



THE HAYDON NEWS



CHRISTMAS PICTURE QUIZ

There are fourteen views of Haydon Bridge in this collage.
List as many as you can in any order and leave your answers with our village newsagents
addressed to PICTURE QUIZ, HAYDON NEWS
Answers to be in by Friday 19th January. One prize of £10 (Editors' decision is final.)

**Issue 10
December
2006**

Published by The Friends Of Haydon Bridge

FRIENDS OF HAYDON BRIDGE
MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM for 2006

Please find enclosed membership/donation £.....
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Enquiries in the first instance to treasurer@haydon-news.co.uk

Unless you live locally and you may leave it at
J.& M. Clarke (newsagents) for collection.
Addressed to The Haydon News

Thank you.

If you live locally you may leave it at the Coop, J.& M. Clarke,
or J.&L. Alder newsagents for collection.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

And so, after almost two years, during which we have had three or four consultation sessions and several visits from officials/engineers with note pads and maps, we are informed that no action to improve defences is to be taken in the foreseeable future, as it just wouldn't be cost effective. It might help when it comes to getting a reasonable insurance premium, it might allow people to sleep easier in their beds on those nights of high winds and torrential downpours. It would certainly help protect vulnerable properties in the village. But no. After due consideration, more consultation is the way forward. Long letters of 'politics speak' to bewilder the reader and confuse the issues. Yes, we'll have wardens, warnings, sandbags, (windbags) and be better prepared next time, but improved flood prevention measures ? **NO**

**Thank you Environment Agency !
M.P.**

HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TO ALL.

Friends of Haydon Bridge Annual General Meeting
Monday, 22nd. January 2007 at 7.30pm.
Haydon Bridge Community Centre.

All members welcome
The chairman must receive at least one week's notice of items for inclusion in the agenda

HAYDON NEWS

contributions and crosswords to:

editors@haydon-news.co.uk

*or handed in to J & M CLARKE (newsagents) Church Street.
Addressed to The Haydon News*

The HAYDON NEWS is edited, published and printed by the Friends of Haydon Bridge.
It is distributed free of charge to all but the most distant households in Haydon Parish.

The committee of the Friends of Haydon Bridge thank those members who produce the Haydon News, people who contribute items for publication, our advertisers and distributors.

EDITORIAL POLICY OF THE HAYDON NEWS.

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

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

Dennis Telford (Chairman). chairman@haydon-news.co.uk

Editors: Mike Parkin and Dennis Telford.

Committee of the 'Friends of Haydon Bridge'

Dennis Telford (chairman), Dennis Gilert (vice chairman), Elena Parkin (secretary),
Alastair Bowen (Treasurer), Sylvia Mitchell, Mike Parkin, Catherine Hall, Storey Hall.

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES from the meeting in November 2006

Next year the Parish Council intend to undertake a parish appraisal and produce a Parish Plan for Haydon Bridge. Jane Harte from the Community Council of Northumberland spoke to the council about funding a Parish Plan. She pointed out that a Parish Plan involved consultation with as many people in the community as possible, on the future development of the village. Funding is available from Defra, but is administered by the Community Council. Jane also pointed out that some parishes had included a design statement in their plan and that these could inform future planning decisions regarding developments in the village. Examples of plans, produced recently by other local parish councils, were shown to councillors.

Public Participation.

The church clock issue was raised yet again as the clock hasn't been working for three weeks or so. The problem is to be dealt with and a full report requested on work done on the clock mechanism during the year.

A complaint was received about dog fouling on the old bridge. The dog warden is to be requested to patrol the area during the early morning in the hope of identifying and prosecuting the irresponsible dog owner(s).

A street light on Land Ends Road was reported not working.

Meeting.

7 councillors were present.

Matters arising.

A decision on the future of Haydon Bridge library has been deferred until December by Northumberland Library Services.

A councillor expressed concern that the council had not been given information on the general operating costs of the library (rental, utilities, etc), as these will need to be known before the parish council can reach a decision on whether or not it is prepared to take over the running of the village library.

At the time of the meeting no further information was available on the Spa Well footpath. (See page 14 for the latest development).

The village notice board has not yet been repaired as there is some difficulty acquiring a new lock.

The 'drop in' consultation session held by the Environment Agency on Nov 2nd was well attended.

A letter received from the Agency was read out by a councillor. The letter mentioned the success of the consultation exercise and the response by councillors to a report on flood alleviation and prevention measures to be taken in the Tyne Valley area.

Councillors had drawn attention to the lack of detail and specific proposals for the Haydon Bridge area, other than the report stating that the village falls within an area where flood prevention measures may be taken.

The letter explained that there were no detailed proposals for improving flood defences in Haydon Bridge as cost-benefit analysis had indicated that the cost of such work could not be justified in terms of the numbers of properties/people benefiting. However further consultation is to take place ! (See Editorial page 2)

After several letters/telephone calls to NCC and Tynedale Council no decision could be made on whether or not the parish council would be allowed to hang decorative lights on the bridge for the Christmas period. Various proposals for lights on the bridge were discussed by the councillors, but none were agreed, as the cost would be too prohibitive, or permission unlikely to be given.

The Christmas lights are to be limited to Church Street this year, although further enquiries are to be made about hanging lights on the bridge next year. Over £328 was raised from the jar collections. The council's thanks was extended to those responsible. (Letter on page 11).

Following a fire at a small riverside storage site last month, the council wrote to the owners expressing concern that the site presented a risk to the public, as the boundary fence had been destroyed. A letter of reply, received by the council, stated that the owner was at present too ill to deal with the situation, but that they would most likely dispose of the site.

Tynedale Council Minutes.

None available.

Correspondence.

Councillors received an invitation to attend a meeting with Network Rail to discuss the proposals for Haydon Bridge level crossing. The meeting is to be held in December.

Councillors were also invited to the December meeting of the Tyne Valley Rail Users Group.

Finance.

Following an additional council meeting to discuss next year's finances, the council agreed to request a precept of £31,000 for 2007/8. This includes expenditure on; Christmas lights, a donation to the Community Centre and Langley Village Hall, Shaftoe Green maintenance (new item of expenditure), emptying dog bins, payment to PC employees, possible contribution towards a youth worker, contingency for the library scheme, brown tourist signs.....

AOB.

A letter is to be sent to Milecastle Housing to highlight the present parking problems in Langley/Greenwich Gardens.

A councillor was pleased to note that recently the community police were in the village more often.

Next meeting December 14th. 7.30pm
M.P.

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Esmond Faulks (chairman)
Mr. D Charlton
Mrs. E Charlton
Mrs. V Fletcher
Mr. M R Parkin
Mrs. C Duffy
Mr. D Smith*
Mr. R Snowdon
Mr. E Brown.
Mr. M Zellas.
Vacancy

(* also a Tynedale Councillor)

Parish Clerk
Mrs. C McGivern

THE VISITOR (part 2)

This month I continue my look back to a time when Haydon Bridge resident Fred Crawley was Chief Constable of Newcastle upon Tyne Police. Mr. Crawley served from 1925 until his retirement in 1944 and lived at 'Hill House' in our parish, eventually moving to Hexham where he died forty years ago on October 4th 1966. (Part 1 of this story was published in November)

In spite of Frederick James Crawley's unprecedented record of success and innovation in the police service, his time on Tyneside is likely to be for ever remembered for the 'disappearance' of a fire engine and the subsequent 'City of Newcastle Inquiry' in 1944, established by the Home Office as a result of resolutions by the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

It was from this time sadly, that doubts were cast over the otherwise exemplary career of our Haydon Bridge resident and Newcastle's Chief Constable.

It seems to me from my research, that Frederick Crawley was in part a victim of circumstances, which included individual political rivalries and early attempts at a cover up by some city councillors. Nevertheless, as the man running the service and ultimately responsible for the men and equipment in his charge, he was almost certainly guilty of errors of judgement that brought about his early retirement.

The first questions in relation to the whereabouts of fire engine BB999 were raised in 1940 when the City of Newcastle auditors noticed that the appliance no longer had a book value recorded against it. As a consequence of the auditors' efforts to fill in the blank space, the 'disappearance' of the fire engine came to be investigated. Had it been sold? If so, the sale hadn't been reported to the Fire Brigade and Stations Committee and neither an account nor receipt for the sale could be found.

At this point, in the interest of clarity, it is worth outlining the organisational and administrative processes of the City Council at the time.

With the onset of the Second World War, on the 31st March 1939 Fred Crawley took up the position of Air Raid Precaution Controller for the city as well as his role of Chief Constable. He was also drawing part of his salary as head of the Fire Brigade. Of perhaps even greater significance in

*the light of the events which were about to unfold; on 16th June 1939 Councillor Richard Embleton was appointed Deputy ARP Controller. Councillor Embleton was **also** chairman of the Watch Committee, which administered the Fire Brigade as an adjunct to the Police Force, **and** Superintendent of the city's Special Constabulary (Mounted Branch), **and** chairman of the Emergency Committee which was appointed to oversee decisions taken by the ARP Controller and his Deputy, in matters of civil defence.*

So, in effect, Councillor Richard Embleton was chairman of a committee which kept a check on the activities of... Yes! You've probably worked it out; Mr. Crawley and the same Mr. Embleton!!

Although questions regarding BB999 were first raised in 1940 by the auditors, the 'disappearance' was kept quiet until 1942 when a letter addressed to the Town Clerk and dated 9th February of that year, was sent from the 'Newcastle and Northumberland Ratepayers Union', raising questions about the city fire engine BB999.

The letter was shown to the Watch Committee and it appears that later that year, on the 4th September, the committee decided that even at that late stage it would be expedient to put a value on the fire engine which had been, 'disposed of'.

So the appliance which did not have a value in the auditors' report in 1940 was apparently worth £10-£15 in 1942, a figure based on, 'Offers that had been received!'

No mention was made at this September meeting of the fact that; 'No offers had been accepted for the fire engine, apparently no one knew who had 'disposed' of it and no one appeared to know where it was.'

A further letter from the secretary of the Ratepayers' Union was sent to the town Clerk in February 1943, again querying the 'irregular disposal of the fire engine BB999' and asking that the letter be read to the full City Council. The letter was in fact read only to the Watch Committee and they decided not to take any action.

If the members of the Watch Committee were hoping that this would dampen down the flames of controversy and the affair would be

kept out of the public domain, as it had been since 1940, they were very much mistaken. They had reckoned without an unlikely alliance between a dogged councillor, William McKeag, and the left wing Ratepayers' Union!

On the 31st March 1943 a question was raised at a Newcastle City Council meeting by Councillor McKeag:

"Was it a fact that a letter dated 9.2.42 was addressed to the Town Clerk by the Newcastle and Northumberland Ratepayers' Union with a request that the same be placed before the council? The letter referred to the irregular disposal of a fire engine."

The council members were informed that the letter had been shown to the Watch Committee and would be brought to the next council meeting.

It was suggested by one councillor that it would be best if the letter was not published!

At a full council meeting on the 5th May 1943, Mr. McKeag gave notice of his intention to ask the Watch Committee certain questions about, "a fire engine". More than twenty questions were asked including: the date on which the machine was disposed of. The date on which payment was made and the value of the machine at the time of disposal. How many tenders for the vehicle were sought and received? Who made the highest offer? Was the machine fitted with a valuable pump and where was it now? And, whether any councillor taking part in the sale of the machine was connected with the acquiring concern.

The chairman of the Watch Committee, Mr. Richard Embleton answered Mr. McKeag's questions with some difficulty, and the questions and answers were published for all to see.

Any effort to ensure that the affairs of the city council were transparent was of course laudable, but it was clear that certain people were going to be hurt in the process and there were those who did not appear to be too disappointed. Certainly, as a result of Mr. McKeag's persistence, the position of the chairman of the Watch Committee was to become untenable and the Chief Constable, as head of the fire brigade, was placed in an almost impossible situation to say the least.

It wasn't long before the 'disappearance' of a very large 75 h.p. vehicle equipped with a 500 gal. per minute water pump

and various other fire fighting appliances, attracted the attention of the local and eventually the national press. The City Council Finance Committee's earlier report that, 'The fire engine could not be traced' and the Town Clerk's statement that he had, "Searched high and low, everywhere (he) thought it was possible to search and could not trace the engine at all," ensured that the incident and its fall out would attract the maximum publicity, rumour, gossip and 'in jokes'.

On the 28th July 1943 a resolution was moved at a City Council meeting that in view of the unsatisfactory state of affairs revealed by the chairman of the Watch Committee's replies to the questions asked of him:

'The (Newcastle City) Council request the Home Secretary to institute an inquiry into the administration of the Watch Committee, and in particular as to its conduct in relation to matters referred to in Councillor McKeag's questions and answers.'

In spite of some opposition and doubts occasioned by pressure being brought to bear on individuals, (for example, one councillor was reminded that if he voted **for** the inquiry motion then an issue of ten gallons of petrol which (he) had received, might come up!) the motion was carried.

In October 1943 the Home Office agreed to comply with the council's request to institute an inquiry, and by February 1944 there was no stopping the ball rolling when the Secretary of State indicated that he would consider the disposal of fire engine BB999 but also wished to, 'Widen the inquiry into further certain allegations' including, 'The administration of the Police, Fire Services and Civil Defence. The use of personnel, food, stores and equipment intended for the use of the aforesaid services, and the acquisition and use of 'Citroen' an east coast Scottish fishing vessel later named 'Premier II'.'

(I will not pursue the interesting case of the 'Premier II' here, other than to mention that it was supposed to be purchased for Newcastle Corporation but ended up in the ownership of a company at St. Peter's Basin, on the banks of the Tyne, to whom the council paid to have it adapted as a fire float and then paid hire charges for it's use. The Float sank on three occasions but fortunately the owners were on hand to salvage it from the Tyne on behalf of the council!)

My sources, who worked in Newcastle at the time of the inquiry, are certain that the Home Office welcomed the opportunity to make an example of Newcastle City Council, in the hope that it would send a message to other local authorities across the country. The ensuing series of events lead to national notoriety for the Newcastle Fire Brigade and had the residents of Newcastle and Mr. Crawley's home village Haydon Bridge, hanging on every word.

We know well of course that the 'Geordies' are renowned for being able to laugh at their own predicament even in the most serious of circumstances, and this national scandal was not without its humour locally.

I am told that: "Once the word got out, every opportunity was taken by the public to chalk **BB999** on the back of all fire brigade and police vehicles and equipment."

And firemen at the time were forever being asked. "Have you counted your fire engines lately?"

"There were others however, of a more sensitive nature, who were too embarrassed to admit any connection with the fire brigade and they would talk together in whispers about their employment when they were in a pub or in company."

The Right Honourable Herbert Morrison, Secretary of State, appointed Roland Burrows K.C. to conduct the Inquiry Tribunal which was established to look into, 'This matter of urgent public importance'.

The inquiry lasted 30 days and cost £40,183 and 3 shillings. More than a million and a quarter words were spoken, 128 witnesses made 225 appearances and the index to the evidence comprised 2,400 pages.

Haydon Bridge resident Frederick Crawley figured prominently in the inquiry when he opened on his own behalf. It was reported that 'he was a great orator and that stood him in good stead in relation to the inquiry'. Chief Constable Crawley expressed his opinion that, "During the war period no fire fighting equipment that was capable of useful service should have been disposed of."

The full report of the 'Newcastle upon Tyne Inquiry. 1944' which is 60 pages and contains 40,000 words, makes interesting reading and is available through libraries. *(If your village still*

has a library!) Clearly it isn't possible to do justice to the inquiry in these notes, however there are a few issues which made the headlines in 1944 and were of particular interest to Haydonians in the light of Frederick Crawley's Haydon Bridge connection.

It is important to recognise that while individual councillors at Newcastle had every reason to seek answers to questions that were of genuine concern to the public, for example the Watch Committee chairman's activities and the 'disappearance' of BB999, the extended inquiry also provided an opportunity for others with long held personal grievances to air their views, and many of the side issues raised by witnesses were unsubstantiated.

Police Photography: It was stated by one ex 'Police Sergeant with a grievance' that one New Year's Day in 1936 or 1937 or 1938, a Newcastle City police photographer had been instructed by the Chief Constable to go to his home in Haydon Bridge to take photographs of a meet of the Haydon Hunt, at which Fred Crawley and Richard Embleton participated.

The inquiry ruled that this must have been done as a favour to the Chief Constable in the photographer's spare time as, 'Haydon Bridge is not in the City of Newcastle.'

Police Horses: There was a suggestion that draught harness for a farm (Hill House) cultivated by the daughter of the Chief Constable, was cleaned or repaired at the Police Headquarters by a member of the mounted police.

The inquiry concluded that this work probably had been done and ought not to have been.

Motor Vehicles: On one occasion in September 1940 the log book of one council car showed a journey of 548 miles. The car was being used in connection with the occupation of a house at Haydon Bridge by Mrs. Embleton and her family.

The inquiry accepted that the car may have been used to convey Councillor Embleton back and forward two or three times a week to his accommodation at Jesmond Dene House in Newcastle. The inquiry further suggested that, 'The general use of motor vehicles for apparently private purposes caused resentment and the growth of rumours.' Although an allegation that certain chauffeurs were invited to take, 'a load of councillors' to the Lake District for a week was 'completely lacking in

supporting evidence’.

Materials: Evidence was given that paraffin was taken from A.R.P. stores and sent to a house at Haydon Bridge which Councillor Embleton rented for a short period.

The inquiry found that no blame was attached to Councillor Embleton in this regard.

Tyre Covers: Evidence was given that in 1942, tyre covers from an A.R.P. car were changed with those tyres on the car of Mr. Nickolls, the Chief Constable’s son-in-law.

The inquiry dismissed the evidence and said that, ‘No reflection can be cast on Mr Nickolls or the Chief Constable in this regard.’

Many of the rumours that surrounded the case were similarly dismissed or unfounded. For example, it was never proved that, ‘A lot of to-ing and fro-ing was done by the police to Haydon Bridge, and that police horses were used to entertain the Chief’s daughters and friends.’ Nor was a suggestion that, ‘Firemen were used to build a hemmel at Hill House for the Chief Constable during their working hours.’ (*A hemmel that has been converted more recently to the cottage ‘Honeybrook’*)

The inquiry concluded that: ‘In many of the matters investigated during the inquiry there had been irregularities arising from personal interest, misuse of public property and loss through mismanagement,’ and it was stated that every man in the police force and the fire brigade, including the Chief Constable, appeared to consider that the wishes of the chairman of the Watch Committee had to be complied with. However, while ‘there was implicit in the allegations that were inquired into, a suggestion that corruption was prevalent in the services concerned’:

The conclusion of the inquiry on 18th April 1944, was that ‘no evidence was called which supports any such suggestion’, and it was held ‘proved that the civil defence and other organisations in question were honestly administered’.

And what happened to the fire engine, the disappearance of which started this chain of events?

BB999 was eventually traced to the ‘Premier Electric Welding Company’ at St. Peter’s Basin alongside the River Tyne, but by this time it had been dismantled and parts of it sold off for ‘scrap’. This company was owned in part by the chairman of the Watch

Committee but a committee of the council was informed that “the man with whom the bargain had been made is now dead”.

Belatedly, the city treasurer received a £10 cheque from the ‘sale’ of BB999.

It is interesting that even now, 62 years after the tribunal, I am told by Craig Tulip a Haydon Bridge full time fireman at Newcastle, that new recruits to the Newcastle upon Tyne Fire Brigade are soon introduced to the story of the missing fire engine, a tale that has been handed down by generations of firemen and has become brigade folklore.

In the wake of the Home Office Inquiry, Chief Constable Frederick James Crawley offered to relinquish his post and at a city council meeting on 11th May 1944 his application to retire was accepted.

On 7th June the discredited Watch Committee was disbanded.

So, on 12th May 1944, Sixty three year old Fred Crawley retired to the Tyne Valley to become, ‘adviser and farm manager’ for his daughter Gwen who ran two farms at Haydon Bridge; one of 27 acres and ‘Hill House’ which was 150 acres at that time.

The Sunday Sun of 14th May 1944 said that after 42 years as a police officer Mr. F.J. Crawley had transformed himself into a country worker. Fred was immediately into ‘his riding breeches, a blue sweater open at the neck and surrounded by his dogs’. He told the newspaper reporter.

“I have been much in the public eye of late, but actually I don’t care a fig for public opinion.”

“I think the countryman’s nervous system is to be envied and if I can in any way condition my own to it I shall consider that I have made greater gain in life than mere success through money or position. I originally had no knowledge of farming. I was brought into it through my daughter’s illness ten years ago when she first came to Hill House. Since then I have studied it in theory and I do not share the views of the pessimists in respect to the future of farming. I believe it has a great future into which science, machinery and collective help will have to be still more applied.”

“Whether or not I will take up farming as my new career I cannot yet say.

The future is too obscure for me to answer that question at present.”

“One of my great interests has always

been what is commonly known as spiritualism, and as the result of my personal investigations in collaboration with the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, I have satisfied myself that we survive bodily death.”

Until his ‘bodily death’ in October 1966, Fred Crawley’s annual birthdays were celebrated with friends and these luncheons were often reported in the local press. We are told that, ‘Chief Constable Crawley’s unorthodox methods, even though notably successful, did not always commend themselves to Whitehall; and much he cared! Fred Crawley always had strange tales to tell of sea-doggery, criminal skulduggery and of Vladimir Lenin, whom he knew quite well.’

I remember that solemn day in October 1966 being as depressing as the grave side service itself. Storm clouds hung low over the city, darkening the sky. Beneath the sodden turf of Old Jesmond Cemetery, decaying generations gave sustenance to a tangle of undergrowth that inched relentlessly and unkempt over angled head stones fallen through years of neglect. A grim north east wind howled through the trees about us.

Is it any wonder then, that the memory of this remarkable man still lingers in the mind of a once young impressionable joiner from Haydon Bridge who, while lowering the coffin into an unmarked grave, recalled the deceased’s stories of a friendship with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and their shared thoughts of a belief in the preternatural, and wondered in what future form he might next meet his father’s annual visitor?

(Frederick James Crawley left two daughters. Dorothy (Nickolls) and Gwen who married Nathan Hewitt of New Alston.)

Sources of reference:

-Report of the City of Newcastle Inquiry Tribunal 1944.

-Various Proceedings of Newcastle City Council and Watch Committees (1939-1944).

-The Newcastle Journal, Evening Chronicle, The Sunday Sun and The Hexham Courant.

-‘Constable’ A booklet outlining the history of Northumbria Police, compiled by F.C. Moffatt.

My thanks are also due to:

-George Hutton (for introducing me to former members of the Newcastle City Fire Brigade).

-Bill Ingham and Ronnie Walker both of whom knew or worked with Chief Constable Crawley and were prepared to discuss their views, knowledge and experiences with me.

-Norman Davidson of Cullercoats, whose father was Deputy Superintendent at Newcastle City Fire Brigade. Norman has shared his own research with me.

-Haydonians Bill Foster and Evelyn Tait, who knew Fred Crawley and his family during their time at Hill House.

A SUNDAY CHRONICLE

The change in ownership of Werner and Mary Nagel's shop on Ratcliffe Road, brings to an end a remarkable business connection in Haydon Bridge with the Marsh family.

It was seventy years ago of which we can be certain, but probably much longer than that, when Jack Marsh obtained a sole agreement to distribute Sunday newspapers in our parish and beyond. The newspapers were brought to Haydon Bridge by train from Newcastle and laid out on the station platform seats, where they were sorted before Jack's 'paper boys' delivered them to houses on the 'North Side' and the 'South Side'.

Bill Foster tells me that he remembers Jack loading the remaining papers into panniers hanging from each side of his bicycle, and cycling across the bridge. Maurice Armstrong, a pupil at Shaftoe Trust School at the time, was one of Jack's paper boys in the 1930's. "After going to the first Church of England service on a Sunday morning, I would go along to the station, pick up my papers from the platform and deliver them to most of the houses on the north side of the river. When the job was done I had to go back to Jack Marsh's house and hand in the money."

Jack Marsh lived in number 4 Shaftoe Street, next to Todd's shop, before

moving to Innerhaugh and Maurice remembers a large table in the front room with Sunday newspapers spread across it.

"Folk who didn't have their paper delivered would call in to Jack's front room and pick one up from there."

So Jack Marsh, who lived until he was 103 years old, established a routine that continued in its various forms until his granddaughter Mary and her husband Werner retired last month.

A prized agreement to distribute Sunday papers was not something that was given up easily in those days and although the 'Sundays' were coveted by our other newsgents; 'Brogdons' and their successors 'Hardings' who sold daily newspapers, Jack's son Wilf was determined to carry on the family business, which included a Sunday newspaper wholesale licence for the district. They were still without business premises however and our station waiting room continued in its secondary role as a sorting and distribution centre for Marsh's Sunday papers.

Wilf, who worked at Settlingstones mine, his wife Mary and their family lived in number 4 Hordley Acres but as a result of a small win on the football pools in 1953, Wilf and Mary were able to purchase 43 Ratcliffe

Road; premises that had been a general dealers at one time but in 1953 were the home of the Osselton family.

The Osselton and Marsh families exchanged houses and following internal alterations to the ground floor of the Ratcliffe Road house, 'W & M Marsh', as we have known it, was established.

The sale of newspapers on a Sunday provided Wilf and Mary with a unique business opportunity, as their shop was the only one between Newcastle and Carlisle situated alongside the A69 and open for business on the Sabbath. There were often long queues down Ratcliffe Road on a Sunday morning as locals and travelling customers waited to get into the small front room that served as a general dealers, to make their purchases. You may remember that officially, many goods weren't allowed to be sold on a Sunday, so these had to be well hidden before being carried onto Ratcliffe Road. Wrapped in newspaper of course!!

Since 1971, while the name above the shop front has remained as it was in 1953, the business has been in the capable hands of Werner and his wife, Wilf's daughter, Mary. Werner and Mary soon developed the business further by selling daily as well as Sunday papers and extra space was needed, so the ground floor premises were extended into the kitchen of the original living accommodation.

Over the years, the Marsh and Nagel families have been grateful for the support of their long serving staff, for example Nancy Marshall, Flo and Tommy Ord and more recently Rene Irwin, as well as their 'paper boys', particularly Dennis Bell and Munro Hall.

Werner and Mary have followed a path established by Mary's grandfather over seventy years ago and continued by her parents. There's no doubt that they both deserve a well earned rest after thirty five years, seven days a week and fifty two weeks of the year serving the public.

But we will miss them!

Mary's welcoming smile and memories of Haydon Bridge past has brightened many a dull afternoon, and shared tales of gossip, rumour and irreverence, with Werner and fellow customers on a Sunday morning, have been a joy.

We wish Werner, Mary and their family every happiness in retirement and we look forward to their 'Journal (or perhaps confessions) of a Haydon Bridge Newsagent' in a future issue of The Haydon News.

My name is James Lonsdale and I have a class photo from 1954, the year I started school. I left Haydon Bridge in 1956 to live in Preston where I grew up. I have lived in New Zealand for the past twenty years but would love to make contact with anyone who was in my class at Shaftoe Trust School. (jim@bricksandmortar.biz) My grandparents lived in Haydon Bridge until they died and my grandfather was the village blacksmith, George Thompson.



Back Row: ? D. Armstrong. A. Crowe. A. Armstrong. M. Murphy. A. Bates. ?
2nd Row: H. Elliot. J. Lonsdale. M. Alexander. ? S. Moffat. A. Tait. R. Matriflio. C. Marshall.
3rd: V. Henderson. M. Turnbull. A. Robinson. A. Engwert. M. Worrel. J. Ghilchrist. P. Moore. Y. Richardson.
Front Row: P. Brown. D. Cameron. B. Robley. K. Powell. M. Smith.

Can anyone fill in the three missing names? If you can, please contact the Editors. Thank you.

A69 HAYDON BRIDGE BYPASS

“Public Exhibition”

In order to give residents the chance to find out more about the construction of the bypass and to meet representatives of the project team, a public exhibition is being held.

Please come along to the exhibition where you will have the chance to discuss any concerns you may have about the work that will be taking place, and to meet the project team.

Exhibition Programme:

Venue: Haydon Bridge Community Centre

Dates and Times: **Friday 19TH January 2007** - **10.00am to 8.30pm**
Saturday 20th January 2007 - **9.00am to 1.00pm**

Merry Christmas

THE RAILWAY HOTEL SENIOR CITIZENS' COMPLIMENTARY CHRISTMAS ROAST

Haydon Bridge's O A P's are invited to join Sue and Michael for a Christmas lunch at The Railway Hotel **on Thursday 21st December from 12.00 noon.**

Please join us for our Christmas celebrations

Sue - Mike



If you would like to book, please ring: 684254

MAJOR ROAD AHEAD!

Looking over the Proposed South Tyne viaduct towards Haydon Bridge



HAYDON BRIDGE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

7.30 pm

In the Community Centre

December 19th
Christmas meal

If you intend to join us, please let a committee member know.

Thank you

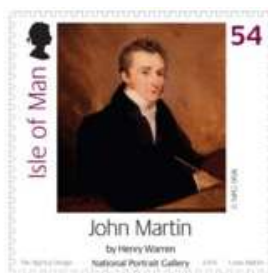
January 16th 2007

Mike Fry
Poetry and Drama

JOHN MARTIN and the ISLE of MAN

The Isle of Man Post Office is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the National Portrait Gallery, in London, with a set of eight stamps. Each stamp depicts an image of a personality with Manx connections.

Our most famous son, **John Martin**, joins Dame Agatha Christie, Ewan Christian, Sir Hall Cain, William Bligh, Lady Maria Callcott, Sir John Betjeman & Sir Edward Elgar in this hall of fame.



Haydon Bridge Senior Citizens

Economist Milton Friedman famously said, "There's no such thing as a free lunch."

Well. Perhaps he was wrong!

Haydon Bridge's O A P's can start their Christmas celebrations early this year, due to the generosity of Susan and Michael Zellas.

Sue and Michael are providing a free roast lunch for our pensioners, on Thursday 21st December at **The Railway Hotel.**

THANK YOU

Jean and Billy Heron have delivered 108 copies of The Haydon News each month, to houses in Greenwich gardens and Langley Gardens, and we take this opportunity to thank them sincerely for their support over the years.

From this December issue we are pleased to welcome Doris Murphy, Sammy Smith and Christine Youngman to our team of delivery volunteers.

They have kindly offered to share the task that Jean and Billy have undertaken so diligently for more than 15 years.

The Friends of Haydon Bridge value the long standing arrangement that 'The Haydon News' should be delivered free to all but he most remote houses in our parish, and this couldn't be achieved without the help of the thirty one distributors, who together deliver over 900 copies to your doors. Once again, on behalf of The Friends' and you, our readers, we thank each one of them for giving up their valuable time.

Thank you!

HAYDON BRIDGE NATURE CLUB

14th December: Margaret Jacot.
The Ancient Kingdom of Ladakh.

4th Jan. 2007: Elizabeth Fish.
Australia.

18th Jan: A.G.M. And speaker.

1st Feb: Trevor Bridges.
Volcanoes in the Western U.S.A.

7.15 pm

In the Methodist Church

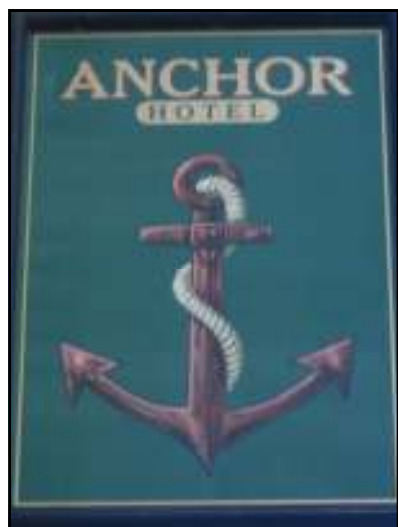
THE FOOD OF LOVE?



I can imagine that there was a long queue for this event in the Railway Hotel's calendar.

And no doubt a few long faces when the only 'course' on offer was a bowl of dumpling soup!

OUR HAYDON BRIDGE LICENSEES THANK ALL THEIR CUSTOMERS FOR SUPPORTING THEM DURING 2006
AND WISH ALL THEIR CUSTOMERS AND OUR READERS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



ANCHOR HOTEL

Christmas Day:

Open 12.00-2.00pm and 8.00-4.00pm

Boxing Day:

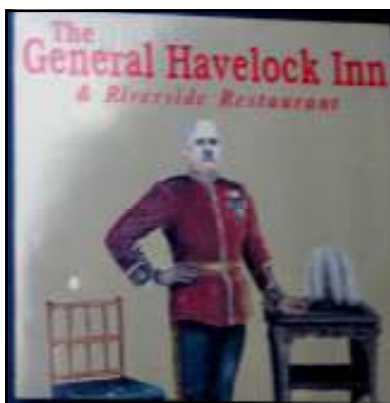
Disco at night.

New Year's Eve Celebrations.

New Year's day:

Open for Breakfast (£5)
11.00am-1.00pm

For further information telephone
684227



THE GENERAL HAVELOCK

Christmas Day:

Our bar is open at lunch time and closed in the evening.

New Year's Eve:

Quiz at 11.00pm.
Open to all

Fireworks at midnight.
Open to all.

For further information telephone
684283



RAILWAY HOTEL

Thursday 21st December:

Haydon Bridge Senior Citizens' Complimentary Roast Lunch. (midday)

Saturday 23rd December:

'The Promise' Bob & Emma entertain.

Boxing Day:

Free Buffet.

New Year's Eve:

Celebrate at the Railway Hotel.

New Years Day:

Free Buffet.

For further information telephone
684254



Saturday 16th December:

Children's Christmas Party. 1.00pm

Singer Nathan Wells plus Disco. 8.00pm
(In aid of Andy Teasdale appeal)

Sunday 24th December:

Bingo, Key draw and Christmas Disco.

Christmas Day:

Open lunchtime. 11.00-1.00pm
Closed in the evening.

Thursday 28th December:

Bar Olympics. 8.15pm

Saturday 30th December:

'Tommy Taylor's Mad Karaoke.' 8.00pm

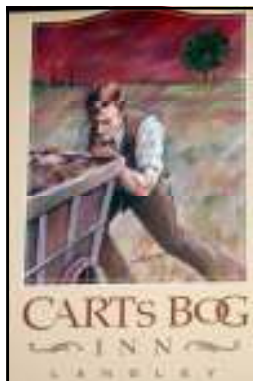
New Year's Eve:

Bingo, Key Draw, Disco. from 7.30pm

New Year's Day: At 12 noon.

Eddie Charles vocalist and Disco.

For further information telephone
684383



CARTS BOG INN

Festive Bookings Now Being Taken

Christmas day:

Open 12.00-2.00pm

Boxing Day:

12.00-4.00pm for food. Bar to 10.30pm.

New Year's Eve:

12.00-2.00pm & 6.00-9.00pm for food.
12.00-10.30pm bar.

New Year's Day:

12.00-2.00pm food. Bar open to 4.00pm

For further information telephone
684338



LANGLEY CASTLE

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT

Enjoy a festive luncheon in our restaurant

CHRISTMAS FARE £18.95

Including mulled wine to start

Bookings taken for Christmas Parties

£26.95 per person

Couples or groups

Full Menu and Disco

NEW YEAR FULLY BOOKED

For further information telephone
688888

**A CHEERY CHRISTMAS
CORDWANGLE**

Gold Award

Mary Douthwaite and Sonia Armstrong have continued their work on the Healthy Business award project and this year their efforts have been rewarded with the Gold Award. The presentation was made on 15.11.06 at a well-attended event. We are most grateful to Mary and Sonia for their efforts.

As part of the project we have held a raffle for some Fair Trade products (donated by the Haydon Bridge Co-op – Thank them very much). The winning ticket is **pink** number **72** (seventy two). Would the owner of the winning ticket collect their prize from the Health Centre before 20.12.06 please?

As part of the day's proceedings a number of talks were given. The most novel was that delivered by a 'Laughter practitioner'. He highlighted the many benefits of having a good laugh – including, but not limited to, well toned buttocks, fewer wrinkles and lower blood pressure. He also made us have several good laughs.

A memorable quotation was given: 'There is no way to happiness – happiness is the way.' - from the Dalai Llama. In which spirit I offer the following:

**They don't write 'em like that
any more.**

The greatest cultural achievement of the twentieth century was 'Round the Horne' – a radio series from the sixties. Amongst the highlights, for me, is the following ditty from the gander-bag of Rambling Syd Rumpo – you can interpolate the missing three verses from these, the first and last:

(To be sung to the tune of 'Green Grow the Rushes Oh!')

I'll sing you one oh,
Green grow my nadgers oh!
What is your one oh?
One's the grunge upon my
splod, masking my cordwangle.

I'll sing you five oh,
Green grow my nadgers oh!
What is your five oh?
Five are the wogglers up my
spong,
Four for my whirdler's bent oh,
Three are the times I've lunged
my groats,
Two are me loominthrums, see
how they jangle,
One's the grunge upon my
splod, it's **RUINED** my
cordwangle.

Try it instead of the usual
karaoke this Christmas – and
talking of remarkable
performances:

Consultation

A big thank you to those who consented to have their consultations videoed in recent weeks. This was in aid of our further education and is intended to enable us to refine our approach to people and their problems. Only the partners and a fellow GP, who is acting as coach and facilitator, will see the videos. When the exercise is finished the recordings will be erased permanently.

When I was training, John Logey-Baird was just experimenting with early moving picture transmission and we did not have the option of seeing ourselves in action. Now, thirty years later, I am not so sure about the awful truth that is revealed – grey trousers, when seen from behind, suggest an elephant that has lost all hope and ambition and a DA is just soooo retro.

Contrary to what you may have imagined, a visit to the doctor is not just a free-wheeling chat about this and that but a serious attempt to uncover the nature of the problem that has brought you to the surgery and to prompt the disclosure of anything else

that may be on your mind. People often have several issues to discuss that may or may not be linked but which are all important.

Critically, a consultation is not something that a doctor does to a patient, it is a joint endeavour, requiring thought and care from both as they work together toward dealing with whatever has brought about the consultation.

We have to listen both to what is said and what is not said – what are the subtexts of the exchange? Non-verbal communication (posture etc.) often conveys much useful information. Intuition, experience and prior knowledge of the patient and their circumstances often play a part. In a practice, such as ours, in a small community clues may come from simply being aware of events within the community. Men and women communicate differently. Children and teenagers present their own challenges arising from differing world-views, vocabulary, maturity, age difference and so on.

The knowledge, beliefs, hopes and fears of the patient all colour the interaction. Do not discount the importance of those same factors in the doctor and add in the particular range of experience that that doctor has to call on – different practitioners can draw very different conclusions from the same information. Ask ten doctors and you'll get twelve opinions.

Having welcomed the patient and opened the discussion, we can move through listing the problems and dealing with each and then check that we have understood correctly what has been said. Examination and testing come after the initial discussion and can confirm or refute the initial suspicions – leading in turn to more discussion, questions and tests.

Once a working diagnosis is reached then it and its significance can be talked about and a plan of action roughed out. We aim to include the patient at every step and achieve the best results when that co-operation is forthcoming. When agreement is reached and future plans set, it is important to check that everything that needed to be said has been said and that there are no

uncertainties for either patient or doctor.

Then we say Good Bye for now and repeat the process for the next patient – and all in ten minutes too!

Obviously there are short cuts. Problems may be simple and obvious. Numerous elephant traps lie in wait for the unwary – most obviously a simple failure to understand each other or failure to uncover the full extent of the problem(s). Being wrong sometimes is inevitable.

The advantage of having several doctors in one practice is that they can discuss problems together and share experience and also patients can see another doctor if they wish. It's all one big collaboration.

On reviewing my own consultations I was very surprised to see just how intrusive using the computer was into the process. I am not a touch-typist and so have to take my attention away from the patient frequently to record the information as it emerges. This is likely to significantly inhibit some people. Having been familiar with written notes hitherto but being more or less required to adopt electronic records now, the change is proving difficult.

Reviews of electronic notes in academic journals has yielded mixed opinions about their usefulness and completeness and The Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice has published very critical views about the use of computers and electronic versions of evidence based guidelines. I have published proposals to meld the virtues of written and electronic records, using modern IT

devices such as 'write-on' LCD screens and have tried to make contact, through Lord Warner, with the Department of Health section in charge of NHS computerisation but so far no reply. Such efficiency.

Talking of scandal and inefficiency in high places
There is a growing suspicion that the soft stuff is about to hit the fan locally.

The way general practice is paid for has always been ludicrously over-complicated and, as time goes by, it becomes progressively more ludicrous. Currently we receive vast numbers of differing sums of money from as many different budgets and other sources, both within and outside the NHS. The sums received cover the cost of running the building, equipment, staff, business costs and, amongst other things, paying the doctors – we get what's left after all else is paid for.

Amongst the current crop of sums is a thing called 'Directed enhanced services' or DES for short – this is a sum that reflects the amount of certain types of work done, results achieved and the number of patients in the practice. It is not a trivial sum.

The DES was supposed to have been paid in July 06 and last week, four months late and four months before the financial year end, it was suggested in a management meeting, that the money may never be forthcoming – the Care Trust do not have any money left with which to pay the practice – any practice.

There is a general reaching for solicitors going on...

Ouch!

A woman in her fifties is at home happily jumping unclothed, on her bed and squealing with delight. Her husband watches her for a while and asks, "Do you have any idea how ridiculous you look? What's the matter with you?"

The woman continues to bounce on the bed and says, "I don't care what you think. I just came from having a mammogram, and the doctor says that not only am I healthy, but I have the breasts of an 18 year-old."

The husband replies, "What did he say about your 53-year old arse?"

"Your name never came up," she replied.

FROM ALL THE STAFF
AND PARTNERS OF THE
HAYDON & ALLEN
VALLEYS MEDICAL
PRACTICE
TO ALL
THE READERS OF THE
HAYDON NEWS
A
MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Steve Ford.

WANTED
HOUSE IN HAYDON BRIDGE.

We are cash buyers and could move quickly
Janet & Graham Fraser
01434 684818

a highlights rural touring scheme presentation.

THE NEW ROPE STRING BAND
('achingly funny and great musicians')

at

HAYDON BRIDGE
COMMUNITY CENTRE on
FRIDAY 15th. DECEMBER at 8.00am.

SOLD OUT

'THANK YOU' LETTERS

Christmas Lights.

Through the Haydon News I would like to thank J&M Clarke, Bowman's, WMH Farm Fresh Meats, Railway Hotel, Co-op, Marsh's, Havelock Inn, Anchor Hotel, Spar and Haydonian Social Club for allowing me to put jars into their businesses to collect donations towards the Christmas Lights. Also many thanks to the public who so kindly contributed.

We collected £328.89.

Thank you all again and a very light and shining Christmas to all.
Joyce Brown. Church Street.

A thank you from Dora Fletcher

I would like to thank all friends and neighbours for their kindness and concern and for the cards and flowers I received before and after my operation.

CHURCH PAGE

CLERGY MESSAGE

From

Leo Pyle

....and so to Christmas! Jesus is the focus. Prince of Peace, he is born of the royal line of David. Even so he is born in obscurity. He comes with the power of love and not the love of power. Poor he shows himself to the poor. He comes to raise our quality of life to the divine. He teaches the greatness in humility, the glory in service and the power of self surrender to God.

Jesus confronts our selfishness, hatred and division with the goodness of God. He shows us the way of peace and love, kindness and service, consideration and generosity.

Jesus confronts our selfishness, hatred and division with the goodness of God. He shows us the way of peace and love, kindness and service, consideration and generosity.

And so we celebrate. We relax and let our Saviour save us. It is a warm and lovely time, a season of light and hope. Not that we wallow in sentiment! We are not in flight from reality. But we celebrate with a great sense of occasion.

The Incarnation is **THE occasion.**

It alters our destiny from doom and disaster to salvation and glory. The glory of God, man and creation. And our prayer is Gloria!

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

A Very Happy Christmas to all our Readers

Leo Pyle

**DECEMBER
2006**



WHO AND WHERE

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

Rev Judith Hampson,
with St Cuthbert's Anglican Church
The Vicarage, Station Yard
Tel. 01434 684307

Rev Les Hann,
with the Methodist Congregation
Wesley Manse, Moor View, Haltwhistle
Tel. 01434 320051

Father Leo Pyle ,
with St John's Catholic Church
St John's Presbytery, North Bank
Tel. 01434 684265

Christmas 2006

**Churches Join together
for:-**

Sunday 17th December 6 pm
Village Carols and readings
at St Cuthbert's

Sunday 24th December

**METHODIST CHURCH
SERVICES**

December 3

10.00am Morning Worship
Margaret Weatherson
6.00pm Evening Worship
David Flavell

December 10

10.00 am Family Worship
'Annual Toy Service'
Leslie Hann
6.00pm No Service

December 17

10.00am Morning Worship
Stan Rowntree
6.00pm Holy Communion
Leslie Hann

December 24

10.00am Morning Worship
Russell Hilborne
6.00pm No Service

Christmas Day

9.30 am Morning Worship
Leslie Hann

December 31

3pm United Service at Trinity Methodist,
Hexham

January 7

10 am Covenant Service
Leslie Hann

January 14

10 am Family Service
Brenda Mearns
6 pm No Service

January 21

10 am Morning Worship
Brian Scorer
6.00pm Evening Worship

January 28

10 am Morning Worship
Brian Elstobb
6.00pm Evening Worship

February 4

10 am Morning Worship
Jim Errington
6.00pm Evening Worship
Marian Olsen

THANK YOU to all who gave
to the Operation
Christmas Child Shoebox
appeal in any way
(35 boxes from Haydon
Bridge were sent abroad)

**ST JOHN OF BEVERLEY
CHURCH SERVICES**

Mass each Sunday at 9.30am

Mass each Sunday at 11.00am at
Haltwhistle

Mass on weekdays (except Mon-
days) at 10.00am
either St John's or Haltwhistle

24th December
4.00 pm Crib Service
10.00 pm Carols and Christmas
Vigil Mass

25th December

9.30 am Mass of Christmas Day

**BELTINGHAM/HENSHAW
CHURCH SERVICES**

December 3

Beltingham
10.00am BCP Communion
Bishop Stephen Pedley

December 10

10.30 Service at Haydon Bridge

December 17

Henshaw
10.00am 9 Lessons and Carols

December 24

Henshaw
10 am Joint Family Service
6 pm Crib Service

Christmas Day

10 am Communion

December 31

10.30 Service at Haydon Bridge

January 7

Beltingham
10.00am BCP Communion

January 14

10.30 At Haydon Bridge

January 21

Beltingham
10.00am Matins

January 28

Henshaw
10 am Confirmation Service
Bishop Paul Richardson

February 4

Henshaw
10.00am BCP Communion

**ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH
SERVICES**

December 3

Service at Beltingham
10 am Bishop Stephen Pedley

December 10

8 am BCP Communion
10.30 Family Communion

December 17

10.30 Communion
6 pm Carol Service

December 24

10 am Service at Henshaw
11.30 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10.30 Family Communion

December 31

10.30 Joint Service

January 7

10.30 am Morning Prayer

January 14

8 am BCP Communion
10.30 Family Communion

January 21

10.30 Communion

January 28

10 am Confirmation Service at Henshaw
(Bishop Paul)

February 4

10.30 Morning Prayer

**HAYDON OLD CHURCH
SERVICES**

Sunday 7 January

4 pm Epiphany Service

ANNUAL TOY SERVICE
at the Methodist Church
Sunday 10th December
10am

If you can donate new or
good used toys they will be
received by the Salvation
Army representative and
distributed to local needy
homes in time for Christmas

SPA WELL REPORT



The path to the Spa Well looking east from the old path towards the new platform (belvedere) . The old road is beyond the railings top right.



Looking west from what remains of the old path up towards the new platform. Several steps lead from the platform down to this level. The second landslide is just beyond this point.

LOCAL SHOP SAVED FROM CLOSURE

At a time when village shops, pubs, libraries and general services are closing, or under threat of closure, it's refreshing to meet people who are keen to challenge the trend. Lisa and Jon Alder are such people. Having spent nine months this year travelling in SE Asia and Australasia, they have returned home to Haydon Bridge and purchased W & M Marsh newsagents.

When Mary and Werner decided to retire and put their shop up for sale, many people feared the loss of yet another village amenity. So it comes as good news, particularly to those people living in the west end of the village, that their local shop is to continue in business.

Going into the retail trade is a totally new venture for Lisa and Jon and both are excited at the prospect of owning and running their own shop. This is tempered by a realisation that they are bucking the trend and will have to work hard to make it a success.

They are particularly grateful for all the help and guidance given by Mary and Werner during the weeks before the sale of the business was finalised.

Lisa and Jon will retain many of the present retail lines including newspapers, magazines, tobacco products, stationery, confectionery, ice cream, drinks, some household items, but a more limited range of foods. They also plan to introduce new lines including DVD hire, playstation games hire, photocopier and fax facilities and access to the internet, take-away hot drinks and sandwiches.

Over time they hope to extend the shop to give more retail space, but in the meantime will be making some changes to the layout and shelving.

Lisa and Jon view the venture as an exciting opportunity and show real commitment to the shop and the people of the village.

Last month on this page we featured an article celebrating Tula Thompson's 30 years in her hairdressing salon. This month we wish Lisa and Jon success as they start out on their first year in business.
M.P.

Officers from Northumberland County Council Countryside Dept visited the Spa Well towards the end of November to inspect the extent of the second landslide. Unlike the one pictured above and repaired by the Highways Agency, it hasn't affected the whole bank. However, a 20m length of the path has dropped down about 1metre making access to the Spa Well difficult for all but the most agile.

NCC do not have the resources available to them that enabled the Highways Agency to carry out such an impressive job of restoration. They do not have sufficient funding to restore the path to its previous level. At present they propose to fix steps down from the path on either side of the landslide, to enable people to cross the landslide area and get to the Spa Well. A further inspection will be made before work is carried out early in the New Year
M.P.

REPORT FROM LANGLEY WI.

Catherine Dixon from Mercy trucks was the speaker at Langley WI's November meeting. She told us of her husband Roy and her work in Sri Lanka after the Tsunami. Six months after the devastation people were still living in tents in the east part of the island. Volunteers helped to build more substantial shelters, taught English and helped to support training courses. A causeway was also designed and built by volunteers to enable a community of about 500 to access aid, jobs and schools. Catherine told us that her husband is currently in Guinea Bissau in West Africa, with a truck full of vital medical and dental equipment. Catherine is fund raising for their next project. She is hosting a sponsored dance at Whitley Chapel later this year. All volunteers with Mercy Trucks must support themselves, paying for air fares, food etc.

Several WI members placed orders for tea towels and bags with the Mercy Truck logo which are sold to raise funds.

Arrangements were then confirmed for the Pie & Pea Supper, to be held by the WI later in the week.

The competition for a foreign postcard was won by Mrs P Davison, second was E Martin.

The meeting to be held on December 12th was discussed and catering arrangements organised. It should be another good meeting.
Cathy Duffy