



THE HAYDON NEWS



Photograph by John Irving

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Issue 02

**March
2006**

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Addressed to The Haydon News

Thank you

EDITORIAL COMMENT

To one who has attended more meetings than he cares to remember, it came as a refreshing change to be at a meeting that was so positive about possible change and improvement. Such was the experience at the Launch of the Tyne Valley Rail Study.

No flashy presentation acts to disguise unpalatable truths. No false hopes of a golden future for Tyne Valley rail travellers.

Just a straight presentation of the study teams' findings and their realistic recommendations for future improvements to the service.

What also helped raise the spirits on this occasion was the number of people present who could wield some influence in moving the proposals forward or at least lobby for change. Three local MPs; several representatives from Northern Rail, the company running our local services, Network Rail, Nexus, Northumberland and Cumbria County Councils; managers from business and industry; representatives from regional government offices and innumerable parish councillors, including three from Haydon Bridge. It was rather disappointing therefore, to find only one representative present from the largest district council on the route, Tynedale. I know that a presentation of the study was made this week to Tynedale Council and was well received by councillors, but it was a pity the opportunity was missed by our district councillors to lobby for improvements with those who are in a position to bring about change.

The Editors.

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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 Anonymous letters/articles will NOT be published.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.

Mike Parkin. The Rambler, Brigwood, Haydon Bridge, Hexham. NE47 6EX

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

Public Participation.

Ever since the new paving stones were laid in Church Street concern has been expressed about the uneven nature of the surface. More in keeping with the type of decorative flagging used as garden paving, the stones are not particularly suitable or practical for general all purpose pavement. Several reports of people tripping or having difficulty walking on the pavement have been reported over the years since the work was completed. Their latest trip victim, Rene Armstrong, came to the council meeting to express continued worries and requested that the council write to the Highways Dept of NCC to request action. The NCC councillor attending the meeting said that he would pursue the issue. Mrs Armstrong has suffered extensive facial bruising as a result of her fall.

Another member of the public expressed their concerns about the difficulty presented to pedestrians by cars parked on the pavements in Shaftoe Street. This often means that walkers have to move out into the road to get past the parked cars. Council to report complaint to Police.

Another member of the public complained about the amount of dog fouling in the length of Shaftoe Street between the corner and Shaftoe School. A resident of Innerhaugh presented a petition to the council, calling for action to reduce the speed of vehicles on the western approach to the village. The petition was signed by representatives from 37 of the 41 homes in Innerhaugh. A copy of the petition is to be sent to the police, Highways Agency, Road Link and NCC.

Cllr Horncastle reported that he had received approval to use his allocation of money for local spending on traffic calming measures, such as the interactive speed signs discussed at last months meeting. Further information was given to the council about these signs. After communication with Road Link they have asked for more information about the positioning of the signs before they send information to the Highways Agency. It was suggested that a sign be positioned at the east and west end of the village to slow traffic.

Council Meeting.

9 councillors present & 1 NCC councillor.

The meeting received notification from Mr Thomas Stephenson that he had resigned from the parish council.

The council was informed that repairs to the church clock mechanism were now underway.

Flood warning packs have been passed to households affect by the 2005 floods. The council hope that some residents will volunteer to act as flood wardens, as suggested in the pack. It is hoped to hold a meeting for those interested in March. Many residents in the flood risk areas of the village have not yet signed up to the flood early warning system.

A report was given to the council on the Tyne Valley Rail Study. (See page 12 for full details of the report).

A tree on the riverside, that has been in a dangerous state for some months, has now been felled.

Tynedale Council Notes.

Nothing to report from council meetings. However, the Tynedale councillor present informed the meeting that members of the planning department were offering to come to talk to parish councillors on general planning issues.

The councillors decided to accept the offer.

Lighting.

A member of the public told the meeting about a light on the old bridge not working at present.

Planning Applications.

Three planning applications were received by the council for comment. No objections were raised on any of the applications.

Correspondence.

A letter was received from the Community Association requesting the council's financial support for the purchase of staging, to be stored and used in the Community Centre. The meeting was informed that the total cost of the staging would be about £3000. The council decided to award

£500 towards the cost of the staging. In a letter to the council the Land Registry stated that they aimed to have ownership of all land registered by 2012. It requested councils to register land in their ownership as soon as possible. An invitation to the council to nominate one of their members to attend a Royal Garden Party received a cool response. No councillors wished to be nominated.

Village Projects.

A brief report was given on the final stages of the John Martin Heritage Project. The Heritage Trail is due to open on April 8th. This is the final public event of the project. The project will be completed by the end of May 2006.

Other Business.

Concern was expressed that there is no bus stop sign at the Community Centre bus stop. A request is to be sent to the bus companies to provide one.

The meeting was informed that a NCC proposal, to 'equalise' youth funding in the county, would mean a cut in rural youth provision. Many councillors felt strongly about this and one councillor was nominated to represent the parish council at a meeting in Haltwhistle on March 23rd. when the issue will be discussed.

An old seat on the North Bank is to be removed.

Next parish council meeting is on March 23rd. At 7.30pm.

PARISH COUNCILLORS

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Mrs. E Charlton
Mrs. V Fletcher
Mr. M R Parkin
Mrs. C Duffy
Mr. D Smith*
Mr. A Johnson
Mr. R Snowdon
Mr. T Stephenson
Mr. E Brown.

(* also a Tynedale Councillor)

Parish Clerk
Mrs. C McGivern

The Government's new Licensing Bill has provoked strong protests throughout the length and breadth of the country. Judging by the objections, there appears to be no real public demand for it and the new laws it contains are a great imposition being thrust upon us. There are those who say that drinking alcohol is bad for people. Others say that this is an extreme view and if taken in moderation there is no harm done. What is clear from previous knowledge, is that the introduction of the Government's new Licensing Bill will lead to ruin and bankruptcy for many who are encouraged to drink even more than they do now. Even if some of those adults partaking of copious amounts of alcohol, are not affected themselves, there is no doubt that their wives and children will have to bear the burden as a result of their folly.

The question we should be asking is, why has there been no desire to promote temperance in the Bill?

Many hundreds of people made up the audience, when a gentleman from our village drew their attention to the Government's Licensing Bill and made an impassioned plea for a more sober nation.

Doubtless he had in mind those public houses of questionable reputation in Haydon Bridge and the drinking hell holes on the quayside in Newcastle!!

The meeting in question where these forthright views were expounded and greeted with great applause, was in the month of June.

No!..... Not June 2005, (*although perhaps it could so easily have been*) but the 25th of June 1904.

The speaker was County Councillor John Davidson JP, of The Belmont Temperance Hotel in Haydon Bridge.

And the venue?

The leafy glades of the Allen valley in the shadow of the remains of Staward Pele.

The occasion was the 48th gathering of the famous Staward-Le-Peel Annual Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration.

My earlier 'Notes, published in the Oct., Nov. 2005 and Feb.2006 editions of the Haydon News, have followed the history of Staward Pele from the third century to William Bacon Grey's ownership in the

mid. 19c, when every traveller, historian and topographical writer from far and wide, not to mention local residents, descended on the Pele, attracted by its beauty and historic legend.

Coaches, brakes and eventually train services between Hexham and Catton Road, (*renamed Allendale from May 1898*) brought visitors in their hundreds and thousands, and from 1856 the pic-nic at Staward Pele was a fixture on the North's social calendar for over fifty years.

Our 19c collector of local knowledge, William Lee, recorded the first of these pic-nics in June 1856.

The Langley Temperance Society held their first Pic-nic at Staward-Le-Peel, one of the most charming spots in the North of England, and indeed it would be very difficult to find anything to surpass it in the country for the richness and variety of its scenery. There was a great many visitors. The Haydon Bridge Band was also in attendance.

The committee responsible for the organisation of these early events, included Simon Shield, George Reed, John and Thomas Wigham, James Wear, James Bell and John Rutherford.

Before the railway branch line from Hexham opened for passengers on 1st March 1869, many visitors to Staward, travelling from east and west, alighted at Haydon Bridge station and made their way to the pic-nic venue on foot.

It is thanks to correspondents of the time, that we can share in the simple pleasures of our ancestors. Their descriptions from 140 years ago provide important social history references.

I so enjoy reading them and I hope that you do too.

It is mid-day on Saturday 30th June 1866 and the sun is shining brightly for the tenth Staward-Le-Peel Pic-nic.

'The journey from Haydon Bridge, the nearest railway station, is through pleasant green lanes, the hedges of which, in several parts still retain the snowy whiteness of their blossoms. The turf beneath is richly garnished with a multitude of pretty flowers, of

every form and hue indigenous to the north of England, and threading our way to the rendezvous, the luxurious foliage of the trees is at its most verdant.

Although not much past one o'clock, upon our arrival many visitors are already there, scattered in knots reclining under the shade of the trees. Entering the field near a venerable old ruin, is a flag proudly floating, bearing the inscription; ***Langley Temperance Society.***

Further on is an elongated sort of tent which served tea, and decorating the entrance are two pretty red, white and blue flags. The door of the tent is besieged throughout the afternoon and the number partaking of refreshment is upwards of 1,200.

Behind the tent, two boilers are kept going as a constant supply of boiling water for the tea. The tables are presided over by nineteen local ladies and the ladies are also attending the stalls from which oranges and lemonade etc. are all available.

The refreshments are as abundant as they are varied and of good quality.'

The Staward-Le-Peel Pic-nic took place on the last Saturday in June, and the activities that made it such a joyous occasion appear to have altered little throughout the pic-nic's history.

An opportunity for friends and relatives from a distance to meet with those in the district.

Wandering at leisure through pleasant walks in the early afternoon sunshine, seeking nothing more than to observe the pretty pink and white flowers of the wild rose, the fragrant honeysuckle and the blossoming furze.

Following the steep path down through wooded banks of Oak and Beech, to partake of the rejuvenating waters of the spa.

Strolling arm in arm by the murmuring delight of the River Allen as it flowed beneath many a jutting crag and overhanging cliff; an early inspiration for our famous Haydon Bridge artist, John Martin.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, a cornet or bugle would be sounded for the commencement of the open air meeting and the majority of visitors assembled on the green, sitting on the turf before a temporary platform. 'The lightest and gayest coloured dresses of the ladies had

a pleasing effect, which was further heightened by the vast array of parasols.' Noted dignitaries of the day would then deliver their addresses, espousing the benefits of total abstinence and the evil results of intemperance. Each speech was generally heartily applauded, although occasionally those on the stage would be heckled by outsiders.

In 1879 for example: 'A young man who from his appearance was far from being in sympathy with the promoters or speakers,' pointed out that for each shilling he spent on alcohol the 'Queen' got threepence. "How about the revenue mister....what'll become of the Queen and the Royal family if I give up the drink?" He queried.

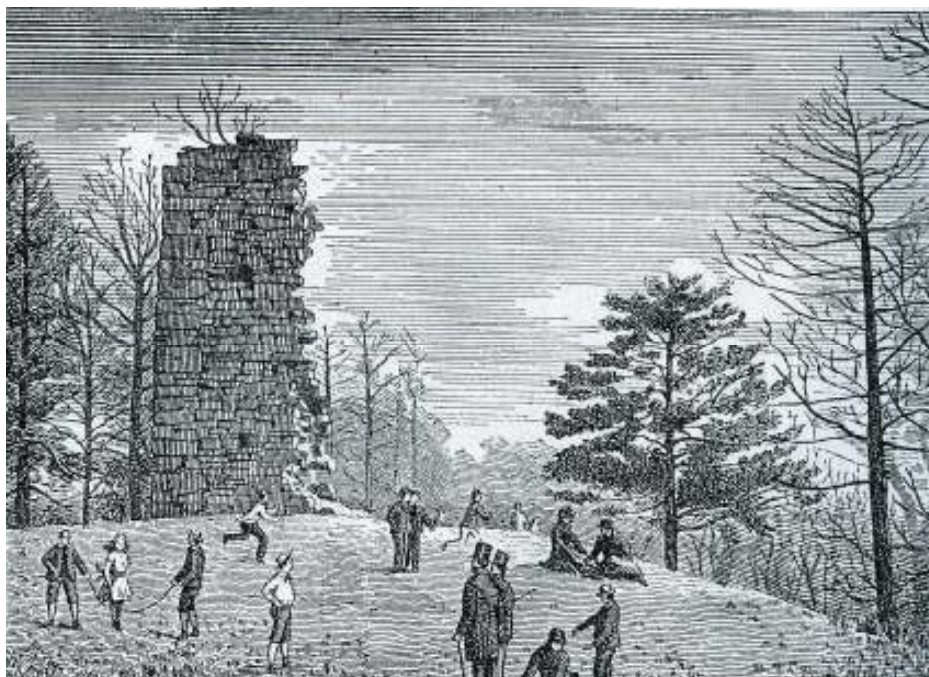
The young fellow was told by the speaker that he should give up the threepence **now** and spend the remaining ninepence on commodities which required a large amount of labour to produce, thus providing lots of work.

As the day progressed the Haydon Bridge or Langley Mill Bands, under the leadership of R. Hamilton and Thomas Stobbart, would continue to, 'discourse lively strains, making the music run sweet through each dingle and nook.' In the evening, dancing airs would be struck up and soon, 'joyous young men with their fairer and gaudier partners would be encircling round each other in graceful motion.'

Those who could not trip the light fantastic or preferred other amusements, joined in 'Jolly Miller,' 'Bobby Bingo' Or 'Driving the Pig to Market.' (*Can our older residents describe these 'other amusements' to me?*) And a bevy of young ladies including Miss Pigg of the Vauce, Miss Wear from Haydon Bridge, Miss Elliot of Langley Hill Top, Mary Ann Mews of Lough Green and Agnes Paxton of Nilston Rigg, continued to supply, 'a cheering cup that refreshes but does not inebriate.'

The vast pic-nic party would leave the Staward grounds at nine o'clock in the evening, having shown once again that a sober company could be, 'more joyous than is likely to be met at any other public gathering.' The day having proved that, 'teetotallers enjoyed life far better than drinkers, for a man who lived on a plain but steady diet scarcely knew what fatigue was, but a drinker knew almost nothing about good health, and was always tired and afflicted with leg ache and bone ache.'

(And, if my experience is anything to go by.....heed ache!!)



Staward-Le-Peel Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration, in 1885.
This engraving shows visitors amusing themselves on the green turf below the ruined pele.

The numbers attending the Staward Pic-nic increased significantly with the opening of the railway branch line from Hexham, in 1869, and on 30th June 1872, the organisers welcomed over 2,000 people to the Pele. Special trains were run at intervals during the day from Allendale and Hexham, conveying large numbers of passengers - 1,000 were booked to travel from one direction or another. The Hexham Courant of the day reported that, 'everything passed off without accident at Staward station, in spite of the crush at night, due to the able management of the station master Mr. Milburn.'

The well established Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration at Staward Pele, continued annually as one of the most popular social get-togethers in the area, and by the 31st event in 1887, visitors from Newcastle and all the intermediate stations to Hexham, were offered special railway facilities. The result was one of the Pic-nic's most successful years with **over 2,000** visitors at the pele in the afternoon and evening.

New visitors arriving from the city by train undoubtedly gave the Pic-nic a timely boost. In truth however, our local industries were in serious decline and by the end of the century, the once thriving lead mining industry was almost non-existent in the area, due to the import of cheap foreign ores.

The committee still shared the vitality and vigour of their predecessors but for a number of years, the attendance of local people at the event was affected by the great de-population taking place in the district.

In June 1889, Mr. Simon Shield was presented to the assembled gathering as the last remaining member of the original promoters of the Pic-nic. He had officiated as treasurer during the thirty three years of its existence.

The renowned Pic-nic continued with success for at least another nineteen years, and thanks especially to the facilities afforded by the NER Company, a satisfactory attendance could always be counted upon, although perhaps never quite approaching the remarkable numbers of its halcyon days.

1890 was a particularly dismal year. 'The rains fell incessantly and the spirits of the picnickers were perhaps understandably, as dull as the darkest clouds - which were very black.' In the afternoon as few as 150 persons braved the elements.

Even the wondrous scenery of the valley comes in for criticism in 1890. 'The locale of this annual festival has altered its garb since last year. The hillside west of the pele to the River Allen having been almost entirely stripped of its magnificent foliage. The stacks of bark and countless fallen trees are left to tell the tale of destruction

to arboriculture.?

In the early years of the Staward-Le-Peel Pic-nic, the changeable weather appears to have had little bearing on the attendances.

The new visitors from the town were much more choosy however.

In 1894, 'the most charming and particularly hot weather' brought out the picnickers in their many hundreds. It had been a long while since so many people had been gathered at the pele. The trains from Hexham were crowded and people from far and near in the surrounding districts put in an appearance.

One year later however (1895) the executors of Henry Bacon Grey, the owner of the pele, welcomed a very moderate attendance, 'greatly affected by the unfavourable weather.'

Fortunately, the members of the 'Alston Pleasant Tuesday Evening Society' could always be relied upon to turn up in their brakes !!

The Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration continued to rely upon good weather for its attendances. 1904 was a particularly good year, and you will recall that this is where we started our story, when the Government's new Licensing Bill was criticised by John Davidson of the Belmont Hotel.

The picnickers met on at least four more occasions at Staward, in the beautiful grounds kindly granted by Miss Bacon Grey and Mrs. Guery. The committee organising these final years of The Staward Peel Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration was: Mr. Dickinson (Secretary), R. Mews, R. Hutchinson, T.Hare, J.W.Stobbart, G. Smith, W. Briddock and W. Maughan

So the pleasure parties of Staward Pele, held on the last Saturday each June, took place for at least 52 consecutive years from 1856.

As I sit here today, on the turf under the shadow of the ruined pele, isolated but for the wonders of nature, it is difficult to imagine **over 2,000 people** walking arm in arm, skipping, dancing and listening intently to long speeches on the benefits of sobriety.

If I listen carefully however, with eyes closed, the rural silence is broken by a piercing whistle, a whoosh of steam and the mechanical clanking of couplings and carriages as a train slows into Staward station beyond Gingle Pot. The

shared chatter and laughter of friends and relations making their way from the south and the east is fast approaching, and the melodious strains of the famed Haydon Bridge St. Cuthbert's Band waft through the balmy air where I sit and day dream.

A fascinating period in Staward Pele's quite remarkable history. Don't you agree?

I feel almost apologetic this day in 2006, as I return to my village in the valley, to sample our publicans' finest ale; drunk only in moderation of course!

In this present mood of nostalgia, I'll be searching for The Wheatsheaf, The Three Tuns, The Grey Bull, The Black Bull and The Scotch Arms when I get back down to Haydon Bridge. But I'll probably give the Belmont Temperance Hotel a miss, (sorry Mr. Davidson!) and chance a dressing down from the platform speakers at the next Staward Le-Peel Pic-nic and Temperance Demonstration!

If any of our readers are able to extend my knowledge of the Staward Peel Pic-nic and especially any continuation of the Pic-nic after 1908, I'd be very grateful.

EXTRA TIME!

Time clearly does fly when you are enjoying yourself! In the February issue of The Haydon News, I told you that David Kirsopp has been groundsman at Low Hall Park for twenty years. In fact, David tells me that has been looking after our football club's pitches for thirty five years. So how were Haydon Bridge football

teams performing when David set out on this labour of love?

In 1970 our village team was in two cup finals, sadly they were beaten in both. 3-2 by Bardon Mill in the Haltwhistle Charity Cup. (Ronnie Hope scored both goals) And 6-4 in the Clayton Cup, by Rochester. (Ronnie Hope 2, Maurice Frankland and Anthony Atkinson scored.) Bardon Mill won the league that year and our Haydon Bridge team was in fourth position.

1971 was a more successful season. Beaten 4-1 by Haltwhistle in the Haltwhistle Charity Cup, Haydon Bridge rallied to beat Hexhamshire 3-1 to win the League Cup, (goals coming from Swailes, Dixon and Armstrong) and won the Hexham District League.

Played 18. Won 17. Drawn 0. Lost 1. Goals for 76. Goals against 16.

Quite a record, finishing nine points above their nearest rivals, Allendale.

Do you recognise the players in the 1971 league winners team photograph shown below?

In 1971, Haydon Bridge entered a team in the first year of the Hexham Junior League which also had a Haydon Bridge connection. The formation of this new league, the first in the area for six years, was under the auspices of the Hexham Sunday League and John Davies, a fellow Haydonian, was chairman and I was secretary.

Ten teams competed and although Haydon Bridge Juniors didn't win a trophy that year, players Rodham, Edwards, Carruthers, Elliot, Burgon, Robson and Bell all impressed during the season.

1972 was also a successful year for our first team footballers. League champions again, after beating Northumberland College 4-2 in a play off.



Haydon Bridge United

1971

League champions and League Cup winners.

Thanks to Steven Brown for making the photo. available.

Haydon Bridge.

Dear Sirs,

Rubbish.

The Haydon News Parish Council Notes for December 2005 (HN Feb. 2005) state that, 'Tynedale Council are undertaking a consultation process on the introduction of a 'twin bin' re-cycling system in rural areas of the district.'

I wonder if this is **new** 'consultation,' because it is common knowledge that the responses to the original questionnaires and public exhibitions, outlining the council's proposals, were clear in their answers from residents in rural areas. **"No thank you."**

- We don't mind 're-cycling' but we will not be happy wheeling our bins several hundred or more yards to the end of the estate or private road joining the main highway. It is totally impractical in any case, particularly for our older residents.

- We do not believe it is environmentally friendly for neighbouring residents to store their bins at pre-arranged group collection points next to the highway. A meeting place for flies and vermin, as well as the wheeled bins, I suggest.

Rural households should be able to have rubbish collected from their doorstep in the same way as urban dwellers.

Let us not forget however, that many people living on or along private roads in our area, do already 're-cycle' their rubbish if they are able. Taking bottles and paper to the various collection points in Haydon Bridge, Hexham and Haltwhistle. Their personal commitment to improving the environment and by chance, helping Tynedale council towards its re-cycling targets.

Fortunately, the Principal Officer for Waste and Transport at Tynedale Council has said:

"The scheme will not be put in place if people don't want it."

And I'm sure that Mr. Philip Hindmarsh is a man of his word.

Unless of course, decisions had been made **before** the consultation!

By the way. Why were those living in the rural parish of Haydon, left out of the consultation road show which took place in nine other villages in the area, from Wall to Slaggyford?

Yours faithfully,

Refuse Refuse.

(Name and address supplied.)

I am still hopeful that a former pupil of St. Cuthbert's School will make contact, to share with us her experience of being at Miss Hebron's school in Mr. Bates' Langley Castle. In the meantime, further research means that I can add to my reflections in last month's Haydon News.

Miss Winifred Hebron opened her school in 1946 after the soldiers, who were stationed at Langley Castle during the war, vacated the building. In its heyday the school had fifty six pupils and it was officially registered in 1958 as an independent school. For many years, St. Cuthbert's was the only school between Hexham and

Brampton entering its pupils for GCE examinations and in the 1960's averaged twenty pupils. Later, County Schools were built at Haydon Bridge, Allendale and Haltwhistle and the numbers at Langley Castle dwindled.

In 1970, Miss Hebron, the owner of the school and the only full time teacher, for twenty four years, had only one pupil in her charge. Not surprisingly she decided to close the school and retire.

I understand that the girls at the school liked nothing better than to roller skate down the long corridors and rooms in the castle. I wonder how Anton and his guests would feel about that in 2006?

HAYDON BRIDGE NATURE CLUB

Fifty members of the nature club attended the Annual General Meeting, held in the Methodist Church last month, on the 2nd. February.

It is 36 years since the club first met and a founder member, Mr. Coombes, was re-elected President.

Others elected to the committee include:

Chairman: W. (Bill) Foster.

Vice Chairman: Colin McCabe.

Secretary: John DeStefano.

Treasurer: Alan Howard.

Programme Secretaries:

Ann Carter.

June Henriksen.

Walks Organisers:

Pauline Nichols.

Peter Ninnim.

The annual subscription remains £10. Excellent value for a programme of winter talks and summer walks.

Following the A.G.M., Margaret Jacot maintained the high quality of this year's talks with a most enjoyable illustrated description of three years working in Kenya.

The Haydon Bridge Nature Club

Meets every other Thursday at 7.15pm in the Methodist Chapel and everyone is welcome.

2nd March: David Raeburn.

'Kayaking on Vancouver Island.'

16th March: Adrian Allen.

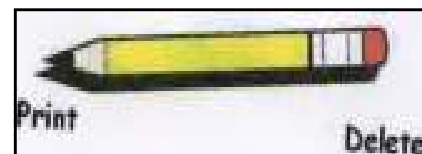
'The Falklands and South Georgia.'

30th March: Brian Galloway.

'Raptors of Europe.'

COMPUTERS "aaaaagh"

My early days as a co-editor of your Haydon News were (and still are) bedeviled by the vagaries of the computer. Many's the time I wonder if the old days would be better and that is why this peek into the past, sent in by David Tait, appeals to me.

EARLY COMPUTERS

Memory was something lost with age. An application was for employment. A programme was a TV show. A cursor used profanity. A keyboard was a piano. A web was a spider's home. A virus was the flu. A hard drive was a long trip on the road. A mouse pad was where a mouse lived. Click was what we did with the girls on a Saturday night. (If we were lucky.) And if you had a 3 inch floppy? You just hoped nobody ever found out!!

JENNIE BOYD

We were unsuccessful last month in our request for information about *Jennie Bond* who lived on Belmont Gardens until her death in 1963.

That may be because the lady was called **Jennie Boyd**; so we'll try again this month.

Anyone able to share information about **Jennie Boyd**, with her relatives, please contact the Haydon News editors: Mike Parkin or Dennis Telford: (01434) 684340 or 684636.

Ambulance performance

As you may or may not be aware there are large changes afoot in the provision of ambulance services in the outlying areas – like Bellingham and Haltwhistle. Haydon Bridge and Allendale will be affected to a degree too. The plan seems to be to remove the permanent manned ambulance stations at Haltwhistle and Bellingham and maybe have a Paramedic on a motorbike to get to cases quickly instead.

This seems like progress only to those who hatched the plan and is thought to be actively harmful by everyone else – especially the ambulance crews.

At a recent GP forum meeting it was decided to try to keep a log of long delays and any other problems with ambulances. Please let us know if you experience any problems. Give us the ammunition to reply.

Recycling

As part of the Health Centre's bid for a Gold Medal in next year's Healthy Business Award we are doing our bit for energy conservation and recycling. We are collecting old mobile phones, printer cartridges and domestic (not car!) batteries for recycling and will be happy to receive contributions at the reception desk. The phones and cartridges will be going to charities and the batteries to the Haltwhistle recycling yard.

Both batteries and old electrical equipment are horribly toxic to the environment if not recycled. Wherever possible use rechargeable batteries.

We have also set ourselves the target of reducing our energy consumption by 25% this year. The majority of the savings we hope to get from being scrupulously careful in always switching off lights, computer monitors and printers. So you may find us stumbling about in the dark but it's all for a good cause.

On the domestic front we have installed fluorescent bulbs in place of incandescent ones and will shortly be improving the house insulation. The trick with energy conservation, specially heating, is not in producing the heat but in hanging on to it.

Pandemic planning

It is still far from clear what the outcome of the H5N1 avian flu situation is going to be. The victims so

far have been amongst those who live in intimate contact with poultry and almost none of us do.

There is a steady flow of information within the NHS about planning and preparation and meetings are being held periodically to keep everyone up to date.

Isolation seems likely to be key to preventing the spread of infection and, if you give the matter a little thought, you will appreciate that one of the very last places you will want to come within sight of is a health centre or hospital. Home treatment will probably be the order of the day.

The new kid on the block.

Everyone is probably fed up with hearing about Chlamydia by now even though it remains a growing problem. So, to add to the air of general happiness, there is now a new tropical variant of Chlamydia spreading in the UK. It's called lymphogranuloma venereum. Whilst this can affect both sexes it is currently mainly found amongst male homosexuals and mimics severe inflammatory bowel disease with pain, bleeding, mucus and diarrhoea at first, followed by suppurating lumps in the groin area. Not nice. Easily avoided, ALWAYS USE A CONDOM – WITHOUT FAIL!

Herbs and the menopause

HRT is right out of fashion at present though still available and used for the short term management of flushing etc. I am sometimes asked whether herbal products are of benefit and this is the answer:

Dietary phytoestrogens – mainly derived from soy products, red clover, oily seeds and some legumes. These may reduce flushing though the evidence is conflicting. Confers no long-term benefits and should be avoided in pregnancy, lactation and in those with breast tenderness. Can cause weight gain.

Red clover – 40 to 80mg daily may reduce flushing.

Black cohosh – may improve vaginal health and resilience but can cause gut disturbance, faintness, headache, dizziness, nausea and allergic reactions. Has been known to cause liver damage and is dangerous in large

quantities.

None of the other herbal remedies that are offered have any evidence of benefit.

Violence in the home

Unfortunately violence in the home is not rare. This may be physical, sexual or psychological – that is to say being hit, raped, threatened or shouted at, amongst other things.

No one, male or female, adult or child, has to put up with this – ever. It's not your fault and there are people and organisations that can help. We are always available to discuss any troubles you have but there are plenty of others to choose from.

Police 999

National Domestic Abuse Line
Freephone 0808 2000 247

Samaritans 0845 7909090

NSPCC – children 0808 8005000

Northumberland Emergency Duty
Team (out of office hours)
0845 6005252

Tynedale Domestic Abuse Project
01434 608030

Northumberland Women's Aid
Refuge 01670 820199

Use these numbers! Take advice. Get help. Be safe.

'Tis a bold-arsed fraud and a turdome lie!

My family say I have always been a grumpy old git but I maintain that it is only a recent development and no surprise in the circumstances. However, I am indebted for the title of this section, a highly usable phrase when at one's most grumpy, to John Barth, an American writer, who, in the 1960s, wrote a book called 'The Sot Weed Factor' – he attributes the phrase to the Governor of Maryland. The book is an 800-page tale of the misfortunes of a naïve man who inherited a tobacco plantation in Maryland in the late seventeenth century.

The book is written in cod seventeenth century English with lashings of 'Sheart's, Damee's, Prithee's, Pardee's, maugre's, thee's and thou's and so on. It is fiendishly complex and oftentimes hilarious. A detailed description of an eating contest's menu includes 'boyled

bats' and in a court hearing, a man accused of cuckolding another, describes the cuckold's wife as 'swived from wim-ple to Whitsun!'. The passing of bets between judge, jury, advocates and audience further enlivens the court hearing.

English used to be such an expressive language and I feel we are the poorer for the loss of its diversity. It pains me to hear many young people employing such restricted vocabularies and being unable to string more than two or three words together at a time.

Regional vocabularies can be a source of much individuality and I have spent many happy times trying to work out what is wrong with a patient with a particularly broad accent. Mr. Marcus Byron has drawn my attention to the activities of a local academic who is collecting a glossary of North East English words and phrases to assist doctors new to the area.

'Mardy gob oil' is translated as 'sore mouth'. 'Ah'm flaid its lops agin!' becomes 'the children have got nits and it's not the first time.' and 'The bairn's card, marra, fretish like' turns out to be 'The child has a cold'. More than one side of the report is devoted to words for the genitals apparently.

May I appeal to all readers to send in their most obscure regional phrases, with advice on pronunciation and meaning, please? All those fit to print, and some that aren't, will be printed in future News's and forwarded to the academic in question too.

Isn't it always the case that after the moment has passed, the *mot juste*, the killer riposte comes to you but what use is it then? I can call to mind a number of instances in which I could cheerfully have employed the above title. Ah well, next time perhaps.

Steve Ford

Tyne Valley Rail (cont'd from page 12)

Rolling stock and train crowding

The award of the Northern Rail franchise brought no offer of new or additional trains. For the present NR will have to make best use of the available rolling stock.

- Class 156 Sprinter trains to run all long distance services
- Continue to improve reliability
- Encourage staff to manage capacity on crowded trains by, for example, asking passengers to remove bags from seats.

In the longer term 'Pacer' trains should be replaced with 'Sprinters'. as these become available.

Finance.

- Maximise internal income generation through high quality operation and marketing
- Exploit every avenue for bringing in external financial support
- Explore options to strengthen the financial base of the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership to enable the group to lobby more effectively for improvements and develop promotional activities, to increase the use of rail services.

The writers of the report, Neil Galilee, Martin Higginson and Rita O'Neill, did emphasize that the report was not a wish list, but a practical and achievable approach to improving rail services on the Tyne Valley Line.

An executive from Northern Rail, Paul Salvesson, welcomed the report, expressed the company's wish to continue working closely with the Community Rail Partnership. He also denied that there were plans to close some of the stations on the line, as reported in the local and national press. (See Editorial Comment Page 2)

GREAT NORTH AIR AMBULANCE.

AN IRISH NIGHT

with

FRANK McCAFFREY

Thursday, 13th April. 8pm
at the

HAYDONIAN SOCIAL CLUB

Tickets £10 inc raffle ticket.

For tickets contact
Norma Clark

01434 684 561.

or available at the door on the night

*ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE
GREAT NORTH
AIR AMBULANCE.*

JOHN MARTIN HERITAGE PROJECT-THE FINAL EVENT

THE OPENING OF THE JOHN MARTIN HERITAGE TRAIL.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH
2006.
10.00am.
CHURCH STREET.

*Be among the first to walk the
John Martin Trail (or part of it)
Make a day of it.
Bring your friends, family.....*

See next month's edition for details.

COVER NOTE

The diesel locomotive shown on our cover, pulling into Haydon Bridge station, is the 'Saint Columba'.

This is the 'Tyne Valley - Edinburgh Festival Express' travelling on the Lancaster to Edinburgh route and photographed by John Irving on 21st August 1999.

John believes that this may be the only charter train in living memory to have stopped at Haydon Bridge. (Unless someone out there knows differently.)

Were you one of the four ladies who travelled on the 'Saint Columba' charter from Haydon Bridge in 1999?

HAYDON BRIDGE WOMENS INSTITUTE

March 21st Lotions and Potions.

April 18th Social Evening with
Easter Theme.

Meetings held in Haydon Bridge
Community Centre at 7.30
All ladies are welcome.

CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER

CHURCH PAGE

CLERGY MESSAGE

From

Judith Hampson

Life in all our churches is changing because the world around us is changing. Every denomination faces the financial pressure of keeping the roof on and heating the building and finding volunteers for numerous tasks. The churches meet because of the great gift of grace offered by God through Jesus. This is a free offer and is made continually and unconditionally. There will always be those who do not wish to accept the gift. In New Testament times people made the excuse of having to buy a field or attend a wedding. Now we have those who will have to attend a football game or go to the Metro Centre. Although I work for the church full-time my concern is much more for the people than for any particular building. My most important task is communication. I know that God called me to be a priest for His people. The difficult part is working out what I have to do. As a teacher Jesus was brilliant. He always put across the message in straightforward terms that ordinary listeners would understand. In our community we, as church are listening to the changing needs of those around us and trying to be available. We live within a very different society than the one we knew as children. God is relevant to all basic rhythms of life and death. As church we can only survive if we work together using our God-given time and talents to help one another along. As we journey through another Lent I hope you can give some time to thinking and

**MARCH
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 David Hasson,
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

praying about the things that really matter. God knows what pressures are upon you. Sharing those thoughts and dreams will make your journey easier to bear.

LENT COURSE

There will be a Lent course called consisting of five sessions entitled "Where is God"

- 1... when we seek happiness
- 2... when we face suffering
- 3... when we make decisions
- 4... when we contemplate death
- 5... when we try to make sense of life

There will be two opportunities

Monday evenings beginning 6th March at The Vicarage, Haydon Bridge 7.30 – 9.30

Thursday evenings beginning 9th March at All Hallows', Henshaw 7.30 – 9.30

All are welcome to join us.

**METHODIST CHURCH
SERVICES**

Sunday 05 February
10.00am Morning Worship
Mr Dougie Hogg
6.00pm Evening Worship
Rev David Hasson

Sunday 12 February
10.00am No Service
6.00pm Evening Worship
Rev David Archer

Sunday 19 February
10.00am Covenant Service
Rev David Hasson
6.00pm No Service

Sunday 26 February
10.00am Family Service
Rev David Hasson
6.00pm Evening Worship
Mrs Margaret Weatherson

Sunday 05 March
10.30am Morning Worship
Mrs Joyce Short
6.00pm No Service

Sunday 12 March
10.00am Morning Worship
Rev Russell Hilborne
6.00pm Evening Worship
Mr Mark Knowles

**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 at St John's or at
Haltwhistle

**BELTINGHAM/HENSHAW
CHURCH SERVICES**

Sunday 05 March
10.00am Henshaw
BCP Communion

Sunday 12 March
10.00am Henshaw
Morning Prayer

Sunday 19 March
10.00am Beltingham
Communion

Sunday 26 March
10.00am Henshaw
Joint Benefice Service

Sunday 2 April
10.00am Beltingham
BCP Communion

**ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH
SERVICES**

Sunday 05 March
10.30am All Age Worship

Sunday 12 March
08.00am BCP Communion
10.30am Communion

Sunday 19 March
10.30am Morning Prayer

Sunday 26 March
10.00am Henshaw
Joint Benefice Service

Sunday 2 April
10.30am All Age Service

*Haydon Bridge
Holiday club*

Plans for this are moving on rapidly but more leaders are needed. The following is a timetable of preparations

Meeting

Tuesday 7th March at 7:30pm,
in the Methodist Church.

Training weekend

Saturday 22nd to Sunday 23rd
April in the Methodist Church

Fun day

Saturday 3rd June,

Final meeting

Tuesday 6th June at 7:30pm. in
the Methodist Church.

Holiday Club

22—29 July

Advance Notice

11th April: 7.30pm
St John's
Service of Stations of the Cross

16th April Easter Day:
Methodist Church
Easter Praise
led by John Wardle

*Concert
In Haydon Bridge
Methodist Church*

£4.00 admission
Includes Supper

Saturday 11 March
7.30pm

Featuring by popular
request

Newcastle

Salvation

Army Band

Come along and have an enjoy-
able night

Concert

Saturday
31 March
7.30pm

*Haydon Bridge
Methodist Church*

featuring our local
community band

Sheds on Fire

By popular demand

Admission and Supper
£4.00

Apology Last month's clergy letter was attributed to David Hasson when it should have been Leo Pyle

TYNE VALLEY RAIL STUDY

PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF PASSENGER SERVICES.

In a recently published study, commissioned by the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership and Nexus, a series of recommendations were produced for improving rail services and facilities along the Newcastle – Carlisle railway line. The study also looked at ways to increase use of the services and better integration with other forms of transport.

The market research undertaken included gathering information from interviews with rail users and from questionnaires to test the possible options for developing the line; gathering statistics from the train operator, Northern Rail, on tickets sales, train punctuality, rolling stock availability and renewal.

Findings:

1. The trains serve several different markets;

- Commuting, mainly into Newcastle, Carlisle and Hexham.
- Shopping, including visits to Metro Centre
- Long distance inter-urban travel.
- Leisure and tourism.
- Local travel to, from and between communities along the route.

2. Train services are most intensive at the eastern end of the line, four trains an hour to Metro Centre, two per hour to Hexham and one per hour to Carlisle, with less frequent services from some of the smaller intermediate stations.

3. Passengers using the smaller stations want a more frequent service from their stations, whereas passengers on longer distance trips want trains to run faster by omitting stops. The net result is that there may be some scope for a small increase in station stops providing it is carefully focussed on station stops that will be most beneficial (increase use of the rail service?)

Recommendations.

Timetable improvements.

- All trains to call at Prudhoe
- More trains to call at Haydon Bridge
- More morning services at Metro Centre.

- More calls at Bardon Mill, Brampton and Wetheral (subject to meeting certain criteria) (could this mean people using the service?)
- Extra late-night Newcastle—Hexham train on Saturdays and investigate the scope for further extra late-night services on Fridays and Sundays
- Possible additional early morning service from Hexham to Newcastle (subject to more detailed cost investigations)
- Better connections with other train services at Carlisle.

There is little spare capacity on the line because of the long signalling sections, which limit headways between successive trains. An opportunity for increasing capacity will be when major investment in signalling on the route takes place, but this will not be before 2011.

Service Patterns.

- Retain cross-Newcastle links to Middlesbrough and Morpeth.
- Replace Stranraer links with more trains to Glasgow, Whitehaven and /or Workington.
- Safeguard the site for a possible station at Gilsland.
- Earlier opening of car parks at Metro Centre (possible Park and Ride scheme)
- Consider closure of Dunstan Station.
- Further investigation into issues about transport in the Blaydon area before a decision is taken on improvement in rail services.

Train service reliability.

Continued improvement in management such as changes in the train maintenance procedures introduced by Northern Rail, timetable planning, train dispatch procedures and platforming information at Newcastle, and a more dedicated rolling stock fleet will help improve performance.

Station and interchange improvements.

Most common means of reaching and

leaving the station is on foot. Car, either driven or picked up/set down, is the next most important means of travel. Only at Newcastle and Carlisle are connecting trains, buses and Metro significant. The report does not expect bus-rail interchange to increase significantly at most intermediate stations, as many bus services compete with rail, rather than feed into it. Where high quality interchange is provided, it should be well publicised and its use encouraged by means such as through ticketing and planned connections.

Recommendations for improvement to stations include: improved walking routes and signposting to and from the stations; more 'step free' access; a transport interchange at Prudhoe; improved information displays at stations and extra car parking at some stations.

The report noted that, with an increase that is above the national average, the catchment population for the Tyne Valley line gives a healthy environment for growth in rail demand. However, it also points out that 3/4 of Tyne Valley rail passengers are car owners and that rail's relative position, in its competition with car, only improves when the motorist faces congestion/ and or parking problems.

Fares and ticketing

- Fares to Newcastle with travel on Metro and buses included
- Off peak discounts for small groups
- Easier purchase of season tickets (use of Internet).
- Earlier opening of Hexham ticket office.

Marketing

- More effective use of Internet web sites to improve joint marketing with the tourist industry, promotion of fares, special offers and on-line season ticket sales.
- Close collaboration with Nexus

(continued on page 9)