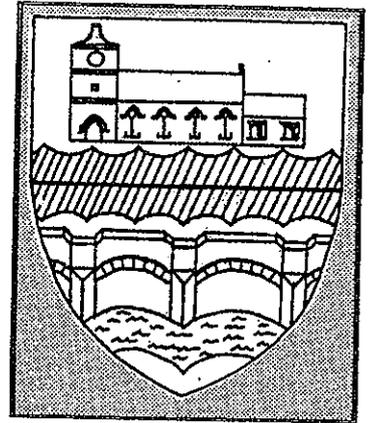


HAYDON NEWS

The Friends of Haydon Bridge Thank the Advertisers for their continued support



April 1993 / 3

ANDY SHIELD - QUALITY BUTCHERS

4 CHURCH STREET, HAYDON BRIDGE, TEL 684 381

FINEST QUALITY LOCAL MEAT & GAME

NOW AVAILABLE - HOME BAKED PIZZAS & QUICHE
READY FOR YOUR FREEZER
A SELECTION OF QUALITY CHEESES

RAILWAY HOTEL

Tel. 684 254

Fresh Cut Sandwiches
also to take away

Lounge Available for Functions

J & M CLARKE

11 Church Street
Haydon Bridge

Tel 684 303

Newspapers, tobacco, toys, games
confectionery, birthday & special
occasion cards, stationery

COFFEE SHOP

HAYDON HAIR SALON

Church Street
Haydon Bridge

Tel 684 573 NOW

Let us make you more beautiful

M. ARMSTRONG

13 Church Street
Haydon Bridge

For fresh fruit and vegetables
Bread and cakes delivered daily
Groceries
Friendly Service

B J YOUNG JOINERY

Manufacturer of doors, windows,
gates, wardrobes, staircases, etc.

Telford's Workshop
Haydon Bridge
Tel Hexham 605289

ERNIE SWINBURN - PHOTOGRAPHY

3 Station Cottages, Haydon Bridge
Telephone Hexham 684 489

**WEDDINGS: SPECIAL OCCASIONS
STUDIO PORTRAITS**

HAYDON BRIDGE FISH & CHIP SHOP

	LUNCH	TEATIME AND	EVENING
Monday			7.30 - 11.30
Tuesday		CLOSED ALL DAY	
Wednesday	11.30 - 1.30		5.00 - 9.00
Thursday	11.30 - 1.30		5.00 - 9.00
Friday	11.30 - 1.30		4.30 - 12.00
Saturday	11.30 - 1.30		5.00 - 9.00

Wet Fish Friday 9.00 - 12.00

Telephone 684289

Hazel Hurst Nurseries

Bardon Mill

for
Shrubs, Bedding Plants, Baskets
Compost, Fertilizers
and all garden supplies.

Tel. Bardon Mill 344 438

HENRY WATSON & COMPANY

Tel: 684 214

All cars welcome for M.O.T
Service: Repairs: Crypton Tuning

Gas & Electric Welding

FRIDGE/FREEZER

Commercial and Domestic
Sales and Repairs
CALOR GAS, PROPANE
or BUTANE

Delivery if Required
Call or Phone

POPLARS CARAVAN PARK
Haydon Bridge Tel. 684 427

D. ROBSON

Landscaping, Tidy-ups,
Pointing, Concreting,
Stone-walling,

Trees felled/logged

Light Haulage.

Free Estimates

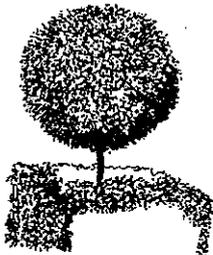
Telephone 688 930

EDITORIAL

As many readers will have noticed, the activities of the working party engaged on the preparation of the new West End shrub border attracted the attention of the Hexham Courant photographer (12 March). There was even a mention, albeit a brief one, in the Editorial of the same issue. Whilst it is pleasant to receive open recognition for the expenditure of so much energy, those involved with the practical work remain conscious that financial support for the project was generated by the 1992 Village Fete - a truly Community effort.

The award for the Best Kept Large Village was equally earned by the efforts of many individuals taking a pride in the Village and doing-their-bit to tidy up or brighten up the local environment.

A third example of pride in the Village can be seen at the end of John Martin Street, near the Carlisle-bound bus stop. The grass and hawthorn bushes there belong to the Parish Council but for many years a local resident lovingly tended the



bushes, practising the art of topiary to produce a bird and other ornamental shapes.

Unfortunately the topiarist is no longer with us and, understandably, the Parish Council is not able to undertake the commercial upkeep of the decorative hedging. Reference was made to the problem in the Parish Council pickings of the October Haydon News but no one has come forward to claim the privilege of continuing the work.

With the advent of Spring and the start of the growing season final decision time is upon us. Unless a volunteer topiarist is found almost immediately the work of years will be obliterated in a few slashes of a hedge cutter and a unique feature of our Village will be lost for all time.

**Please
will someone
volunteer to take
over the care of
this topiary,
even
for
a
trial
period
?**

If so, the Parish Council would be pleased to hear from you **before 22 April** or I will be happy to pass on your name.

Gina Richardson
Editor
Tel: 684318

**CHRISTIAN AID
WEEK
1993
17-22 MAY**

Yes, very soon it is Christian Aid week again and a chance to try to improve the quality of life for the underprivileged around the world.

Last year, the very generous people of Haydon Bridge raised over £1 000 to maintain or initiate Christian Aid projects in many countries, including Britain, and considering all the many demands on our finances that was a wonderful response.

Every year as organiser of Christian Aid in Haydon Bridge, I receive harrowing reports of the suffering of people in 3rd world countries. This year, though, the single sentence "a child dies from starvation every 2 seconds" was enough to stop me in my tracks, especially when you consider that the world produces more than enough food to feed *all* its inhabitants.

Please come to our special Christian Aid service in the Methodist Church at 6pm on 16 May. If you would like more information, or would like to help in other ways as well, please contact me, Pat Hirst, on 684474.

Pat Hirst
Organiser, Christian Aid
Haydon Bridge

*This took about
30 seconds to read.*

**ARTHRITIS &
RHEUMATISM
COUNCIL**

Haydon Bridge Branch.

In this last financial year we have raised £390.00 to send to National Headquarters. This is more than the previous year's total, so thank you all.

We shall be repeating our Car Boot Sale endeavours at the end of May. Please don't throw out anything that might be remotely saleable - prices start from 5p - instead give me a ring on 684335 and I will arrange collection. Paperback books, in particular Mills and Boon, sell very well.

Date for your diaries:

17 July, 3pm
Strawberry Teas at
Appletreewick, Brigwood.

Hilary Rutherford.

**NEXT ISSUE
OF HAYDON NEWS
MAY 1993
ALL COPY
TO THE EDITOR
14 SHAFTOE STREET
BY 20 APRIL
PLEASE**

**VILLAGE FETE 1993
Possible Beneficiaries**

The Organising Committee is already engaged with preliminary plans for this year's Village Fete, to be held on:
Monday 30 August.

Disposable proceeds will be donated to one or possibly two Village Organisations. Suggestions as to possible beneficiaries are now invited from Organisations or individual local residents.

Please put your suggestions *in writing*, and add your name and address or that of your Organisation. Then hand it to any Committee member or send it to me, at 27 Greenwich Gardens, by *1 May please.*

Eileen Charlton
Chairman

MUSIC at HENSHAW

There will be a concert of Flute and Guitar music played by Brain Stewart & Paul Croft on Friday 16 April in the W I Hall at Henshaw at 7.30pm

(cont. next column)

We hope this will be the first of a series of concerts of all sorts of music by local professionals, so please do come and support them. Programme includes a selection of light classical music.

Tickets £2.50 (OAP's and under 16's £1.50) including buffet from:

Yvette Passmore 344230,
Elizabeth Scott 344582
Julie Bainbridge or
Brian Stewart

E Scott
Bardon Mill

LANGLEY W I

Mrs Pauline Wright and two members of her "Keep Fit" class gave a lively demonstration at Langley W I.

Members enjoyed watching the three ladies going through their paces and were then invited to participate in a short fitness routine which was suitable for a wide age group.

Everyone acquitted themselves well and enjoyed the unwonted exercise.

M Nagel

PORTRAITS

Excellent Portrait drawings in Pencil or Charcoal from £20
Pastels from £40, Oils from £80

PICTURE MOUNTING AND FRAMING

Also in stock: Original drawings, prints, etchings, watercolours, oils and pastels. Phone and arrange to visit my studio without obligation

PATRICK SHARP

7 Ratchliffe Road Telephone 684411



**BUSINESS ACCOUNTS
AND
RETURNS**

Prepared for Taxation
purposes
Reasonable fees

W D Johnson FCCA

Telephone 344467

HAYDONIAN W M CLUB

Book now:

Birthdays, Weddings,
Anniversaries, Parties, Meetings.

Buffet available on request,
room free to members.

Bingo nights:

Wednesday & Saturday
8.15 prompt

Come along and bring a friend.

**ACCOUNTANCY and
TAXATION SERVICES**

Fully qualified
Professional advice
Confidentiality guaranteed

**David Armstrong ACA
MAAT ATII**

Telephone 684072

**PICK PICKERINGS
DIRECT**

STONEHAUGH, HEXHAM

**For a fine selection of
quality clothing
at a fair price**

MAIL ORDER

**lists available on
request or
Tel: 0434-230444**

**PARISH COUNCIL
PICKINGS**

25 March meeting

10 Councillors present. Also
County Cllr Purdue and 2
members of the public.

Quite a concentration on
various aspects of the litter
problem at this meeting.
Residents of Martin's Close
complained about the num-
ber of discarded beer cans -
(not soft-drink cans) left on
the waterside and neigh-
bouring areas. Tynedale
Council has decided that it
cannot afford the £1 500
needed to provide two poop-
scoop bins on the picnic
area. Problems seem to
have arisen at Frankham
Tip where people are appar-
ently being asked to prove
that they have paid a fee to
dump their waste. County
Cllr Purdue is going to look
into this one.

"Clean-up week" is from 16-
25 April, but this leaves
well over a month before
the Best Kept Village adjudi-
cators arrive in June: can
we keep the place tidy that
long? Is it nearly Haydon
Bridge's turn to have a skip
provided? If we get one,
can it go in "Robert Hum-
ble's Yard"?

Also related to the appear-
ance of the Village was the
Parish Council's thanks to
the By-Pass Committee (and
friends) for their gardening
work at the West end.

Cllr Bill Howard said he
would see if he felt suffici-
ently skilled to maintain the

topiary figures at the bridge
end. (Cllr Howard wishes it
to be understood that he
hopes this will be only an
interim measure and that
the appeal spelt out in the
Editorial of this issue will
encourage an experienced
or an embryo topiarist to
take up the challenge).

Planning applications in-
cluded a proposal to extend
the annual period of use for
the caravan park and exten-
sion to properties in Douglas
Gardens. The Railway Hotel
is to appeal against the re-
fusal of permission to con-
vert its garage building.

Reference was made to the
prospect of better access to
Euro-money to help replace
agricultural jobs, since the
County and not central
Government will be the con-
trolling authority.

JPR

TOPICAL VERSE

I

"Tis spring; come out to ramble
The hilly brakes around,
For under thorn and bramble
About the hollow ground
The primroses are found."

A E Houseman

II

"Long as there's a sun that sets
Primroses will have their glory
Long as there are violets
They will have a place in story"

Wordsworth

III

"And not a girl goes walking
Along the Cotswold lanes
But knows men's eyes in April
Are quicker than their brains"

John Drinkwater

IMPROVING OUR VISUAL IMPACT Progress Report

The proceeds of the 1992 Village Fete are being applied to "improving the visual impact at the entrances to the Village, as approached from East or West on the A69".

Working parties have been in operation over each week end since Saturday 6 March and will be continuing steadily into the immediate future.

To give everyone an understanding of the effort going into this project it seems only fair to issue regular, detailed reports of the activities of the working parties. Hopefully the recital will inspire even more individuals to join the gallant band!

At the west end:

Preparation of the low growing shrub border against the fence behind the old people's bungalows has necessitated:

marking out extent of bed in grass verge,

transplanting daffodils into positions nearer to road,
booking hire of rotovator,
collecting rotovator,
cultivating whole bed by many passes of rotovator to "turn in" the turf and break down soil to a friable consistency,

hand weeding and raking to level for planting,

disposing of material removed during cultivation,

returning rotovator,

negotiating supply of forest bark, courtesy of Egger,

arranging delivery of forest bark,

"barrowing" forest bark onto bed,

raking forest bark level,

disposal of unusable component of bark,

negotiating supply and delivery of shrubs for part-planting bed,

marking planting points,

planting.

At the east end:

Observers might be forgiven for wondering if the present appearance is indeed any

"improvement". In fact the black plastic-covered mound and heap of turves are the spoils of the cultivation at the west end and will provide excellent "infill" when the retaining wall for the heather bed has been built.

At the Cemetery entrance:

A start has been made on dismantling the derelict wall and sorting the stone which will be used for the heather bed retaining wall.

I would like to add my thanks to everyone who has turned out to contribute to this work as well as those who have helped from the side lines, for instance by loaning equipment or storage space.

We have welcomed the attendance of junior members of the community and at the other end of the scale the interest shown by those no longer able to wield a pick and shovel is also an encouragement in its own way.

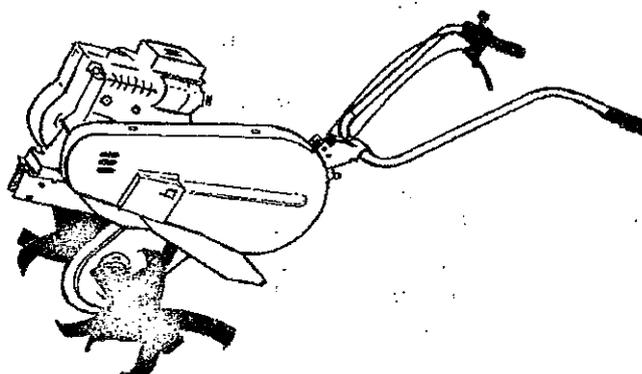
My thanks to you all.

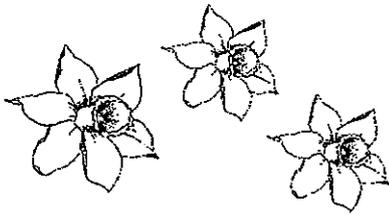
Eileen Charlton

**THE ANCHOR HOTEL
AND RESTAURANT
HAYDON BRIDGE
Tel: 0434 684227**

**Bar and Restaurant Meals
available daily**

**SUNDAY ROASTS
from £3.50 in the bar**





CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

It is true, and not too dramatic, to say that the care of handicapped persons in the community is approaching crisis and collapse.

Handicapped persons include the elderly who can no longer take decent care of themselves in their own homes without outside assistance from relatives, neighbours, home helps, district nurses and/or by having aids like ramps, grab rails, special bathing equipment including hoists, raised toilets etc. etc. installed, at tax payers expense in their own homes.

Other "handicapped" persons include young people with M S, spinal injury, arthritis as well as Downes Syndrome adults whose parents cannot care for them indefinitely and many other similar cases. There are also Single Persons who have lived with their parents until they died and left them isolated and untutored in domestic skills.

Another group are those persons afflicted with a mental disorder because of which they have been cared for in mental hospitals

where many have been able to lead useful lives provided they took regular medication and had a regulated, orderly and somewhat supervised routine of living about them.

Up till now these handicapped persons have been cared for by the NHS and Social Services Departments, the latter being Local Government whose finances come from us via national and local taxation.

In the future a large number of persons will be moved out of hospital accommodation, paid for by the NHS, into the community paid for out of Local Government finance. In other words *more* is going to come from us by way of Rates, Poll Tax, Council Tax or whatever it is to be called next. The net result of all this will be less money available for Community Care.

At present provision of care for handicapped persons in their own isolated homes is very expensive, inadequate and inefficient. There is a better way which we should have been developing within the Village years ago and to which we *must give urgent attention now. It is sheltered accommodation.*

Under sheltered accommodation, many residents provide for their day to day needs by themselves, living

in their own private apartments with cooking and bathroom facilities but under the same roof and of easy access there are common rooms, communal laundry equipment and specially equipped bathrooms. In these it is possible to provide hoists and other facilities where a nurse or bath assistant can deal with several persons in a single visit rather than having to travel to separate, distant houses each modified but not to the standard which can be provided in a purpose built properly designed place.

Home help services should be less costly to the tax payer for similar reasons and the running costs of one, specially designed and modern building should be far less than the cost of heating and maintaining several separate, often old dwellings.

And where should such Sheltered Accommodation be? Right in the centre of the Village, near to shops, churches, pubs and public transport and around a Village green where people could sit and chat on summer evenings or gather for carols at Christmas.

I wonder where that site could be? There is much more to be discussed on this subject but that is enough for starters!

Dr R High



CHURCH Newsletter

An independent supplement
to the Haydon News



APRIL 1993

AT THE PARISH CHURCH

4/4/93 Palm Sunday

8 a.m. Holy Communion

9.30 Blessing of Palms
at Roman Catholic Church
followed by Ministry of
the Word at U.R.C. at
9.45 & Methodist Church
at 10. Eucharist at
the Parish Church at
15.

7/4/93 Wed of Holy Week

10 a.m. Holy Communion

2.30 p.m. Women's Fellow-
-ship with Holy Weed Address.

8/4/93 Maundy Thursday

10 a.m. Holy Communion

7.30 p.m. Eucharist of
Maundy Thursday and stripping
of the altars.

9/4/93 Good Friday

10 a.m. Liturgy of Good
Friday with Communion from
the Reserved Sacrament.

7.30 p.m. United Service
the Methodist Church

10/4/93 Easter Eve

10 - 12 Coffee Morning in
the Church Hall

11/4/93 Easter Day

8 a.m. Holy Communion

10 a.m. Easter Eucharist

11.45 a.m. Holy Communion
at Haydon Old Church.

14/4/93 Wed of Easter Week;

7 p.m. Holy Communion with
Prayers for those who are ill.

18/4/93 Easter 1

10 a.m. Parish Eucharist
(Canon Boddy) Vicar with Young
People at Seahouses.

19/4/93

7.30 p.m. Annual Parochial
Meeting in the Church Hall

25/4/93 Easter 2

10 a.m. Parish Eucharist
followed by Election of
Churchwardens.

2/5/93

8 a.m. Holy Communion

10 a.m. The Eucharist

THE THREE R's.

What on earth does Easter mean to the average man or woman in the street, apart from two Bank Holidays? One might even ask what does the average Christian understand by Easter. Words like 'redemption' and 'resurrection' trip off the tongue, but to most of us what do such words mean?

To me, redemption is about buying back and about saving. In times of need people used to exchange their possessions at the pawnbrokers for money, and when times were better they'd buy back, or redeem, their prized possessions.

When I bought my house it contained two ugly fireplaces which I seriously considered replacing. However, the more I looked at them, the more I realised they had a certain charm. My original plan of consigning them to the council dump was abandoned because I recognised that the fireplaces had redeeming features.

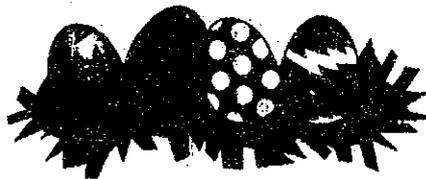
What can be said of pawnbrokers and fireplaces can equally be said of humanity. The ugliness and bankruptcy of our lives stems from us putting self before God, but despite this, God still values us. We are his creation and he sees us with a loving and caring eye. The life of Jesus was a witness to God's love and to God's desire to redeem mankind. To fulfil God's plan for our redemption, Jesus had to be willing to die to self and accept whatever happened, even if it meant crucifixion - and it did!

Yet Jesus' death on Good Friday was only part of God's plan: Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Easter Day was the fulfilment of that plan. By his resurrection Jesus showed that death cannot break our relationship with God and that fullness of life is experienced by putting God before self and having faith in him. Redemption and resurrection naturally lead us to a third 'R' - rejoicing. Yes, through God's redeeming love and Jesus' resurrection, we have good cause to rejoice.

DAVID BRADSHAW

EASTER FUN

At the Anchor Hotel



Good Friday

Paste egg Competition Entry Fee 50p

Age Ranges 5 - 8 years

9 - 12 years

All entries in by 2.30 p.m. Good Friday
Easter egg Prize

Easter Monday

Egg Jarring. Entry fee 50p.

Hard Boiled eggs provided.

Prize for the winner.

Ladies Easter Bonnet

Entry Fee 50p

All entries in by 3 p.m.

Prize for best bonnet.



All money raised, apart from prize money to go towards a mini-bus for the youth groups run by Rev. Keith Fletcher

METHODIST CHAPEL

Diary for April

Mar 31st - Apr 3rd
Hexham Music & Arts
Festival.

April 4th

Palm Sunday Processional
Service. - 9.30 a.m. at
Roman Catholic Church
procession via URC and
Methodist Church to St.
Cuthbert's for United
Morning Communion.

6 p.m. Evening Service
led by Mr M Fawcett

8 p.m. Music & Ministry
led by Rev D Perkins

April 7th

7.30 p.m. Bible Study in
schoolroom.

April 8th

7.30 p.m. United Maundy
Thursday Liturgy at St.
Cuthbert's Church.

April 9th

10 a.m. United Liturgy
at St Cuthbert's

7.30 p.m. United Vigil
Service led by Rev David
Perkins

April 11th Easter Sunday

9 a.m. Early Communion
led by Rev David Perkins

10.45 a.m. Family Service
led by Mrs B Rowarth

6 p.m. Evening Communion
led by Rev David Perkins

April 14th

2.30 p.m. Women's Own
Speaker: Mrs Robson from
Catton.

April 16th-18th

Youth Weekend at Seahouses

April 18th

10.45 a.m. Morning Service
led by Mr P Lucas

6 p.m. Evening Service
led by Mr P Murray

April 21st

7.30 p.m. Bible Study in
schoolroom

April 24th

7 p.m. Warden Chapel
Anniversary Concert by
Stanley Men's Choir

April 25th

10.45 a.m. Morning Service
led by Miss M Peters

6 p.m. Evening Service
led by Mr J A Forster

April 26th

7.30 p.m. Pentecost Bible
Study in schoolroom.

April 28th

2.30 p.m. Women's Own
Speaker: Mr G Wilson

May 1st

Representative Synod at
QEHS Hexham

May 2nd

10.45 a.m. Morning Service
led by Miss E Gittus

6 p.m. Evening Service led
by Rev A Buglass

BEETLE DRIVE & PIE AND
PEA SUPPER

This was held in our
Church Hall on 17th
March. Many thanks
to everyone who made
the event such a
success. £122.60p was
raised for our church
funds.

From the Registers

FUNERAL

9/3/93 John Baxter



ALBANIAN RELIEF PROJECT

Some of the Fellowship Group from Sunderland who we supported last year in their Relief Mission will be returning here to our Methodist Church on Monday 5th April so that we may see the Video that they took of their visit and hear of their experiences. They will also be bringing a clip of film from the Tyne Tees Television programme outlining their plans for this year i.e. a return visit in July with relief help and then a second fly out visit in August for Christian outreach.

On April 5th we all will have an opportunity to identify with the pain of the needs of the world today as we contemplate the pain of our Lord as he approached his crucifixion, we also will have an opportunity to identify with the hope for the world today as we support this group of Christians who are prepared to give and share God's love in every way, making their sacrifice in his name and bringing the outreach of a living God into the lives of the needy.

We too, can make our offering, firstly by praying for the Mission then by encouraging others in our community to join us on 5th April when there will be an opportunity to give financial aid that will be used to purchase medical equipment and for other needs. We can also provide food, sugar, cooking oil, rice, tinned food, vitamin tablets and childrens' vitamin tablets, terry towelling nappies and/or towels that could be cut, baby clothes for all extremes of weather, toys, cots. All these items could be brought to our Church (Haydon Bridge Methodist Church) any time and stored in the shed next to the Sunday School until 5th April when they will be taken to Sunderland for packing.

Please come along and bring others too either at 2.30p.m. for a cup of tea and biscuits, then the Video will be shown from 3.00-4.00p.m. or come along at 7.30p.m. to see the Video and this will be followed by coffee and biscuits.

Thank You.

**Good God,
WHY SHOULD
WE SUFFER ?**



**EDDY BURFITT and LINDSEY GRAY
invite anybody.....**

who knows suffering to cancel all engagements
from **HONDAY 26TH APRIL** to **SATURDAY MAY 1st.**

To hear about - and discuss - **THE STORY OF JOB**
- in which he triumphs through faith!

We will meet you at **THE VICARAGE** each night at
7.30 p.m. - **EXCEPT WEDNESDAY** - when Eddy will
speak at an "open" Mothers Union Meeting.

On **SUNDAY MAY 2nd**, Eddy will preach at 10.0 a.m.
at St. Cuthbert's - on **SUFFERING and SALVATION**



PLEASE READ Job - even if you can't come!

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

This will be held in the Church
Hall on Monday 19th April at 7.30
for the election of Representative
to the P.C.C. and the Deanery
Synod. and to receive the Annual
Reports.

Please see the NOTICE on the
Notice Board for further details.
Nomination forms are available in
church. These should be given
to the vicar when complete.

ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS

This will take place on Sunday
25th April after the Parish
Eucharist.

EASTERTIDE

CHEESE & WINE PARTY

Wednesday 5th May 1993

7.30 p.m.

in the Church Hall

Tickets available from the vicar
and the churchwardens £2.50 each

HAYDON BRIDGE HEALTH CENTRE

NEWS

WARK FOREST EDGE

MELKRIDGE HAYDON BRIDGE WARDEN

CATTON

A FRIENDLY WELCOME - SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS - CHILDREN'S PLAY ROOM - DISPENSING FAMILY PLANNING - WELL PERSON CLINICS - CHILD HEALTH CLINIC - YELLOW FEVER CENTRE

INSOMNIA

Not getting "enough" sleep is a very common problem. Some people are troubled by poor sleep most of the time and almost everyone has had a few bad nights. Often there is an easily recognisable problem - anger, grief, a row, loss of a job, too much to eat or drink, pain or excitement - most parents will have met the last of these on Christmas Eve.

What do we mean by "not enough sleep"? Is it difficulty getting to sleep, is it broken sleep, is it waking early and staying awake? Do you rested and refreshed the next day? Do you look forward to sleep? There are many sorts of sleep problem and many causes of those problems.

What is sleep and why do different people have different sleep patterns? The purpose of sleep is usually thought of as rest and this is definitely part of the answer. It is also a time for the brain to sort out memories and reset the "thinking machine" after the day's work. Lots of research is going on into sleep and new understanding will come but it is a complex process where necessary changes take place to allow us to be healthy and active - it is much more than simply "not being awake".

Babies sleep a lot - honestly! At first the pattern is very patchy but by about three or four months it will settle into a three or four times a day routine. As the child grows this

change again to night time only and may involve one big sleep of up to twelve hours. As the child changes into an adult the period of sleep tends to shorten, though some rapidly growing children can become particularly sleepy - they are not idle they are growing. As adults age they tend to have shorter periods of sleep and find that to sleep solidly through the night becomes unusual. This is not always to do with crying children and the need to empty the bladder (men especially) it is a change due to age. From the fifties onwards a lot of people find it tempting to snooze in front of the telly or after lunch, this is quite normal.

Aiming to sleep from getting into bed to getting up in the morning is not realistic for most adults. It can be very trying to lie awake for hours on end listening to the clock striking and wondering how you are going to get through the day on so little rest. Provided that you are lying comfortably and are reasonably relaxed then the rest that you are getting will be very useful even if sleep won't come.

What can you do to improve the quality of your sleep?

Exercise. Late afternoon or early evening is best - not before bed. If you are physically fit you are more likely to sleep well.

Diet. Don't eat much just before bed and have only small cups of Ovaltine or similar milky drink at bedtime.

Caffeine. Coffee, tea, chocolate and "colas" all contain caffeine - unless specially decaffeinated - and it is very effective at preventing good sleep. Avoid taking any of these within four or five hours of going to bed. As a matter of interest, a lot of the caffeine which is taken out of coffee and tea is put into painkillers to counteract the sleepiness which they might otherwise cause - look at the ingredients when you buy some.

Alcohol. May make you a bit sleepy but will not cause good quality sleep. If nothing else you will probably have to go to the loo! In general avoid alcohol in the late evening.

Bedroom. A good bedroom is a bit cooler than the rest of the house - say 18C or 65F. A comfortable bed will aid sleep, a very soft squashy mattress is not necessarily the best though. Quietness and freedom from irritating noise will help.

It may help to follow the routine suggested here. Go to bed when you are tired and sleepy, there is little point in being restless in bed as well as awake. Put the light out quickly once you are in bed. If after 20-30 minutes you are not asleep get up and go into another room to do something quiet, even boring, until you feel sleepy again. Repeat this sequence as often as necessary until sleep comes. Also follow this routine if you wake for a long period during the night. Try to set reasonably regular bed and rising times. Do not nap in the day, especially do not nap to "catch up". It may take several weeks to settle into a routine.

Sleeping tablets, if used at all, should only be taken for a few days. Not sleeping because of depression is different and sticking to the prescribed dose of your anti-depressant is important. If in doubt about the which sort of tablet you are on - ask.

Next month I shall suggest ways of dealing with mental and physical restlessness which can disturb sleep and with the problem of sleepless children.

CHICKENPOX

A number of children have recently had this infection which is caused by a virus. It is usually a mild illness but very infectious. From catching the virus to getting the spots can be anything from 10 to 21 days. A scattered red rash develops on the body first and later head and limbs. Small blisters develop very quickly on the red patches and over the next few days these dry and fade. The infection can cause only one or two spots or hundreds. Generally an adult with the disease will be more poorly than a child. Spots can also occur in the mouth and throat. Temperature, headache and general poorliness are made worse by the itching caused by the spots. Treatment with rest - not necessarily in bed - Calpol (paracetamol elixir is cheaper and essentially the same) and calamine helps. As with any illness in children be sure to keep them well supplied with drinks to avoid dehydration.

ANNUAL REPORT

If anyone has any comment about last year's annual report or if they would like any particular issue addressed in this year's edition, please let me know.

WAITING TIMES

Having checked the "same day appointment" numbers again - results next month - we are going to try to measure the time people actually wait in the waiting room to be seen. To help us make an accurate assessment please let the receptionist know as you arrive.

PATIENT'S CHARTER

We are in the process of drawing up our own version of a Patient's Charter which we shall publish in the News Letter. If there are any aspects of the way we run the surgery which you would like changed or explained please let us know.

COUCH POTATOES

It is never too late to start exercising and looking after your health. American research showed a 41% reduction in premature death from heart disease in a group of seriously lazy and unhealthy middle aged people who were persuaded to change their ways. Now where has that bicycle gone?..... SF.