

# THE HAYDON NEWS

July 2022

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## Welcome to our July issue

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue and to Tony Messner for his cover image.

I've had a few enquiries as to the loss of our crossword and puzzle pages recently. I'm afraid that it simply comes down to the amount of time it takes to put the magazine together. If anyone fancies taking a shift as editor, or is able to lend a few hours each month, please do get in touch.

If you'd like to submit something for our August issue, please send it to us by 12<sup>th</sup> July.

All the best  
Alex

editor@haydon-news.co.uk

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### Charity quiz nights at the General Havelock, Haydon Bridge

Our May quiz contributed £211 to fundraising for the wonderful Platinum Jubilee celebrations in the village on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you everyone.

We plan to hold our next quiz on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July. The target for our charity giving at this event is likely to be the Tynedale Hospice at Home. Nominations for future quizzes are welcome.

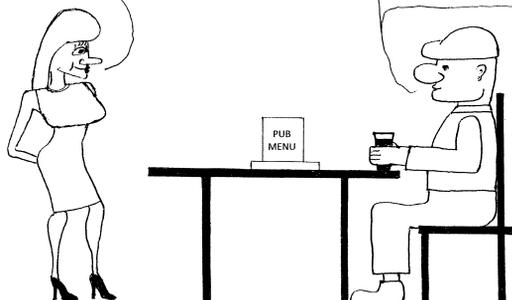
*If you have any community news you'd like us to include, please email editor@haydon-news.co.uk*

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### RAYDON FRIDGE and DUSTY BINN

I'm taking names for the pub's sea boat fishing trip, Raydon, the captain will provide life jackets and distress flares.

I don't mind wearing the life jacket, Dusty, but no way am I wearing ripped bell-bottomed jeans.



### Ice Cream Van of the Year

Zoe Philipson of Tyne Valley Ices in Hexham has won the biggest prize in the ice cream sector – Ice Cream Van of the Year.

Zoe won the award at the National Ice Cream Competition 2022, run by the Ice Cream Alliance, the UK's ice cream industry trade association. Zoe was up against two other finalists and won after being interviewed by a panel of industry experts. Zoe won the award for her exceptional customer service and dedication to the industry and to her local community:

“Winning Ice Cream Van of the Year means the world to me,” explains an excited Zoe. “After many years of hard work, dedication and sacrifice it's fantastic to be crowned the best in the country. It was a fantastic experience from start to finish and I can't wait to see what the future brings. I'd like to thank the people of Haydon Bridge for the support they have given me and the business over the years.”

Zoe joined the business full-time after finishing her A levels, a little over 10 years ago. When she took over the business it had one van. It now runs five vans, two trikes and a barrow. In addition to their weekly rounds, Tyne Valley Ices regularly attends corporate, charity, school, village and wedding events throughout Northumberland. It also maintains regular slots at caravan parks, playgrounds and care homes. Ice Cream Van of the Year, known as the Mobiler of the Year in the trade, is awarded every year and has been running for over 70 years. Entrants are judged on their customer service, product quality, local community support, food hygiene excellence and a host of other attributes. All entrants are whittled down to three finalists who are interviewed by ice cream industry experts at the Ice Cream and Artisan Food Show 2022 in Harrogate.

# Haydon Parish Council Meeting

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAYDON PARISH COUNCIL AT 7.30PM ON THE 26<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2022, AT HAYDON BRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE.** You can find the minutes of each meeting as soon as they are published at [www.haydon-bridge.co.uk](http://www.haydon-bridge.co.uk)

**Present :** J. Bates, I. Burrows, E. Faulks, B. Howard, A. Kirsopp, R. Snowdon, J. Keyte, A. Sharp, and J. Thompson; members of the public and C. McGivern (mins).

## **Peter Fletcher- Neighbourhood Plan –**

Peter Fletcher explained that the Plan had gone to NCC and then for independent examination. At this stage it had been passed, subject to various changes. The Plan should always add things to the planning process and not duplicate anything in the County Plan, and changes were largely to ensure this. NCC rejigged the Plan and now the final version will go to referendum on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.

Mr Fletcher said that there were two key things that the PC needed to know regarding the referendum - they can encourage people to vote, but they are not legally allowed to tell people to vote yes. The notice of referendum is now on the parish noticeboard and on the website. The polling cards will have the following question on them –

**“Do you want Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”**

If it is agreed at the referendum stage and comes into force then NCC planning officers will have to use it when making planning decisions. There will be a two page spread about the plan in the Haydon News in mid-June. Posters will also be put up around the village explaining more about the Plan, and NCC will have another article in the Hexham Courant closer to the referendum. The independent examiner was very impressed by the consultation and the weight of evidence for the plan. Mr Fletcher thanked Parish Cllrs who had attended a workshop on community led housing, and said that there was now a developer in place for the site west of Langley Gardens. This is Gentoo Homes. The idea is to get affordable housing that is community led. He said that it is possible to get funding for this, if you have specific proposals in place. The vehicle for this will be the Development Trust, who will change their legal status to do this. If this goes ahead then the homes created won't be at risk of “right to buy”, and can be retained as housing that the community controls. Finally, Mr Fletcher said that he was aware that the PC had had a meeting with a developer who was interested in the site at East Lands End. He requested PC approval to approach them too re community led housing. This approval was given.

## **Public participation –**

Chris Armstrong explained that he had recently opened Oddfellows Café on Shaftoe Street. He noted that coming from the A69 there were no brown signs showing the amenities available in Haydon Bridge. He felt that this was a missed opportunity for the village. Cllr Faulks said that this had been raised by the PC before. Cllr Sharp said that there were brown signs for Haltwhistle and Greenhead. Cllr Bates asked who would pay for the brown signs and Cllr Sharp explained that NCC will supply but not pay for them. Mr Fletcher said that a good attempt to get brown signs had been made after the bypass. He thought now that the Neighbourhood Plan was close to implementation it might be a good time to try again. Cllr Sharp said that he would be happy to help with funding, although it suggested that the total cost is likely to be in the region of £10-15,000 as signs would be needed at both sides of the village. Mr Armstrong said that he would be happy to give something toward the cost and he felt other businesses would be too. Cllr Bates also said that there were legal stipulations as to where the signs could be sited on the road. Cllr Sharp said he would investigate and Mr Fletcher will send him an email linking the suggestion to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr Armstrong said that Haydon Bridge was a lovely place but did not have an attraction, he felt that the old bridge should be the centre of the village. Elsewhere he has noticed large black planters have been used in locations where the local authority wants tourists to be. He wondered if some could be installed on the bridge filled with poppies, along with benches for people to sit in. People regularly stop on the bridge to take photos. Mr and Mrs Wallis had mentioned to him that in the past the bridge was used for a market, and he wondered if it could be used for an antiques fair in the summer months.

**Apologies –** were received from Cllrs Charlton and Thornhill.

**Declarations of interest –** none were received.

**Minutes of the previous meeting –** having been circulated, were approved and signed.

**Report from Northumberland County Council –** Rumble strips on the road going up to the cemetery in front of Shaftoe School, have been replaced. Cllr Sharp said he was not at all happy that the gully beside the War Memorial on Church Street has not been attended to and he had chased NCC up on this matter as water is again pooling on the kerb side.

Ditches at the various locations around Langley and Haydon Bridge are being attended to and he asked anyone who knows of areas which need attention to let him know. The re-surfacing work on the road from North Bank to Grindon is in the programme to be carried out in the summer months. With regards to the work on the road on the A686 from the junction on the A69 to Esp Hill Cllr Sharp had been in touch with Technical Services as was not happy about the delay in getting this work done, and they had responded as follow -

*"I have looked into this with the team and your concerns about a September start. I do appreciate your concerns about the current state of the road. In considering the overall programme, resource availability and preparation works needed, we have been able to bring the start date forward to 22<sup>nd</sup> August. I appreciate this isn't as soon as you would have liked but it is the earliest we can carry out the work. In the meantime we will keep it monitored so that any actionable defects are repaired and the length is kept safe for traffic".*

Cllr Sharp was concerned about a number of planning applications in the village. A feasibility study on the road improvements beside Woodhall Mill is still progressing and Richard Snowdon continues to work with NCC on this scheme.

With regards to the Queen's Jubilee funding, Langley Village was awarded £250.00.

Cllr Sharp had also been attending to several other matters on behalf of individual residents.

#### **Highways –**

Cllr Bates said that the flashing speed sign still says 30 mph. Cllr Kirsopp said that as you approach the village from the west there are no white lines in the middle of the road. Cllr Sharp will take a look at this.

Cllr Kirsopp said that the grass verge needed to be cut, directly past the access to the Showfield, as currently visibility is bad for motorists turning out at this point. A request had been received from NCC for the PC's three transport priorities for the next year. It was agreed to put forward – Cycle route to Hexham/Access onto the estate at Langley Gardens/Brown signs from the A69.

#### **Lighting – nothing to report.**

#### **Planning applications –**

**22/01761/FUL** - Kitchen extension, North Cottage, Haydon Bridge - HAYDON PARISH COUNCIL SUPPORTS THIS APPLICATION, WHICH RETAINS THE HISTORY OF THE BUILDING BY USING GLAZING TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF AN OPEN SPACE WHERE THERE WAS PREVIOUSLY ACCESS FOR A HORSE AND CARRIAGE.

**22/01762/LBC** - Listed building consent for kitchen extension, North Cottage, Haydon Bridge - HAYDON PARISH COUNCIL SUPPORTS THIS APPLICATION, WHICH RETAINS THE HISTORY OF THE BUILDING BY USING GLAZING TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF AN OPEN SPACE WHERE THERE WAS PREVIOUSLY ACCESS FOR A HORSE AND CARRIAGE.

**Risk assessment and Review of internal audit** – having been circulated both documents were approved.

**Accounts - as in budget.**

**i) Annual Governance for 2021-22 was completed and approved and signed.**

**ii) Statement of Accounts had been completed by the Clerk and was approved and signed.**

**Parish Council's bank account** - Cllr Faulks explained that the PC was considering changing bank accounts. HSBC now charge for cheques, as well as a monthly fee. The Co-op's Directplus account offered free banking for 30 months, then there is a charge of £7 a month. Free cheques are provided, as long as the account remains in credit above £1,000. All agreed that this was a good idea. In order to set this up the Clerk will need additional information from all signatories, and she will circulate an email about this.

#### **Parish projects**

a) Development Trust – Cllr Faulks said that the library was now open two days a week.

b) Climate champions – Cllr Howard said that there had been a constructive meeting and they were looking at community heating as part of this. He thought it should be possible to provide advice on community heating systems and perhaps feed this in when responding to planning applications. For example to install such a system on Ratcliffe Road from scratch would involve a huge cost in digging up the road etc, but it could perhaps be included in any scheme for the Strawberry Fields and get the go-ahead as part of a larger scheme.

c) Cllr Thompson said that the GITS had raised £300 for the Jubilee party, Julia Cooper's group had raised another £100 and Cllr Sharp had given £200. Pauline Wallis has ordered medals for the children and lots of volunteers have come forward to provide teas and coffees, and children's events. There will be snack vans and a cake on the day too.

#### **Any other business –**

Cllr Howard said that he had been contacted on a couple of occasions by people renting the vicarage and gone to have a look at the reported anti-social behaviour. He said that there were kids at the picnic area, but he felt they were just having fun. Mr Atkins said that in future he would contact the Police if this occurs again.

Cllr Kirsopp had been approached by parents with children at the Shaftoe School who were concerned about the safety of children walking to school and crossing the road as they came off the old bridge. Parked cars made visibility bad at this point. Cllr Richardson wondered whether "children crossing" signs might help. She also noted that most children cross outside the chip shop. Cllr Burrows said that in the past there had been a lollipop lady at this point. Cllr Sharp said that NCC would only be able to install signs if the school wrote to them.

Cllr Kirsopp said that the hanging baskets had been ordered and would arrive around mid-June.

Cllr Thompson proposed that a round of applause for Cllr Bates who had organised the purchase of Jubilee mugs for children in the village. This was unanimously agreed.

## Village picnic celebrates the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Community Picnic finally all came together on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June when crowds of locals descended on the green at Strother Close at 2pm.

Gazebos, tables, chairs, decorations, hats, medals, flags, sound equipment and much more had all been set up by a small but determined team from the Get It Together Society and willing volunteers. There was a hot food van run by Donna and her team selling burgers, hotdogs etc. and an ice cream van run by Zoe. There seemed to be a permanent queue at each van! We also had two teams providing tea/coffee and juice, one at the Community Centre side of the green and the other at the Methodist Church side. Many thanks to those who kept the refreshments coming. People brought picnics and sat on blankets or at the tables we'd set up and listened to the wonderful music of GAJA, Kevin Moore and Hayley Watson. They all really provided us with fantastic entertainment.

There was a great tombola which seemed to disappear in a flash as people scrambled for tickets. Well done to Karen and Christine who manned the stall – they needed a rest afterwards! £148 was raised plus £54 in donations towards future community events including the New Year's Eve Fireworks. Thank you to all who contributed.

We gave out lots of Jubilee memorabilia; hats, waving flags, noisy blowy things (sorry) and there were Jubilee medals for nursery and primary age children which Queenie helped to hand out. Hopefully by the time you see this, all children will have received one. There were also Jubilee mugs provided by the Parish Council.

Siobhan and her team sold plants to raise funds for flowers for our village public spaces. Thank you.

Amber and Doris entertained the children and what an amazing job they did. Lots of happy, smiley faces. I'm sure there were some very tired children that night! Wei was the face painter for the afternoon (Doris too) and there were some incredible creations by them. There was also a photo booth – I have no idea if anyone used it, put some photos on Haydon Bridge Matters if you did.



So many people made a huge effort by dressing in red, white and blue or in fancy dress. Queenie chose two lovely winners who got a box of chocolates each.

The piece de resistance arrived to be placed in its own gazebo surrounded by security tape. That's right – THE CAKE and oh boy! What a cake!!! Made by the super talented Kerry Parker at Cakes and Comfort, it was amazing and everyone that wanted some, got some!

Kevin said some nice words about our Queen, and we all raised a glass to her – after all that's why we were there. So, let's say again, 'Congratulations Ma'am on your 70 years reign'.



As 5pm approached, no-one seemed keen to move but we knew that there was a lot to do so the, by now very tired, small but determined team started clearing up. We were really grateful to be given a bit of help, especially when the rain started as we were taking the gazebos down. The end of a busy but lovely day and we made it home by 7pm.

We hope you all enjoyed it. We really need more people to join the Get It Together Society especially if we're to continue putting on events like this. We need younger people who can carry these events on into the future.

Thanks for coming.

**The Get It Together Society** - Contact Pauline on [pjwallis58@gmail.com](mailto:pjwallis58@gmail.com) or Pauline Johnson Wallis on Facebook

**Then and now** - Tula Thompson (nee Moore), age 4, with a crown attached to her dress, at the village celebrations for the Queen's coronation on 2 June 1953. Immediately behind Tula is her older sister, Sandy Brough (nee Moore) who was 14 at the time! Decades later, Tula was at the village picnic celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



# The New High Sheriff of Northumberland

A little over two months ago Colonel James Royds, who lives near Haydon Bridge, was installed as the new High Sheriff of Northumberland in a ceremony at Hexham Abbey. The office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular office in the United Kingdom after the Crown and dates from Saxon times. High Sheriffs have existed in England and Wales for over 1000 years. The original “Shire Reeve” was responsible to the King for the maintenance of law and order within a Shire or County and for the collection of taxes due to the Crown.

There was a time when High Sheriffs had considerable powers. They judged cases in monthly courts and acted as law enforcement officers. They could raise the full force of the military in a County and there were even military contingents led by High Sheriffs at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Sheriffs are mentioned in 27 of the 63 clauses of Magna Carta of 1215 and were clearly fundamental to the running of the shires. By 1254 a High Sheriff supervised the election to Parliament of two Knights of the Shire but their powers began to wane in the late thirteenth century as more and more functions of the State were centralised. The Exchequer was established to administer tax collection and to audit the Sheriff’s accounts and a system of itinerant Justices and Assizes were set up to hear and judge cases in court.

The selection of High Sheriffs was collated on a Sheriffs’ Roll and dates to King Henry VII. This roll of names was written on vellum – a thin membrane of calfskin – and is known as the “pricking ceremony”. Pricking a name on vellum was an early form of document security. Sheriffs had to collect unpopular taxes and could be personally liable for any shortfall.

There was, therefore, an incentive to try and avoid being selected for the appointment! No matter how high the bribe to be removed from the list, there was no hiding a hole pierced through the vellum against a nominee’s name. The practice of the Monarch pricking the names of High Sheriffs survives to this day and Her Majesty pricked James Royds’ name in March 2022.

Today the office is an independent, non-political Royal appointment for one year. The duties have evolved over time: supporting the Crown and the Judiciary remain central but High Sheriffs now add support and encouragement to crime prevention agencies, the emergency services and the voluntary sector. High Sheriffs are able to bring together a wide range of young people within the community they serve.

During the installation ceremony at Hexham Abbey in a formal pledge witnessed by His Honour Judge Paul Sloan QC – the Honorary Recorder of Newcastle upon Tyne – James promised to “well and truly serve the Queen’s Majesty and promote the peace, well-being and prosperity of Northumberland and its people”. James added “it’s a huge honour to have been selected by Her Majesty to be High Sheriff of Northumberland in Her Jubilee Year”.

When on official duties James wears the uniform of a retired colonel of the Northumberland Hussars and Queen’s Own Yeomanry with whom he served as a volunteer soldier between 1982 and 2019.

You can follow progress of James’ year in office on Instagram @highsheriffnorthumberland.



## Correspondence

**I have been reading** through May's issue of The Haydon News, and Dennis Telford's article on the Scotch Arms and his recollection of the one-time Landlord there, Mr. Ward.

I remember Mr. Ward when he lived on John Martin Street. I took over the John Martin Street paper round from my brother John, when I was about 11 or 12 years old which would be about 1960. (John had previously taken over the round from Ann Davies.)

I remember the bird tables in Mr. Ward's garden, he was a nice man, he gave me sweets and a tip at Christmas. I didn't know he'd been Landlord of the Scotch Arms earlier.

I also remember Fergus Turnbull who lived up Whittis Hill, on the back lane, and who had been the owner of the Haydon Hotel - I remember he had a very snappy little Jack Russel dog.

After delivering and collecting in monies on Sunday mornings, I would go into the Anchor to Mrs. Mac. Who was the landlady of the Anchor Hotel, she would take my coins and give me the equivalent in notes to take back to Mr. Marsh at the paper shop on Ratcliffe Road. I remember Mrs. Mac. as a very kind women who gave me pickled eggs/crisps, and tips too.

I am in the process of writing my younger day memories and as I had one or two mild 'run-ins' with village policemen - I wonder whether any Haydon News readers have any details of their names, as there would be two or three in that period from 1960 to 1970.

Thank you, David Armstrong.

***If any reader is able to help David in his research, we would be grateful if you get in touch with the editor or Dennis Telford by email - dennistelford636@btinternet.com***

**Over the last few months** I have unfortunately been disabled by arthritic damage to both my knees so I have to resort to using walking aids. This is an entirely new experience and one which has highlighted how difficult it is for folk in a similar position to get around Haydon Bridge. While accepting, with gratitude, the provision of drop-kerbs along our two principal streets, moving around in other streets becomes almost impossible if you are disabled. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> I was, as ever, acting as Queenie at the street fair, and I needed to use my mobility scooter. My lift dropped me in Greenwich Gardens which is where I first discovered that I was stranded on pavements with no drop-kerbs (delay No.1). When I eventually reached the site of the fair, it was impossible to get onto the green because of a lack of drop-kerbs (delay N.2). I noticed that there were a number of mobility chairs in use so the inconvenience was felt by a significant number of those present. On top of my anger at the time there was a sense of shame that our village offered such a poor welcome to the disabled. Do readers feel the same as me? I would like us to agree that we should regard this as an urgent issue. We must be way behind other places in providing for the disabled.

John Harrison



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Oh goodness, into June now and no real signs of any summer yet. Hopefully we will get some decent weather soon. None of my family or friends have any intention of going abroad for at least six months or so. Why book off work time to struggle through queues of people and have endless waiting at airports due to insufficient staffing levels, to eventually get on board, only to be told to disembark again and discover the flight cannot even take off. What a disappointment and complete waste of money. Any reimbursements could take months to recoup (such is the backlog) and of course you need another holiday to get over the holiday you haven't even had yet!

Remain in good old Blighty - have a weekend or two away and get to know a bit more about this land of ours. The trouble is, you have to prepare for every eventuality weather-wise - my packing list would typically run a bit like this : broly, sun hat, wellies, suntan cream, shorts, warm jacket - you get my drift! And unless you are driving and can shove as much in your car as possible to cover our diverse climate - (oh, and of course we have a petrol issue now which is adding hugely to travel costs), there is obviously a limit as to how much 'stuff' you can hoick about.

Here is the crux of the matter though. Why do we go abroad in the first place? Very roughly I think it's for more reliable weather - whether it be heat or cold you require, generally cheaper, perhaps different food choices. Because the fact is, it is arguably more expensive to holiday in this, our own country, than to travel miles away.

The hospitality industry in Britain is way out of touch and has been for years. It is not value for money. Airbnb has made an absolute killing due to this. It has definitely reduced the cost of an exorbitant hotel bill. I have tried it a couple of times for impromptu breaks, but the only thing for me is I don't want to go on a break if it includes stripping beds, emptying bins, going to bottle banks and getting up at the crack of dawn to vacate the premises at the end of the so-called break.

It eludes me in this day and age when hotels in Britain have faced this problem now for decades, why they still cannot accommodate the Brits in their own country for less than other countries.

Here is a quote from an interview in the Guardian which I came across by chance: "How can it cost over £1000 more to stay in a self-catering Cornish holiday park, than in a 4\* hotel beside the beach in Malta, including flights to get there, and all the meals thrown in?" It beggars belief.



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## RAPHY G 26 MAY-1 JUNE 2022

It's just about time for the summer holidays so I thought it would be appropriate to present an account of a sailing trip I made recently.

Although the majority of my sailing experience has been in dinghies, I had been fortunate enough to undertake a cruise in 1984, shortly before I graduated from the University of Exeter. A friend's uncle had planned to sail from Pwllheli in North Wales along the south coast of Ireland, around the Fastnet Rock and back, but had been let down by a couple of crew at very short notice. We packed any suitable clothing we could get our hands on and drove overnight from Exeter and joined three gentlemen on a Sigma 33. Memories of the trip are somewhat faded after 38 years but include many pints of creamy Guinness, working the foredeck in a force eight with wind over tide coming out of Cork harbour and a serene moonlight sail back across the Irish Sea, accompanied by a selection of JS Bach's organ compositions.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022** - Up at 6.00am (this proved to be a recurring theme throughout the week!), packed the car and drove to Corbridge to meet with three of my sailing buddies. With all our gear and several bags of provisions safely stowed in the back of the pick-up, we began the long drive up to Dunstaffnage, a few miles north of Oban.

The weather on our journey northwards proved to be interesting, with several squally showers making visibility poor at times, and it was a relief to stop at the Green Welly café in Tyndrum for sandwiches and coffee. We reached our destination after about six hours on the road and introduced ourselves to Julie and David at Alba Sailing. Another three sailors, including the skipper and first mate, were en route from Manchester and had yet to arrive so we had to content ourselves with viewing our home for the week from the hammerhead at the end of the jetty. Raphy G, an Oceanis 46 built by Beneteau, certainly looked the part and we were eager to board and familiarise ourselves with her, but had to wait until she was officially handed over to us. So we drove to Oban in order to purchase even more provisions! Bread, bacon, cheese, cans of beer, boxes of red wine and a couple of bottles of malt whisky were loaded into the back of the pick-up, which was now pretty much bursting at the seams, and we drove the short distance back to the marina.

The rest of the crew had now arrived and both skipper and first mate had begun the time-consuming task of completing the boat inventory – even the teaspoons had to be counted! We prepared a fleet of trolleys – available for £1.00 deposit, just like at the supermarket – and began the task of transferring personal kit and provisions from cars to boat. As one of the largest vessels in the marina, Raphy G was, of course, moored as far away from the car park as was possible and everything was transferred aboard without mishap.

I was allocated to the starboard aft cabin which I shared with another retired teacher; I later discovered that this cabin is traditionally the largest on board and traditionally known as the 'honeymoon suite'! There was plenty of storage for clothing and wet weather gear, along with a handy door straight to the heads (nautical term for lavatory). It might sound strange, but calling toilets 'heads' actually makes complete sense. In the past, only the captain would have had a private toilet near his quarters, at the stern of the ship. The rest of the crew would have to make do with a toilet in the bow of the vessel, close to the waterline. By placing a toilet in the bow of the ship, the seawater could wash it out naturally. And, because sailing ships can't travel directly into the wind, the toilets would always be downwind. So, any unpleasant smells wouldn't linger for long. If you hadn't guessed it already, the bow of a ship is also known as the head...

Heads on board are operated by a pumping system. Ours was flushed using a hand pump to operate the head. Once business had been completed, a switch is flipped which allows water to be pumped by hand into the toilet bowl. Next, the switch is flipped the other way, and the bowl can be pumped out. The most important thing to remember about the heads is not to put anything down them that you didn't eat first!

The weather had yet to improve and the wind was still blowing a steady force 5, gusting 6 from the north-west. The plan had been to undertake a 'shake out' sail and find a mooring at Oban Marina on the island of Kerrera in the evening, but the skipper decided that it would be wise to remain safely in Dunstaffnage and the suggestion of take away fish and chips was greeted heartily by all and a party was dispatched into Oban, where seven portions, including mushy peas and curry sauce, were purchased and consumed aboard, accompanied by beer and red wine. Sleep eventually came to the whistling of the wind in the rigging and the lap of the water against the hull.

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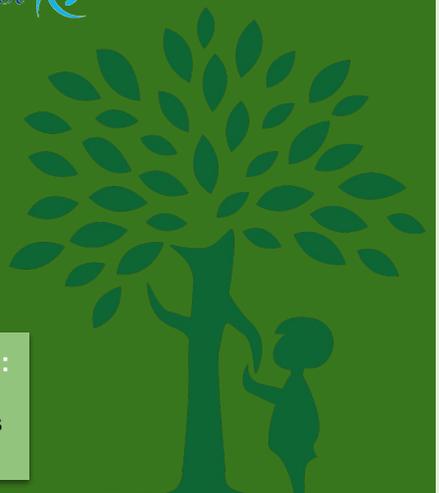
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**Bring along :**  
 Plant, Books,  
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 swap



Like many of you, I have been watching the Platinum Jubilee celebrations over the last weekend and have been impressed by the colourfulness, which must have brightened up the lives of so many. It was like the emergence of the brightest of butterflies after a long time spent in a dull brown cocoon. And yet, as the last rendition of God Save the Queen fades into memory, the first item on the nation's agenda has been a rapid return to the dull monotony of parliamentary business – do we have confidence in Boris as our PM? As a weather enthusiast this puts me in mind of the reader who took the most amazingly colourful photograph of a rainbow over his local beach, only for it to be reproduced in black and white by his local newspaper. I don't know about you but I think I'll just hang on to my memories of the vivid red and gold of the Jubilee celebrations.

Unfortunately May didn't always provide us with the brightest of settings for outdoor activities. In many ways the weather in May changed very little from the previous month with the exception of the cloud cover which was more of a feature during a month dominated by anticyclonic conditions. Pressure remained high for the opening 9 days during which the wind remained fixed in the west and was usually relatively light.. "Dull and damp" were the most commonly used labels as far as the weather was concerned, which made it feel colder than the screen temperature suggested. There were, however, some brighter spells, which encouraged some outdoor activities.

A broad area of cyclonic conditions began to take control from the 10<sup>th</sup> which introduced less settled weather. There were periods of more substantial rainfall culminating in the wettest day on the 16<sup>th</sup> (17.4 mm) which was wet all day. This represented 45% of the month's total fall. Frontal activity was associated with fresher winds and an influx of tropical air from the southwest 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> resulted in daytime temperatures reaching 20 degC for the first time in 2022 in Haydon Bridge. The complex cyclonic weather system trailed cold polar air in its wake towards the end of the month with temperatures remaining low in fresh northerly winds and bringing us close to ground frosts on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Water courses continued to be running low at the month's end. Colour memories from the May countryside – amazingly green splashed with dazzling blossom.

Month 2021	Average Max. Temp (Daytime) deg C	Relative to long-term average degC	Average Min. Temp (Night-time) deg C	Relative to long-term average degC	Rainfall mm	Percentage of long-term average
May	16.1	+0.8	8.1	+2.1	38.5	76%

Gladys told me recently about a classic mishearing that flew around her village. A well-known local couple announced that following their wedding they would be living at the Old Manse. They would not be living with the bride's father as rumour suggested.

And how about a silly suggestion? A Church of England bishop is reported to have contacted his parishes last Christmas suggesting that real horse-poo be added to nativity scenes in order to add an element of authenticity. Did he wish them all a 'Smelly Christmas'???

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# Churches Working Together

## Methodist Church 10.30 am

- 3 July Local Arrangement Service (see Notice Sheet on Chapel window)  
10 July Joint service with Fourstones Methodist Church (same time 10.30 am)  
17 July Deacon Anne Taylor  
24 July Rev. Barrie Morris (Communion Service)  
31 July Tom Dodds  
7 Aug Local Arrangement Service (see Notice Sheet on Chapel window)

## Informal Worship on Wednesdays 7pm - 13th and 27

Please note that **Meeting Place** meets at the **Methodist Church** on **Tuesdays only** 10am to 12 noon why not call in for coffee or tea and a friendly chat

## St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church Sunday Services 10.30 am

- 3 July Eucharist Rev. Jan van den Berg  
10 July Eucharist Rev. Gill Alexander  
17 July Eucharist Revs. Nigel and Mary Warner  
24 July Eucharist Rev. Janet Jackson  
31 July Morning Prayer and Hymns Ken Newitt  
7 Aug Morning Prayer Dave Thornhill

## All Hallows Henshaw 11.00 am

- 3 July Rev. Canon Steve Wright Holy Communion  
12 July Rev. Canon Steve Wright Holy Communion  
17 July Rev. Keith Teasdale Holy Communion  
24 July Morning Prayer with Reflection  
31 July Benefice Joint Service at Holy Cross, Haltwhistle **10.00 am (Please note earlier time)**  
7 Aug Rev. Canon Steve Wright Holy Communion

## Catholic Church Services

- St. John of Beverley** Haydon Bridge 9.00 am Sunday **St. Oswald's** Bellingham 11.00am Sunday  
**St. Wilfred's** Haltwhistle 9.30am Thursday  
**St Mary's** Hexham

**Public Mass and Live Stream (please check St. Mary's website)**

## Clergy Letter by Pat Devlin

Last Sunday, in the Catholic Church we celebrated Christ's gift of himself at the Last Supper. As St Paul puts it in 1Corinthians ch 10:

*The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ.*

*The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf.*

We may well ask ourselves what this means in a world threatened by global hunger, where some have an excess while others face starvation.

In response to this challenge CAFOD ( Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) is launching a 3 year campaign to '**Fix the Food System**'.

Introducing the campaign, the question is posed: how have we ended up with a system that is killing the planet and leaving 800 million people to starve?

The campaign goes on to look at

a)The role of large agribusinesses who acquire vast swathes of land at the expense of small scale community oriented family farms and then promote the wide use of chemicals to produce a high yield in a limited range of crops which will bring them the greatest profit.

b)The scandal of waste. In the UK we throw away 9.5 million tons of food per year and this waste food produces more greenhouse gases than the whole of Kenya, while it takes land, the size of India to grow the food in the first place.

c) The alternatives we need to promote in order to change to a system which will serve the whole of humanity .

In sharing the 'One Loaf' may we recognise our interconnectedness with our common home and our neighbours near and far so that all may 'share in the feast'.

## Christian Aid Collection May 2022

Many thanks to everyone who supported this worthy cause, the village total amounted to £375.48 which was made up of Church donations and totals from buckets left in our local shops.

Thanks again Deborah Bell (Organiser)

## “CHEERS”

### Part 6

#### The Anchor Inn

**Our Haydon parish pub-crawl takes us this month to the Anchor Hotel, formerly the Anchor Inn, and even earlier the site from where law and order in our Langley Barony was controlled. The Anchor Hotel is almost certainly the best known of Haydon Bridge's drinking establishments, due to its history as the court house of the 'Leet and Court Baron of the Barony of Langley'. (The court rolls of Langley Barony are fascinating and have survived from 1632 to 1831.)**

Historical references date an Inn on the present day site of the Anchor at Haydon Bridge to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when the Percy family were Lords of Langley Barony and in 1422 John Parker was hanged for felony in the Inn's courtyard. And, in 1528 a letter from the Earl of Northumberland to Cardinal Wolsey refers to the hanging up in chains upon a pair of gallows of Jamys Noble. Noble 'hadde committed dyverse and sundry, horrible and cruel crymes.'

#### **A short history (from the Tindales to the Radcliffes ... and the Anchor):**

The Barony of Langley, of which Haydon was part, had been held in chief by the Tindale family, whom we know were in possession in **1165**. The Tindale's ownership was followed by the Boltby family, from around **1220**, and then the Lucy family. (*Thomas de Lucy the third began building his fortified tower house - Langley Castle - in 1350.*) By **1370**, the Umfraville family were Lords of the barony until **1398**, when Maud the widow of Gilbert de Umfraville, who had married Henry Percy the Earl of Northumberland, died and Langley Barony was in the hands of the Percy family in spite of various skirmishes, until **1535**. In **1632**, Sir Edward Radcliffe of Dilston purchased the barony from a new owner, the Earl of Annandale, in trust for his son and heir Francis, and in **1687**, Sir Francis Radcliffe was created 'Earl of Derwentwater Viscount Radcliffe and Langley and Baron Tynedale'. The Radcliffe family held the ownership of Langley Barony, on and off, until **1715**, when in August of that year, James Earl of Derwentwater and his brother Charles joined the English Jacobites in their failed rebellion against the Crown.

Following the rebellion's collapse, the Derwentwater estates, including Langley Barony, were forfeited and were in the hands of the Crown.

By **1749**, Langley Barony was made an absolute estate of inheritance for the benefit of the **Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich** and it is likely that around **1756**, the court house at Haydon Bridge was named the **Anchor Inn**, in recognition of Greenwich Hospital for Seamen; whose governors were the new owners of Langley Barony's estates.

*(It seems that 'The Crown and Anchor' would have been an equally appropriate name, had it not been used elsewhere in the same context.)*

For those customers sitting comfortably in the Anchor Hotel in 2022, it is worth recalling that between 1583 and 1671, records suggest that the country between Newcastle and Carlisle was, 'so wild and insecure that the judges of assize were escorted on their journey by an armed force'. And, 'Hexham market was attended by a hundred strong border thieves who overawed the country people whom they robbed'.

There is little doubt that the lives of those who collected the barony rents and meted out their punishments at the court house that pre dated the Anchor, were in serious danger.

By 1828, law and order had been achieved in the border counties and we have our first definite name, of a landlord of the Anchor Inn in Haydon Bridge, one John Johnson. Unfortunately, we have been unable to add to our knowledge of Mr. Johnson, although, we do know that the Royal Mail, and True Briton Coaches to Carlisle and Newcastle, called at his Inn every day before noon.

The Anchor Inn also continued in its role as the court house, dealing with misdemeanours in the district.

By June 1836, and according to a Newcastle Journal report, the landlord of the Anchor Inn was a Mr. Etherington. Further research suggests that this was a Journal printing error and the landlord in 1836 was, in fact, Mathew Hetherington (*with an H*).

In any event, an edited version of the Journal article is worth repeating as it sheds light on the part played by the Anchor Inn, in the opening of the extension of the Newcastle and Carlisle railway line, from Hexham to Haydon Bridge, on June 28th, 1836.

'..... When the passengers reached Haydon Bridge, the 600 who had been furnished with tickets for refreshments repaired to Mr. Etherington's Anchor Inn where, in addition to almost every room in the house having being converted into a temporary dining room,

long tents had been erected in the open space in front, the tables of which literally groaned with substantial and well cooked joints. Those who had not been so fortunate to get tickets for the Anchor Inn, dispersed themselves to those parts of the village where refreshments could be obtained and such a company, we venture to assert, never before assembled on this spot ...'

There was further rejoicing in Haydon Bridge two years later when, on Monday June 18th, 1838 the line was opened along its full length after bridges were built across the South Tyne at Lipwood and Ridley and over the River Allen at Morralee.

On Mathew Hetherington's death, the Anchor Inn became the responsibility of his widow Ann. Ann is recorded as living there as a 70 year old in 1841, with five of her family and two servants.

In September 1844, the fourth Annual Show of the Haydon Bridge Floral, Horticultural and Industrial Society was held at the Anchor Inn. This seems to have been the first occasion on which the show was held outdoors, 'in a spacious pavilion at the Anchor where a band from Hexham played and enlivened the scene'. The Annual Show in 1844 included classes for: Market Gardeners, Nurserymen, Gentlemen's Gardeners, Amateurs and Cottagers. After the prizes had been awarded, seventy members of the society sat down to dinner provided by Mrs. Hetherington of the Anchor, 'in her best style'. According to reports: 'The evening was spent in the most convivial manner and all went off with harmony and glee. During the afternoon of the second day, a number of poor people were admitted for free and, although the pavilion was crowded to excess, yet, the greatest order and regularity prevailed.'

Ann Hetherington died on February 4th, 1850 and her daughter Elizabeth took control of the Anchor, living in the Anchor with her were a widowed sister Sarah and her adult children Ann, William and Thomas. An interesting family, perhaps, as by 1861 they had moved and were farmers of 225 acres at the Lees, at Haydon Bridge.

In 1861, the innkeeper at the Anchor Inn was Francis Wilkinson, who lived there with Esther (nee Miller) his wife, and family John, Isabella Esther and Mary.

On October 12th, 1867, the proceedings of Langley Barony's, 'Court Leet or the Law Day, and View of Frankpledge' were held at the Anchor Inn in Haydon Bridge - and the Court Baron of the Commissioners for the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom and Lords of the Barony or Manor of

Langley, in the County of Northumberland, were in attendance.

*Readers will recall that much of the barony/district was under jurisdiction of the Lords of the Admiralty, following the Derwentwater's forfeiture of their land to the Crown in the eighteenth century. Since 1749, the Inn that was to be named the Anchor, had been in the ownership of the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich, and Langley Barony courts and meetings of administration were held there at regular intervals.*

It seems that Francis Wilkinson's wife Esther died in 1864 and in February 1868, Francis was married again to Sarah Salkeld, at Warden. Sarah was twenty nine years Francis' junior and they soon left Haydon Bridge and the Anchor Inn for Elswick in Newcastle, where Francis was recorded as, 'a cow keeper'.

James and Ann Davidson were tenants in the Anchor by 1871 and they enjoyed a successful and popular period in charge. Their popularity was acknowledged at an auction at the Anchor Inn in June 1877, when portions of the Greenwich Hospital Estates were put up for sale by direction of the Lords of the Admiralty.

The property sales included a number of lots that would be recognised by many living in Haydon Bridge today. For example: Innerhaugh Buildings, land and an iron foundry and implement manufactory, at the extreme west end of the village - sold to Peter Laing (£570). Two cottages with a blacksmith's shop and yard (*on Ratcliffe Road*) - sold to William Brown (£560). The site of the Gasworks, leased at £2 per annum for 80 years - sold to the Gas Company (£90). The site of the Reading Room with library and cottage, leased at a ground rent of 10 shillings a year for 80 years from 1868 - purchased for the Reading Room Institution (£25).

**And Lot 8: described as 'the most interesting lot in the sale', the Anchor Inn.** The Inn was described as, the 'Court House of the Barony where the rents of the Greenwich Hospital estates had been collected'. After some quick bidding, the Anchor was knocked down for the existing tenant Mr. James Davidson at £1,675. This announcement was greeted with great applause by the assembled throng.

In December 1877, James Davidson was mine host for what was described as, 'a red letter day in the annals of the usually quiet town of Haydon Bridge'; when a dinner was held at the Anchor Inn for the coming of age of Thomas Burrell Bewick. Thomas was the son of John Bewick who owned the Langley Barony lead mines on the banks of the Honeycrook Burn.

**We will return to the Anchor Inn next month.**

## A Gardener's Lament

Recent issues of the Haydon News glorify the joys of gardening. However there is another side to it about which gardeners should be aware as they are more likely to experience it!

### A Gardener's Lament

The soil I tend with loving care  
And sow all kinds of seeds  
But something eats up most of them  
For all I get - is weeds.

Now, if I miss but one lone day  
Because of wind or rain  
You can see that I have missed it  
Yes - the weeds are back again.

Those tall and lovely hollyhocks  
Should reach up to the sky  
Unfortunately in my case  
They only reach knee high.

Tomatoes grow so easily  
At least so I've been told  
But the only thing that mine grow  
Is a deadly growth of mould.

Some lettuce once I tried to grow  
Surrounded by a pot  
But even that did not prevail  
A rabbit got the lot.

My apple tree with blossom glows  
A truly gorgeous sight  
But when the autumn comes around  
Not an apple is in sight.

I used to move my plants around  
In a carriage made of steel  
But even that is useless now  
My barrow's lost it's wheel.

A lawn should be a pleasure  
But mine is full of bumps  
And grass that should be verdant  
Will only grow in clumps.

But even then it got much worse  
And quite gave me the hump  
A mole had got beneath it  
And heaved up a mighty lump

One day as I walked up my path  
I quickly smelled a rat  
The stench was something awful  
Yes of course - it's next doors cat!  
No matter how I strive and strain  
Disasters what I got  
So now I've solved the problem  
I've concreted all the lot.

So, now i am a happy man  
And in sunshine or in rain  
I can wander round my garden  
And not suffer any pain.

*William Veitch*

---

## A new guidebook for our parish church

**Michael Sadgrove**

St Cuthbert's has just published a new, illustrated guidebook. Written by Dennis Telford, it includes a comprehensive history of the Church from its beginnings down to the present day, together with a walk round the building highlighting its significant features. It complements Dennis' earlier guide to Haydon Old Church.

This new guide casts its net more widely than simply the Church building, however. Every historic parish church embodies the history of its community and those who have played a part in shaping it. So this 70 page booklet shines a light on Haydon Bridge past and present and invites us to consider the people and events that have made us here in this village and parish what we are.

St Cuthbert's is one of the most important, and visually prominent, buildings in Haydon Bridge. The new guide contains a surprising amount of information to interest even the most casual of droppers-in. Those who worship there regularly or from time to time, or who have attended baptisms, weddings and funerals of loved-ones, will find much that is fascinating in this attractively produced book. Many of the photographs have been taken specially for it. The publication has been financially supported by the Shaftoe Charities, to whom, along with Dennis, we are most grateful.

Copies are on sale for £5 at Claire's, Mr George's Museum of Time, and the Community Library. There is also a copy kept in church for you to look at, and for visitors to use.

Every second or third season, we get a huge amount of fruit ripened at the same time around the village. This year we are likely to have the biggest crop I remember. Many of us have apple trees which will be laden with fruit in a month or two's time. A few of us got together and wondered if we should have a community response to this, pooling our surplus fruit to do something special for the village.

Things we talked about included;

Cooking with fruit – lessons in what you can make with surplus fruits

A village fruit press, to make apple juice

A village cider vintage – our own village collective brand

A “hands on” session making chutneys/preserves from fruit

I'm sure there are more/better ideas and if we started now, we may be able to apply for funding to help. If you have any other/better ideas, or would be interested in getting involved, please either catch Dan Dowling around the village, or email [haydonbridgefruit@gmail.com](mailto:haydonbridgefruit@gmail.com)

## Heating our homes and businesses – a big issue and a possible way forward?

**Did you know that the Government has proposed that from 2026 you will no longer be able to buy and install a new oil or LPG boiler?!** This will inevitably mean that parts for existing oil and LPG boilers will become increasingly scarce, and that fuel costs will continue to rise. This is actually great news for our planet (as nearly a quarter of carbon emissions come from heating our homes) - but what are we going to do instead? We live in a rural northern community, off the mains gas grid, with mostly oil boilers or solid fuel wood and coal fires, and a great many old homes that are not well insulated. Add to this the ever-rising fuel and living costs and the increasing number of severe storms like Storm Arwen.

Haydon Bridge Net Zero Group (a sub-group under the Development Trust umbrella) have been thinking about this issue, and we have come across the concept of community owned district heating schemes. We think this might be an exciting opportunity for Haydon Bridge to solve this problem, reduce our carbon emissions, reduce fuel bills *and* generate income for the community. Many hundreds of thousands of pounds leaves our community to the pockets of multinational energy companies – so this would be kept in our community, generating some income for the village, and also creating job opportunities. And remember (some of you!), Haydon Bridge did once have its' own heating company – The Haydon Bridge Gas Company. A district heating system is a modern-day equivalent to provide heat to our homes and businesses to see us into the future.

This raises all sorts of questions! What is a district heating scheme? How does it work? What would it cost? Would it be disruptive? We are currently working with Community Action Northumberland and the Rural Design Centre and they have put us in touch with re:heat, an Alnwick based renewable heating company that have vast experience of district heating. With their help we have created a list of 'Frequently asked questions' which we and re:heat plan to share at a stall at 'The Nurture Nature Fun Day,' on 13<sup>th</sup> August, 11-1pm, Low Hall (field next to the football field). See publicity elsewhere in Haydon News for more details of this event.

These are also on the village website: <http://www.haydon-bridge.co.uk/>

We are at the very beginning of exploring this idea. We need to find out if it is technically feasible, what it would cost, how much money could be generated for the community and how community ownership could work. Once we have all this information, we will be able to share it and find out if there is enough interest to take the project forward. Very importantly though, no one would ever *have* to join the scheme.

The first thing we need to do is find out how much heat Haydon Bridge uses, so we'll be sharing more information and a questionnaire soon. In the meantime, if you have any questions that aren't answered in the FAQs, then please send them to Siobhan Stephenson at [siobhanshilbot@aol.com](mailto:siobhanshilbot@aol.com) and we'll find out the answers. If you would like to become involved in Haydon Bridge Net Zero Group, please also email Siobhan.



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## Clarty Boots - Nitrogen

Seventy eight point one percent of the atmosphere is Nitrogen  $N_2$ . It is the fifth most abundant element in the universe, is inert (not chemically reactive) and has no odour, taste or colour. Nitrogen was first discovered by Scottish physician Daniel Rutherford in 1772. Above every acre there is approximately 37,000 tons of Nitrogen and it is an essential nutrient for plant growth and development but is not available in its most common form as atmospheric nitrogen. Plants instead depend upon forms of nitrogen, such as ammonia and nitrate. It is a major component of chlorophyll, the most important pigment needed for photosynthesis, as well as amino acids, the key building blocks of proteins. It is also found in other important biomolecules, such as ATP and nucleic acids.

Plants acquire these forms of “combined” nitrogen by:

- 1) The addition of ammonia and/or nitrate fertiliser or manure to soil.
- 2) The release of these compounds during organic matter decomposition.
- 3) The conversion of atmospheric nitrogen by natural processes, such as lightning.
- 4) Biological nitrogen fixation.

Much of this nitrogen is provided to cropping systems in the form of industrially produced nitrogen fertilisers. So in this first part we will look at the background of industrial produced nitrogen fertilisers.

Area	Metric tons
World	108,937,136
Europe	17,300,000
USA	12,428,482
China	31,074,613
UK	1,490,000

*Table showing amount of Nitrogen fertilisers used per year*

At the beginning of the 1900's Professor Kristian Birkeland at the University of Oslo was trying to produce a rail-gun. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of Feb 1902 the gun short circuited and blew up during a test. He observed a disc shaped arc spread by the magnetic field and the smell of nitrogen oxides. At this time one of the major fears was that of famine. Chilean nitrate deposits were running out and the world depended on them as a fertiliser. Chemists were working hard to come up with an economical way to fix atmospheric nitrogen.

He was not the first to fix nitrogen by electric arc – Crookes in Manchester had a plant producing Calcium Nitrate, but the disc shaped arc promised a higher yield. Birkeland worked with a civil engineer, Sam Eyde and with money from Swedish financiers to build a hydroelectric plant at Rjukan, Notodden called the Vemork Power Plant.



*The Vemork Power Plant*

Three years later a Birkeland-Eyde arc furnace was producing Calcium Nitrate (saltpetre). That same year Fritz Haber discovered a superior way producing Nitrates in what is now known as the Haber process,  $N_2 + 3H_2 = 2NH_3$  (ammonia). The Norwegians soon abandoned the arc furnace for this method.

The Haber process, later the Haber-Bosch process, uses high pressure for a chemical reaction. It combines nitrogen from the air and hydrogen at high pressures (above 1450psi) and temperature (400° to 500°C). A catalyst made mainly from iron enables the reaction to occur at a lower temperature than would otherwise be required. The lower the temperature and the higher pressure the greater the production of ammonia.

The electricity from the Vemork power station was used to electrolyse water to separate the hydrogen and to power the process which seems an environmentally friendly way of doing it. By 1962 the plant was producing 723,482 tonnes of fertiliser per year.

The process today is predominantly run using natural gas which is a naturally occurring mixture of hydrocarbons consisting mainly of methane, but can use other fossil fuel sources, coal, heavy oil and naphtha. Green hydrogen can be produced from biomass, electrolysis of water and thermochemical splitting of water (solar or other heat source). Hydrogen from the gas is mixed with nitrogen from the air. Around 60% of the natural gas is used as the raw material the methane being split into hydrogen and carbon dioxide, the rest being used to power the process. The ammonia is used to make nitric acid, with which it is then mixed to produce nitrate fertilisers such as ammonium nitrate (AN). Ammonia may also be mixed with liquid carbon dioxide to create urea. Both these products can be further mixed together with water to form UAN (urea ammonium nitrate) solution.

Use of these fertilisers has led to worldwide ecological problems, such as the formation of coastal dead zones, nitrogen-tolerant species to thrive and outcompete more sensitive wild plants and fungi. This reduces wildlife diversity and damages plant health. Excessive application of synthetic fertilisers has been shown to acidify soils too, damaging soil health and reducing the productivity of soils. Biological nitrogen fixation on the other hand, offers a natural means of providing nitrogen for plants and we'll explore those in the next article.

clartyboots@yahoo.com

## Whither the weather?

Anne Galbraith

As we approach St Swithin's day on 15 July, when the old wives' tale has it that if it rains on that day, it will rain for the next forty days, you might ask, well, what is new?? We sometimes get quite a poor June and it has certainly been very windy recently, but according to Paul Simons, who writes the weather column in The Times, it hardly compares to 78 years ago. The D-Day invasion of June 6 1944 was almost blown off course by stormy weather and then conditions grew worse. Vast amounts of supplies had to be shipped to Normandy for the Allied forces who had landed there. However, a furious storm blew up from 19 to 22 June, which destroyed about 800 landing craft and ships. Supplies were landed using two Mulberry harbours, which were enormous floating structures built from prefabricated caissons, towed across the Channel and assembled on the coast of Normandy. They were built to withstand force 6 gales, but the weather of 19 to 22 June gusted to force 8, destroying one harbour and damaging the one at Gold beach but it was repaired.

You can still see some of the remains of the giant caissons at Arromanches in Normandy, but some of them were put to good use after the war ended, first to reinforce the harbour at Portland in Dorset, and then, when the Netherlands was devastated by a catastrophic North Sea storm surge in January 1953, many of the caissons were shipped from Portland to repair Dutch flood defences. This is not a bad record of their use, as they were originally designed to work for only three months!

In TV coverage of the ceremonies in Normandy to commemorate the anniversary of D-Day, you may have caught sight of some of the caissons still poking up through the waves. And you may also have seen the splendid statue unveiled at Vers sur Mer to commemorate the British D-Day heroes. When we remember the events of 1944, perhaps we shouldn't complain too much about any recent spells of poor weather.

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