction. (7)
 25. Chinese shown in relief or mosaic. (7)
 26. Fruit with cartoon character connections. (5)
 27. Features in 17 down. (5,5)

DOWN

1. Preserved veg. (7,8)
 2. Take up, on or in. (8)
 3. Displease. (5)
 4. Carpenter's choice or butcher's advice. (4,4 / 3,5)
 5. Russian trained dog. (6)
 6. Praised. (9)
 7. Scramble wager on highest note. (3,3)
 8. Pace Lancashire town stories. (10,5)
 15. Spice fruit knife and I. (9)
 17. Scale lovely military centre. (8)
 18. Rules palace a trying place. (8)
 20. Strike gear in architectural form. (6)
 21. Service to which old PM and learner contribute. (6)
 23. Boat. (5)

Solution to Crossword number 18 will be found on page 14.

HAYDON NEWS WEB SITE: www.haydonbridge.demon.co.uk/

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THE MEETING PLACE

**AT
THE METHODIST CHURCH**

Come and Join your friends for
Coffee and Refreshments on
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am - 12 noon

FAX facilities

Warm welcome to all

HAYDON BRIDGE UNITED ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CLUB

HBUAFC hold their monthly meeting on the first Tuesday
of every month at 7:30pm in the Lounge of the *Railway
Hotel* where representatives of every football team in the
village are invited to attend.

This meeting is also open to members of the public.

NEED HELP WITH

Tax Returns, Accounts, Book-keeping etc ?

Ring

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Tel: 01 434 605 666

We Can Help YOU

Committee of the 'Friends of Haydon Bridge'

Charles Thomas (Chairman) Mike Parkin (Vice Chairman)

Elena Parkin (Secretary) Alistair Bowen (Treasurer) Richard Snowdon (Editor)

'Mitch' Mitchell Pauline Tulip Sylvia Mitchell Louis Parkin Jacqueline Outterside

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HAYDON & ALLEN VALLEYS MEDICAL PRACTICE

(Haydon Bridge Health Centre)

Monday to Friday: 8.00am to 12.00 noon
2.00pm to 6.00pm

Doctors consult from: 8.00am to 11.00am
3.00pm to last appointment at
5.30pm

All phone calls for appointments and visits, including 'out of hours':

01 434 684 216

All phone calls for dispensing or prescriptions:

01 434 688 351

E-mail address: **sford-hb@dircon.co.uk**

Web-site: **www.sford-hb.dircon.co.uk/hc**

MUSIC and MOVEMENT

Calling all Mums! Did you know that there is a Music and Movement group running in Haydon Bridge?

We meet at the Methodist Church on Friday afternoons (1.10pm and 1.50pm) during term time.

This is a fun get-together for Mums and pre-school children alike which involves singing, instrument playing and movement with coffee and orange juice served afterwards.

Please contact **Susie Steven** on:

01 434 674 260 for further details.



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Hexham
NE47 5DG*

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Contact Malcolm or Rebecca for information

HAYDON BRIDGE JUDO CLUB.

**Keep Fit and Have Fun!
Young and Old welcome.**

On Tuesdays at Haydon Bridge High School

Juniors: 6pm - 7pm

Seniors: 7pm - 9pm

BJA Qualified Coaches

Contact Michael on: 01434 684 783

Tynedale Citizens Advice Bureau

We hold a free, confidential, independent advice and information session at:

**The Health Centre, Haydon Bridge
on Monday afternoons
from 2.00pm until 4.00pm.**

We can give you advice and information on:

Social Security Benefits

Consumer Rights

Relationship issues

Employment

Money Problems

Problems at work

Housing

Legal Proceedings

And much moretry us!

We can help you fill in forms, draft letters, negotiate by telephone or letter, and prepare Social Security reviews or appeals.

Ring the Health Centre (**01 434 684 216**) to make an appointment or, if required, to arrange for a home visit.

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NE47 6ND

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Kevin Welton Tel: 016977 41327

WHIST DRIVES

Langley Village Hall
Fortnightly on Saturdays
at 7pm.
50p entrance
(Everyone welcome)

Solution to crossword (18)

Ten (10) entries were received.
Nine (9) were correct.

Mrs E Jukes
Mrs Rene Armstrong
B. Pearson
Susan Stephenson
Rosemary Shout
A. Phillips
Philida Irving
Denis Bell
A Scott

TINY TOTS

From Birth to 3 years.

The sessions, run on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, from 9.15 to 11.15 at St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, aim to provide a friendly environment where parents / carers can meet, have a coffee and chat, whilst the children play and have fun.

Cost: £1 for the first child, 50p for each additional child.

For further information contact

Gina Davidson on: 01 434 684 918 or call in at one of the sessions.

PLAYGROUP - From 2 years 6 months

Playgroup currently runs on Monday and Friday mornings from 9.15 to 11.45. Each session provides your child with the opportunity to learn through play and to experience a wide range of activities. Children learn, through play, to communicate effectively and happily, at their own pace, with other children and adults. Playgroup is run by a qualified Nursery Nurse Teacher plus assistants.

Cost: £3 per session.

For further information contact Gina Davidson on: 01 434 684 918 or call in at one of the sessions.

St Cuthbert's Playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.



£10 winner out of the hat:

B. Pearson

S	C	A	F	E	L	L		A	R	A	R	A	T
C		F		D		O		N		A		A	H
R	U	R	A	L		W	H	E	R	N	S	I	D
E		I		I		E		W		D		L	R
E	C	C	E	N	T	R	I	C	S		A	L	M
S		A		G				L				E	P
				H	O	P	E	A	N	D	P	R	A
M		C		A		O		I		E		Y	
C	H	R	O	M	O	S	O	M	E	S			
K		I				T				P		P	A
I	O	N	A			I	M	M	A	T	E	R	I
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E		E		G		L		L		T		L	R
Y	E	S	T	O	R			E	V	E	R	E	S

'THE FRIENDS OF HAYDON BRIDGE'

Formal Committee Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the **MONDAY** before the fourth **THURSDAY** of each month at The Community Centre, Haydon Bridge.

(The General Public is welcome at the first part of every meeting.)

Any items for discussion must be notified in writing to the Chairman one week in advance of the meeting so that Committee members can be advised, enabling worthwhile discussion to take place. The Chairman will then advise the person concerned of the right to attend.

EDITORIAL POLICY OF THE HAYDON NEWS

The editorial policy of the *Haydon News* is ultimately the responsibility of the Committee of the 'Friends of Haydon Bridge', although day-to-day responsibility is delegated to the Editorial Committee of the *Haydon News*. Our intention is always to ensure that the content of the *Haydon News* is as fair and factually correct as possible. Any complaints concerning editorial policy should be addressed in writing to the Chairman of the 'Friends of Haydon Bridge', and will be considered by and receive a formal response from the Committee of the 'Friends of Haydon Bridge'. Complaints other than those made above will not be entertained.

The Editorial Committee reserves the right to decide which letters are to be published, and to alter or shorten letters when necessary. Anonymous letters will NOT be published. A nom-de-plume may be used provided that the Editorial Committee has been advised of the writer's name and address.

Charles Thomas, (Chairman)
South View, Heugh House Lane,
Haydon Bridge, NE47 6ND

DEADLINE: All contributions to the *Haydon News* to reach the Editor no later than Monday 22nd April 2002.

CHURCH PAGE

CLERGY MESSAGE

Canon Vincent Ashwin

It sometimes bothers me that we in the churches have to spend so much time dealing with buildings. In the last five years, Haydon Bridge has seen a brand-new Methodist Church built, and necessary repairs done to St John's Roman Catholic Church. Now St Cuthbert's has launched a very large appeal. We have also seen the closure of 'The Congs' – the United Reformed Church by the level crossing, now being used constructively as art studios.

In Cramlington, there are three Church of England congregations that meet in school halls; the halls are hired for Sunday mornings and weekday evenings where necessary. These are 'church plants' – new congregations that have been planted in new areas of housing. In Africa, they often hold church services in school classrooms, or people's homes, or in the shade of trees. In the Bible, we read how they met in people's houses for 'the breaking of bread and the prayers'.

But now, in the English language, the same word *church* is used for the people, the activities, and the building. (I belong to the Church; I go to church on Sundays; we meet in the church.) Buildings seem very important in the scheme of things. Why?

A church building says something about God. Durham Cathedral, which is so impressive that it's counted a World Heritage Site, stands for the greatness of God. All those centuries ago, they wanted to build a massive church that towered over the city and countryside. God was in charge; the building had to show that. Church buildings make a statement, that God is there among the people. So in down-town areas like Scotswood and Byker in Newcastle, we are reluctant to close churches, even though hardly anyone attends services, because it could feel that God and the Church are abandoning the people.

Every church building says something about God. The new Methodist church makes a statement: God is here in busyness as well as in worship. The Catholic church says: Come apart, up the hill, to worship God, as Jesus went to be on his own to pray. St Cuthbert's seems to say, in its stained glass and size and tower: you can depend on God; he's here in the heart of the village. Haydon Old Church, as adapted in the 19th century, says: Here is a God of stillness and intimacy.

So how do we use our church buildings? If we had launched our appeal at St Cuthbert's, just to provide a place for an average congregation of 30 people, then it would not be justified. We could have asked the Methodists or Catholics if we could share their building. But St Cuthbert's is part of the history of the village. It stands on the main street. And it is used for village occasions, like the carol services of the two schools, major funerals, and occasional concerts. Our task is to make it welcoming, by providing easy access for wheelchairs and prams, a toilet and kitchen facilities, etc, as well as keeping

March / April 2002



christians together in haydon bridge
AN INDEPENDENT SUPPLEMENT
TO THE HAYDON NEWS

WHO AND WHERE

The names and phone numbers of the clergy who minister in Haydon Bridge

Rev David Hasson, with the Methodist congregation
The Manse, Moorview, Haltwhistle 320.051

Father Leo Pyle, with St John's Catholic Church
St John's Presbytery, North Bank 684.265

Canon Vincent Ashwin, with St Cuthbert's C of E
The Vicarage, Station Yard 684.307

WHITHER AGRICULTURE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY?

Wednesday 29 May 2002
At Hexham Agricultural Mart Function Suite
5.30 for 6.00pm

A consultation organised by the churches' regional commission, chaired by the Anglican bishop and URC moderator. Input from Professor Philip Lowe of Newcastle University, Mr J Dronsfield of Kirkley Hall, and the principal of Northumberland College.

Attendance is open to all.

To help establish numbers, phone 0191.373.5453 or 01434.684.307 (the vicar) if you plan to go.

it water-tight. If the biggest church in Haydon Bridge was allowed to fall into ruin, it would reflect badly on the whole village.

30 years ago, the church in industrial County Durham where I was curate launched an appeal for repairs. I grumbled, "Surely we should send all the money to OXFAM instead, to feed the hungry." My attitude changed, strangely, when I worked in Africa; the people there – while sending money each year to African countries that were even worse off than them – raised money for church buildings, as a sign of how dedicated they were to the Christian cause. Buildings showed that they cared.

So church buildings are not only useful; they are also a sign.

METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES

April 3 2.00pm Women's Own

Sunday April 7

10.00am Mrs Margaret Weatherson
6.00pm Mr Roger Anthony

Sunday April 14

10.00am Mr Patrick Eavis (family serv)
6.00pm Dr Lindsay Gray

April 17 2.00pm Women's Own

Sunday April 21

10.00am B Ridley
6.00pm Doborah, Mallett

Sunday April 28

10.00am John Green
6.00pm Valerie Anthony

Sunday May 5

Usual services.

WORKING AMONG THE YOUNG

Two youth clubs are now operating in the village, to supplement the long-standing work done in Haydon Bridge's Methodist Church for the younger age group. The work for young children is led by Kathleen Armstrong and a group of volunteers. On a recent Friday, they were seen making Easter nests, and other craft work to suit the season.

On Monday nights at the Community Centre, David Matthews and his team lead the 9-13 year-olds. David is the youth worker sponsored by CHRISTIANS TOGETHER IN HAYDON BRIDGE and operating with great support from the Youth and Community Department at the High School.

David needs volunteer helpers. If you want to learn more about what's involved, phone one of the clergy (see over the page) or David himself on 01661.886.062. Nearly two dozen young people have been attending these meetings.

On Thursdays, the 13+ group meets, and 17 or 18 have been attending; most of them have been coming consistently for about nine months. Some of them have volunteered to be helpers at the Holiday Club to be run in the first week of the school summer holidays.

Much of David Matthews' work is done in schools in the area. The primary focus is in Haydon Bridge High School and Queen Elizabeth High School in Hexham. Nearly one third of his time is sponsored by the Hexham churches. This work includes taking school assemblies, teaching the guitar, and helping with Christian Union meetings.

CALENDAR FOR ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH

April 7th Second Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am All-Age Service of the Word
6.00pm Evensong, Haydon Old Church

Mon. 8th 'Lady Day' Communion, 2pm.

Wed. 10th 7.30pm Worship Group.

April 14th Third Sunday of Easter

10.30am Parish Communion and Sermon

Wed. 17th 7.30pm Church annual meetg

April 21st Fourth Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Prayer & Sermon.

Wed. 24th 7.30pm Mothers' Union

April 28th Fifth Sunday of Easter

10.30am Parish Communion, Sermon

Wed. May. 1st 7.30pm Appeal Comm'ee

May 5th 6th Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am All-Age Holy Communion
6.30pm Deanery Service, Allendale

St Cuthbert's Appeal progress

Many thanks to those who have returned envelopes with donations to St Cuthbert's Renovation Appeal. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of some people in the village. By the last week of March, we had received just over £8000. This is a great start, and means that the first phase of work can begin in a few months' time, once we have got the necessary planning permission from the church and District Council authorities.

Vincent Ashwin.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The annual meeting of St Cuthbert's parish is on April 17th. This is a chance to hear about the progress of the parish, and to elect the new officers for the next year. All members on the church's electoral roll are invited, and glass of wine will be served in the middle. The vicar will give a 10-minute presentation on where some of the Diocese's money goes!

Special services coming up

The new season's services at Haydon Old Church begin this month. In the next six months there are six services, all at 6.00pm, beginning on April 7th.

There will also be a "Rogation Service" for the Hexham Deanery at St Cuthbert's Allendale on Sunday May 5th. This is an annual service for the blessing of the crops and fields.

SERVICES AT ST JOHN OF BEVERLEY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass each Sunday at 9.30am.

Mass at 11.0 at Haltwhistle each Sunday.

Mass on weekdays (except Mondays), at 10.00am, either at St John's on Tuesday and Wednesday, and at St Wilfrid's Haltwhistle on Thurs, Fridays, Saturdays.

HAYDON OLD CHURCH Evensong, Sundays at 6.00pm

April 7th, May 26th, July 7th, August 4th,
August 25th, September 22nd (Harvest)

HOPE OUT OF HARDSHIP

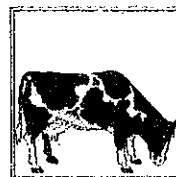
You are invited to a service

In Hexham Abbey

On Market Day, Tuesday May 14th

At 12.00 noon

To mark the end of Foot & Mouth Disease



Participants include people from tourist businesses, local clergy, vets, NFU, two Haydon Bridge farmers, etc.

Lunch will be provided afterwards at Trinity Methodist Church, Beaumont St.

Christian Aid We believe in life before death

PUT THE DATE OF CHRISTIAN
WEEK IN YOUR DIARIES -
MAY 12TH - 18TH

With a service at the Methodist Church on
Sunday May 12th to dedicate collectors.

Christian Aid's special emphasis at present is on those orphaned by the AIDS pandemic. 100,000s of children in Sub-Saharan Africa have no parents because of the wide-spread nature of AIDS.

Photographer Don McCullin visited several African countries recently:

A man opens the door when I knock; he is wearing no shoes, and has two anxious children with him. Obviously they have seen their mother die, and they are clinging to their last hope that their father doesn't die...

Christian Aid Week gives us all a chance help the world's weakest children.

CHEER UP! SPRING'S HERE...**FRYING ICE CUBES**

Every Wednesday many of the Tynedale GPs forgather in the Hexham General Hospital Post Graduate Centre for an educational lecture preceded by a free lunch – you would not believe the existential angst and separation anxiety (from our moral scruples) that preceded our allowing the drug companies to pay for the lunches. Last Wednesday we had what was, arguably, the best lecture in living memory. 'How the scientific view of ageing is changing and why we should take note' was the topic. The lecturer, Dr. Tom Kirkwood from the University of Newcastle, delivered the Reith Lectures on the BBC on the same subject last year. Several of the audience, when posing questions to the speaker afterwards, made it very clear that they were 'only asking for a friend!'

Surveys have shown that a quarter of 16-24 year olds think that old age begins before fifty (toe rags!), whereas those of us in that vicinity know that it always starts at least fifteen years older than we are – old joke but still with some mileage in it. Most people with whom I discuss this agree that, in their mind, their self image is of a late teen to early twenty year old, it's only the bit on the outside that ages much. We live on average twice as long as people from two hundred years ago. Life expectancy has increased by ten years in the last fifty years.

It has been suggested that our genes program us to die, that we have built in obsolescence and a predetermined life span. This is quite definitely not so. From the moment of conception we are ageing because we accumulate damage to our chemistry that can only be partially repaired – ageing is the accumulation of damage at the cellular level. The wrinkles, loss of vigour, and all the rest are a consequence of the damage. There are many causes of the damage – chemicals in the environment (many naturally occurring), the oxygen in the air around us, radiation (including sunlight) etc. Our cells are marvellously equipped to repair us but even the best defences fail under the relentless onslaught to which we are all subject.

Oxygen? How can that be harmful? Without it we die! Can't live with it and can't live without it, I am afraid. Oxygen is one of the most chemically reactive elements in creation, it will react with almost anything and certainly with all of the chemicals of which we are composed. All of the structures, proteins, membranes and genes in our cells are continuously damaged as they come into contact with the oxygen that is transported to them by our blood. Our cells need oxygen to produce the energy that powers us but, like any machine, simply running them wears them out.

Our cells have 'antioxidant' defences that we may be able to bolster by careful attention to diet but perfect defence and perfect repair is beyond all of us. There is no undisputed evidence that any form of supplement makes any difference but the speaker at the meeting listed the 'most likely' candidates as Selenium, Zinc and the antioxidant vitamins A, C and E. The speaker declared openly, before being asked, that he took no supplements of any kind. Of all the mammal species, humans have the best developed cellular antioxidant defences, which is why we are amongst the longest lived.

Genes account for about 25% of our longevity. As ever, chose your parents with care! Other factors include nutrition, lifestyle, environment and chance. I understand it to be the case that the only factor, over which we have any substantial degree of voluntary control and which is a known to have an influence, is nutrition, in that UNDER-nutrition confers longer life. Yet another reason to avoid being overweight. Thin appears to be more durable.

Experiments done in recent years show that programs of regular exercise for a group of eighty year olds caused changes in their cells and levels of fitness that equated with their being made twenty years younger. That is a quite stunning change and one to which all but the most gravely disabled can aspire.

Positive mental attitude is also a significant factor. Fatalism, denial, negative stereotyping, tunnel vision, abdication of personal respon-

sibility and the eternal mirage of the 'quick fix just around the corner' all undermine the health and welfare of older people. If you think old, act old and acquiesce passively in mental and physical decline then guess what – you'll be old! USE IT OR LOSE IT!

This evening I potted into the kitchen and found my wife frying ice cubes. I viewed this development with some concern, as I think any spouse might. It would be an uncommon presentation of dementia but the culinary vagaries of some 'cognitively challenged' senior persons can be surprising. When visiting an elderly man, Mother, in her health visitor days, was offered a bowl of Brazil nuts, only to be informed later that the chocolate that had originally encased them had been delicious.

This evening, all was revealed in a trice, the ice cubes were, in fact, wine cubes – leftovers frozen for later use in cooking. The paella was exceptional.

CALLOW YOUTH

Few, if any, young people have a meaningful grasp of the scope of experience and knowledge that lies in the minds of older people. This is such a shame and certainly justifies the old adage about youth being wasted on the young. On the other hand, if one could implant an older mind in a youthful body – well – precious little economically productive work would get done and no error!

Official US Department of Defence statistics show that the one and a half million GIs that served in Britain and Europe during World War 2 had intercourse with, on average, twenty five women each during their stay. Students of WW2 history will be familiar with the terms 'utility furniture' and 'utility clothing', they were items produced in wartime that were satisfactory for the purpose but very basic. There was a common saying about 'utility knickers' – "one Yank and they're off!"

So, when the pleasantly batty old dot in the chair, who usually responds to 'Gran', is looking more animated than usual, remember that it might not be dementia that's making her grin persistently, it might be reminiscence. Might be best not to disturb her just now...

BREAST FEEDING

Unbelievable but true, the Speaker of the House of Commons persists in denying women MPs permission to breast feed their babies in the House. This coming at a time when bottle feeding is becoming distinctly unusual.

There is a major effort being made to encourage breast feeding by all mums, the Baby Friendly Initiative, as you will see from the display that Janet Moss (Health Visitor) has put up in the health centre.

Globally, ONE MILLION LIVES PER DAY are saved by breast feeding. This includes all the children's lives and also the lives of older children and adults who have been sufficiently favourably influenced by breast feeding that they can survive later illness. There is now good evidence that breast fed people are actually permanently changed for the better and are biologically different from bottle fed people.

Gastroenteritis, respiratory infections, ear infections, urinary tract infections, necrotising enterocolitis, juvenile diabetes, coeliac disease, Crohn's disease, dental caries and many other conditions are all known to be lower in breast fed people. For every 1% increase in breast feeding the NHS would save £500,000 per year on treating gastroenteritis alone. Benefits for women include reductions in premenopausal breast cancer, ovarian cancer and hip fractures in later life.

This practice already has a very high proportion of breastfeeding Mums. 100% would be brilliant. We very strongly encourage all Mums to consider and try breastfeeding and will give maximum support to their efforts. Breastfeeding in the public spaces in the health centre is positively encouraged and for those who would prefer a quiet room apart we can provide that too.

Steve Ford.