

THE HAYDON NEWS

December 2020



Editor's Letter

As this difficult year comes to a close, we'd like to thank all our contributors and advertisers for your continued support.

Our cover photo this month comes from Michael Sadgrove. Thank you to Michael and to everyone who sent us their winter photos. We hope to feature more readers' photos in 2021 – please send us any images you think would make a great front cover.

The Haydon News needs a new Treasurer – can you help?

We are looking for a volunteer to be our new treasurer, who will oversee advertising revenue and complete monthly updates on the accounts. A big thank you to Mark Weldon who has done a sterling job. Mark will be available, along with the rest of the committee, to support the new treasurer. Please get in touch if you'd like to join the committee in supporting the Haydon News into 2021.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from The Haydon News Committee.

Christmas puppet show

The annual Christmas show is usually held in the Methodist Chapel but, due to Covid-19 restrictions this year, is going to be a bit different! We are taking our show online and will feature nine different Christmas songs and carols all with a bit of a twist and “performed” by a variety of characters. The team are hoping that we can meet to film this together after 2nd December, however if not, the show will have a bit of a zoom-style feel with all our parts being filmed separately! We are aiming to upload the show to YouTube on the 12th December under the channel name



‘Haydon Bridge Puppets’ and will circulate details around the village and online. While the show is free to view, the Methodist chapel is also hoping to raise some extra funds through a separate online donation page (details will be circulated with show info); fundraisers will hopefully include a Christmas quiz sheet.

Deborah Bell

“Many Thanks!”

This short paragraph is to say **“Thank you”** to the many individuals who, often unseen or unannounced, undertake voluntary work that ensures our parish remains such a pleasant place in which to live.

A correspondent in October's Haydon News bemoaned the untidy state of the Tunnel Top bottle bank: **“Thank you”** so much to the lady who, armed with brush and shovel, swept up the rubbish and glass surrounding the bins; on Monday morning (November 16th). Here's hoping that residents and authorities will do their best to maintain a tidy site there in the future.

The Haydon News arrives at your door every month; and that would not be possible without the support of those who volunteer to deliver your parish magazine. **“Thank you”**; especially this month to Margaret Marshall, who has delivered and supported The Haydon News and St. Cuthbert's Church magazine before it, for around 50 years. You deserve a rest Margaret (and Jeff)!

We are sorry to hear of the death of Joyce Armstrong; on November 4th. Joyce has delivered The Haydon News in our village for many years, as well as being a wonderful supporter of our Church pages. We have been most grateful to Joyce who will be sadly missed, and our thoughts are with John and family. **“Thank you.”**

Dennis.

CHARITY QUIZ NIGHTS AT THE GENERAL HAVELOCK

Unfortunately, because of Covid-19 restrictions we have been unable to offer Charity Quizzes since February. We shall be retaining the planned quiz dates and the list of supported charities, and will resume once permission has been given.

In the meantime you may like to get in training. I am offering a new quiz every month which will be dedicated to different charities. You can receive a copy of the December quiz from me at johnandaveril@aol.com. Answers will be available on request from the same address at the end of the month. If you wish to make a team donation (suggest £5 minimum) to a charity then "Breast Cancer Now" is my nomination.

THE HAYDON NEWS DONATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Donations of any value are always gratefully received, and will help us to keep this publication going. For people living outside the Haydon News delivery areas, we can arrange delivery by post of the Haydon News for the year at a subscription cost of £20.

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For payment by BACS (Bank Transfer) - please use the Sort Code: 20-40-09 and Account No 93898830 and reference the payment Donation or Subscription.

Cheques should be made payable to 'The Haydon News' and can be handed in to 'Claire's' on Church Street, addressed to the 'Treasurer of The Haydon News'. Or, posted to **Mark Weldon**, The Haydon News Treasurer, Heugh House West, Heugh House Lane, Haydon Bridge. NE47 6HJ.

We will try to have the February editions of The Haydon News printed and distributed early in the month.

Please submit any articles for inclusion by the 12th of the previous month.

Thank you



Christmas opening hours:

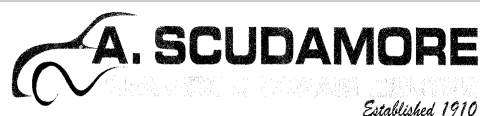
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**ALL CORRESPONDENCE, CONTRIBUTIONS, ADVERTS AND CROSSWORD ANSWERS TO:
editor@haydon-news.co.uk or by hand to: Claire's Newsagents 11, Church Street.**

The Haydon News Committee
Alex Kinsey (Editor), Pauline Wallis (Chair), Pat Hirst (Secretary), Mark Weldon (Treasurer), Richard Woodley (Distribution co-ordinator), Peter Parker, Dennis Telford, John Wallis.

The editorial policy of the Haydon News is the responsibility of the Committee, although day to day responsibility is delegated to the editor. Our intention is always to ensure that the content of the Haydon News is as fair and factually correct as possible. Any complaints concerning editorial policy should be addressed in writing to the Chair and will be considered by and receive a formal response from the Committee. Complaints other than those made above will not be entertained. The Editor reserves 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 if the Editors know the author's name and address.

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Parish Council Notes

ZOOM MEETING OF HAYDON PARISH COUNCIL ON THURSDAY 22ND OF OCTOBER 2020.

Present : Cllrs J. Bates, E. Charlton, E. Faulks (Chair), B. Howard, J. Keyte, A. Kirsopp, K. Richardson, R. Snowdon, D. Thornhill and J. Thompson; C. McGivern (mins) and P. Hartley.

1. **Apologies** – were received from Cllr Burrows.

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

3. **Mr. P. Hartley – Proposed cycleway from Haydon Bridge to Hexham –**

Mr Hartley explained that he was working on the Neighbourhood Plan mobility and transport group. They are looking at how to reduce the negative impact of road transport on the parish through encouraging the use of walking, cycling and public transport. They are considering a range of things to do with walking and cycling, but there had been a lot of support at the community meeting for a cycleway from Haydon Bridge to Hexham. At present cyclists have to either use the A69 which is very dangerous, or use the roads via Fourstones and Warden which is a very winding road and not particularly safe either.

The proposed route would leave the village alongside the A69 until it joins the old road at Spa Well, where it rejoins the A69. A cycleway would need to be constructed beside the road at this point for 1 ½ miles, before diverting down the bridleway at Greenshaw Plain to Warden Bridge. From there it would follow the existing route into Hexham along Tyne Green. In terms of Government policy this is supported in the Transport Plan both locally and nationally. The group has written to NCC and has their support, however they have poured the available funding into the larger conurbations. The route would cross into the area covered by Hexham Town Council near the end, and Mr Hartley had been in touch with them and they are very keen on the idea. Realistically, the only way forward seems to be to have this route constructed as part of a larger scheme, perhaps extending cycle path 72 which goes along the Stanegate road and up to the Sill.

There was a useful meeting with Sustrans before lockdown, and they had been keen to make this the main project for the next year. They were looking at applying for a grant for a feasibility study. The officer that Mr Hartley had been in contact with has now left, but he is in the process of contacting her replacement. At this stage Mr Hartley had no idea how much the project was likely to cost.

The Greenshaw Plain bridleway is not suitable for bikes, but it is a public right of way. Mr Hartley will provide the Parish Council with a plan of the route. Cllr Faulks thanked Mr Hartley for his work and for updating the PC. Cllr Charlton said that Mr Hartley had done a lot of this work himself and she felt that the way forward was for the PC to have a strong input to add their support to the project. Cllr Sharp said he was also very supportive of the proposals and was happy to meet with Mr Hartley. He went on to say that it was not easy to compulsorily purchase land, and this is where a project had failed at Gilsland. He suggested that the key thing would be for the PC to work with the Leazes Estate. It was noted that there were wide verges on the A69 at the relevant point. Mr Hartley said that he has correspondence from NCC and from Guy Opperman M.P. who is keen on the project.

4. Report from Northumberland County Council

The green surface dressing has now been put on the pedestrian crossing at Shaftoe Academy where pedestrians cross the road. The kerb works should be done during half term.

CCTV work was carried out at Elrington junction and as a result of this the matter was passed to the flood team who have contacted the landowner to have the ditches on their land reinstated to hopefully alleviate issues at the junction. As yet no work has been done by the landowner. The flood team are chasing this up and are in regular contact with Cllrs Sharp and Snowdon.

The loading bay on Church Street has now been completed. It has not got any time restrictions attached to it therefore people cannot park in the bay at any time other than for loading. It is suggested that maybe parking should be allowed in the evening 6pm to 8am in the morning (ie restricted parking between 8am and 6pm). This was discussed and the PC decided to give the matter further consideration.

The old speed restriction sign coming from the west into the village is to be amended to 20mph. The contractor is being contacted to progress this matter.

Cllr Sharp had received the following reply from Neil

Snowdon regarding the Ratcliffe Road scheme **“Design team informed me earlier that we received works target costs back today. Once everything is agreed, the works package will be formally issued to the area office who will then programme the works”**. The area office have said that they will do the work as soon as they receive the go-ahead.

The road sweeper has again been out in the village, and further spraying of the weeds in the kerb sides has been carried out. David Hunt has been asked to ensure that the road sweeper comes into the village at regular intervals to keep the village clean and tidy.

NCC have now attended to all of the gulleys which had been reported to Cllr Sharp.

The LED lights on Crook Hill will be changed next week. Lynsey Sawyer has reported that the light situated on Belmont Gardens is on private land and Cllr Sharp will inspect this. The hedge at Whittis Hill has now been cut. Further work has been done at the Showfield with regards to the signage on the road beside the play area, and the additional 20mph signs have been put on the lamp posts. The litter bin will be installed at Innerhaugh within the next two weeks. Potholes between the Vauce Farm and Lough Green, Langley have been inspected but Cllr Sharp had not yet been able to check if the work had been done.

Tim Fish has recently had a meeting with the agent for Mr Straker regarding the access required for footpath work being carried out at Haydon Spa. The meeting was quite constructive and he is waiting for confirmation from Mr Straker that the work can proceed. He mentioned that the footpath would have to be moved further to the East but he did not think this would be a problem.

Cllr Sharp had met with Cllr Keyte and discussed all of the issues regarding the footpath and access problems beside the sports hall and around the High School. He had also had further discussions with Tim Fish regarding this issue and various proposals have been raised. The road will be swept below West Lands' End where gravel had been washed down the bridleway.

Fence repairs needed behind the Community Centre to Karbon Homes.

5. Highways –

A) Cllr Charlton said that the surface on the road coming into the village from the East, near the junction with Martin's Close and John Martin Street, was horrendous. Cllr Sharp promised to take this issue up.

HAYDON BRIDGE NATURE CLUB



Meetings usually take place at
Haydon Bridge Methodist chapel
On Thursdays at 7.15 pm

THE CLUB COMMITTEE HAS YET TO MEET
BUT WHEN THE MEETING TAKES PLACE
THE CHAIRMAN WILL BE PROPOSING
THAT
THE NEW PROGRAMME COMMENCES
IN JANUARY 2021
AND MAY CONTINUE INTO LATE SPRING.

LOCATION MAY CHANGE

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B) Cllr Howard said that Ratcliffe Road had never been “swept” since the surface was dressed. He said that he understands that parked cars are a problem, but if he was given the date for work he would be happy to leaflet households to make them aware of the need to keep the street clear. Cllr Sharp will mention this at NCC.

C) Cllr Richardson said that Joyce Brown had requested a handrail for the steps under the railway, from Station Road. The Clerk will contact Network Rail.

D) Cllr Richardson said the footpath from the railway tunnel, right along to the picnic area is in a poor state and very muddy in places. This is well used by those who cannot manage the steeper routes around the village. The Clerk will report this to Tim Fish.

E) Cllr Richardson said that a member of the public had asked why, when parking has been created at Langley Gardens, could parking not be created on the green outside Greenwich Gardens.

F) Cllr Charlton said that the new houses behind Hordley Acres should have a street name sign, and house numbers. She also said that the kerb on the path behind the pensioners’ bungalows is a trip hazard. She wondered whether this small estate had been handed over to Karbon Homes yet. There had been no reply to the PC’s letter requesting clarification on several points.

G) Cllr Richardson said that she had received complaints about the weeds on the path along Station Road. Cllr Sharp will deal with this.

6. **Lighting** – no issues were reported.

7. **Planning applications** – none received.

8. **Accounts** – as in budget.

Audit – The external auditor’s report and certificate had been received and circulated. This was accepted and the Conclusion of Audit notice had been displayed on the noticeboard and on the website.

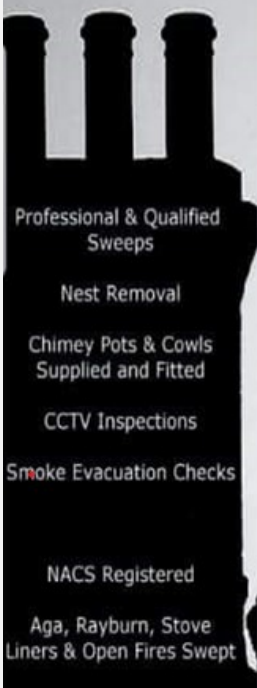
9. **Correspondence** –

A)The PC had been sent a copy of a letter sent by Clare Crowley to the Head of the High School setting out concerns about trees on the boundary of the school. The Chair said that he sympathised, having walked along there recently. Cllr Sharp said that he would take this up. The PC will also send a letter of support.

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B) In reply to a request for the Police to support a pub watch scheme in Haydon Bridge, a very positive response had been received from Gary Neill, Inspector Neighbourhood Policing (Rural). Cllr Thompson had replied to him on behalf of the scheme.

C) Jackie Stothard had emailed the PC to ask why a traffic survey had been carried out at the Showfield, but not on John Martin Street. This request was discussed. and it was agreed that Cllr Sharp would contact NCC to request a survey.

D) Updates had been received from NCC and NWL regarding flooding and new developments, these had been circulated.

10.Parish projects – nothing to report due to the current situation.

11. Any other business –

A) Cllr Thompson said that Mr Richardson and the Scouts had done an outstanding job on the flower beds. He had requested an additional £20 for solar lights to illuminate the gardens they have been working on. The PC said that they were very impressed with the work and agreed to fund an additional £20.

B) Rev'd Benjamin Carter had contacted the PC to discuss plans for Remembrance Sunday. The ceremony this year will be extremely small, as only those who are laying wreaths should attend. It was noted that people should not be encouraged to attend, and anyone who is on Church Street should practice social distancing.

C) Cllr Sharp said that the first meeting for the Community Chest had been held last night and the distribution of £26,000 agreed. At the next session there will be another £20,000 to spend and Cllr Sharp advised any village halls with capital projects to get in touch. Cllr Bates wondered whether Langley Village Hall would be able to apply as they are carrying out emergency work to treat dry rot, therefore the claim would be retrospective. Cllr Sharp said if not he would be happy to help from his Members' Allowance.

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Christmas Dinner – to meat or not?

I keep hearing that we all need to eat less meat to reduce the effects of climate change. Although I'm not a farmer, (beyond being an apprentice gardener at home), I *am* really worried about the future of humans due to our climate changing and the massive reduction in diversity that is happening very quickly. So I'm very interested in farming as farmers can actually have a massive effect on reducing the impact of climate change by how they look after their land. So I went to the Northern Real Farmers Conference, on Zoom, to try and learn more. Here I came across Chris Smaje.

In his recently published book 'A Small Farm Future', he says that although the ecological impact of livestock farming, as currently widely practised, is severe, there are also many benefits from having a smaller amount of livestock. I think this is especially true on farms in the north of England. I heard some amazing accounts of farmers doing such things as 'mob grazing' and 'agroforestry'. As Chris says, if you are standing in a supermarket aisle trying to decide which ready meal to buy, it is very likely to be better for the environment to choose a bean dinner rather than a beef one. But it is better still to choose meat from a local, low-energy farming system. In fact buying something locally sourced supposedly puts back four times that value into the local economy – something called 'local multiplier 3' – which I don't even begin to understand even after googling it! You can also see various sessions of the farming conference by searching NRFC on you tube.

So, with much still to understand about all of this, I have decided for now to eat much less meat and to buy it from butchers that source their meat locally...so I'll be heading round to our village butcher, WMH Farm Fresh Meats. Their beef, pork and lamb is all locally sourced and their Christmas turkeys will come from the closest turkey farm in North Yorkshire.

If any farmers would like to give their thoughts about these issues, and the issues they face, that would be amazing. Maybe farmy discussions on a regular basis down the pub? I'm sure there are also lots of vegans out there who will definitely NOT agree! Whatever you decide to eat, have a great Christmas.

Let me know what you think about these thoughts – and any others relating to our Climate and Ecological Emergency at siobhansib@protonmail.com

Siobhan Stephenson

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Photography is a picture language

Photography is a picture language, communication is its purpose. Most, if not all, of us take images (photos) not for ourselves but for others. We want them to be seen by others hence the "Selfie" (my biggest pet hate). My own aim is to document. My main photographic subjects include derelict/abandoned buildings, trees and local surroundings. Since my photography started and my understanding of the art has changed, my subjects have become more important. No longer do I take images of people, I have never really had the interest to photograph humans, to me, it's far too easy to upset someone with a bad picture of them, a 1/100th of a second can cause so much trouble, so my camera and humans are a no no.

My love of photography started 7 years ago when my wife, Ursula, bought me my first DSLR camera, now in my fifties my main regret is that I never took photography up when I was younger, but as they say "it's never too late". These days, with YouTube and Google, it's so easy to learn new things. There are so many great photographers to learn from, Simon Baxter (woodland photographer), John Maher the former drummer of punk band Buzzcocks is an excellent photographer of derelict buildings and Thomas Heaton from the north east who is top of the landscape scene, to name just a few... I have learnt from all of them. The biggest mistake some beginners make is to try and copy other photographers, one must find their own unique style, yeah take tips and hints but avoid copying. Be different, you stand out more if your images are not like the others. This way of thinking has got my images in several magazines, I have been showcased in galleries in Copenhagen, Berlin, Madrid, Slovenia, Amsterdam and even as far as Singapore, I have photographed for local businesses and the Corbridge Music festival.. Just recently I have been approved to appear on the stock site Shutterstock. So I have a lot to thank for the technology we have at our fingertips these days.

Trees and abandoned buildings, for me, are so interesting. Trees especially fascinate me, I mean some have being around for hundreds of years. The yew trees at Beltingham are 900 years plus... 900

years... can you just imagine what these trees have been through? Oak trees can be hundreds of years old too. Just the way trees grow in their own unique style, all different, all with their own shape, they make beautiful images and after all there will be a time they fall (naturally or by man) so let's respect them and record their existence. Derelict buildings have their own story to tell especially old mining locations. British past must be photographed, as with trees, they will disappear... When I'm in these abandoned places I can imagine how life was, the surreal feeling can be overwhelming. I'm still trying to get that feeling into my images and that's why, even now, I'm still learning the great old art of photography....

Tony Messner

View Tony's images here:

<https://www.picfair.com/users/Tm66images>

<https://www.clickasnap.com/Tm66images>



Single Tree at Bardon Mill - From the first day I saw this tree, I knew the image I wanted, but it took me three years to actually stop and take it. The perfect sunset glare warms the photo while the dark stormy clouds cool it down. Clouds for me give a picture a real dark feeling, I just love clouds especially stormy ones - there's no better day for taking photos than a day where the sky is full of dark clouds...

CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER

Clergy Message: from Deacon Anne

As I write this letter in the middle of November the word that comes to mind is 'longing.' A longing for something other than what we have now! Having just passed Remembrance Sunday, a longing for peace in our troubled world, in lockdown for the second time, we long for an end to the restrictions that prevent us from seeing who we'd like to see and doing things we like to do and of course we long for a vaccine to take us out of the situation we are in. Being an early riser I long for the lighter mornings to see what I am doing and where I am going. Darkness can be very debilitating, we long for the darkness to come to an end and for the dawn of each new day. We long for a new start, a New Year.

My daughter who lives in Lancashire, as well as others in the village where we live at Bellingham, have already put up their Christmas Tree - perhaps a bit soon but on asking some why now? they have said 'it's so dark and dreary, it's something to look forward to' and indeed it is.

The Christmas story is set in a time when people were longing for a Messiah, the promised one, longing for someone to save them from the oppression and occupation they lived in, someone to give them hope and a life they longed for. Into their dark and dreary existence came as promised long ago, **Jesus**, God's own Son - the Light of the World! -someone who could bring all they longed for: peace, love, joy, light and life. Jesus said, 'Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' John Chp 8: v.12 a verse that has very much spoken to me during these times.

As we begin to put up our lights for Christmas and re-open the doors of our Churches to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us not forget the significance of the Light of Christ!

'The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.' John Chp 1: v 9

'In him was life and that life was the light of men.
John Chp1: v 4

The opening words of Bernadette Farrell's hymn sums up what many of us in the Church long for at

this time:

Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light, Shine in your Church gathered today.

(Bernadette Farrell (b.1957) Words and Music 1993
Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications

May you too, know the light of Christ in your hearts this Christmas and also in the New Year that lies ahead.

Deacon Anne Taylor
(with the Methodist Congregation)

St. Cuthbert's Church in December
www.facebook.com/parishesbythewall

Services in the Parishes by the Wall

At the point of writing public worship is not possible in our Church buildings. At this time we are maintaining daily Morning and Evening Prayer at 9am and 6pm on our Facebook page (facebook.com/parishesbythewall) and offer a fuller service with hymns and reflection at 9am on Sunday morning.

We are able to open our Churches for private prayer and both St Cuthbert's Haydon Bridge and All Hallows' Henshaw remain open for private prayer each Sunday at 10.30am.

As we look towards Christmas we hope and pray that restrictions will ease to allow us to gather for worship at that holy time of year. Please keep an eye on notices on Haydon Bridge Matters, our Church Notice Boards, and our Facebook page and website where we will advertise clearly what developments there will be for public worship as and when we are able to.

Rev'd Dr Benjamin Carter

St. John of Beverley Catholic Church



St. John's RC Church like all others is under 'LOCKDOWN' restrictions so no public Mass being celebrated at this time.

Live streamed Mass celebrated by Father Warren can be followed on St. Mary's Hexham website. Times of these Masses and Christmas Mass times will be published on that same website for St. John's.

Booking for any public Mass once we are open is essential as places are limited. Book on-line at the 'heavenfieldpartnership' website.

Methodist Church Update

Since October, and after following the guidelines of the Methodist Church Risk Assessment programme, we have been able to open our building on Wednesday nights for 'Worship on Wednesdays' and have held varied short services relating to current themes including Harvest and Remembrance Day.

Once the current lockdown is lifted, we hope to resume our times together on Wednesday evenings when services during December (beginning at 7pm), will be based around Advent and Christmas to which all will be very welcome.

Deacon Anne Taylor

WHO AND WHERE

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

Rev. Dr. Benjamin Carter,
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Deacon Anne Taylor, (with the Methodist Church)
Woodville' Redesmouth Road, Bellingham NE48 2EH,
Tel: 01434 220283

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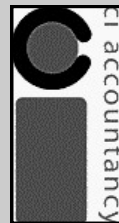
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Historical Notes of Haydon Bridge

By Dennis Telford

As I write this contribution in November 2020, for your December Haydon News, I am wondering how - in this year of a global pandemic and social distancing - we can adequately remember and reflect upon those from our parish who fought and died, as a result of world conflicts.

Last month (*November's HN*), I included an email from Janet Philipson in my Historical Notes. The Philipson family lived at various times, until 1926, in Haydon Fell Cottage (*See below*) and New Alston cottages, and I have decided it is appropriate to return to the Philipson family of Haydon Fell Cottage this month, and particularly to Ainsley Morris Philipson, one of the family's children and our parish's young men, who gave his life in the Great War of 1914 - 1918.



AINSLEY MORRIS PHILIPSON

Ainsley Morris Philipson (*often commemorated as Phillipson*) was one of six children of Mathew and Mary Jane Hails (nee Dodd) of Haydon Fell Cottage. Born in 1893, Ainsley lived all his short life at New Alston and Haydon Fell Cottage.

After leaving Shaftoe Trust School, Ainsley served his time as a painter and decorator with William Cooper and later worked for Mr. Ellis at Hexham. He was a devoted member of the Haydon Bridge Methodist Church, as were his parents.

Ainsley worked in a munitions factory before he enlisted in 1916, and was a Lance Corporal in the Grenadier Guards when he died on April 7th, 1918 aged 24 years. Ainsley Morris Philipson's final days are recorded for posterity and it occurs to me that this sad story - *written in the next column* - reflects a

series of events that will have applied to so many of those servicemen who died and:

'WE WILL REMEMBER THEM'.

A telegram dated **April 5th, 1918** was received on Sunday April 7th by Mathew and Mary Philipson at Haydon Fell Cottage, stating that their son Ainsley had been dangerously wounded and he had asked that a message to that effect be conveyed to his parents.

Another telegram, dated **April 6th, 1918** followed from Ainsley's commanding officer:

'I regret to say that the condition of your son is not so good today. Gangrene has set in the wound. He has been operated upon and I trust the danger has been averted. Possibly you will be coming across to see him.' (*In France*)

A third item of correspondence was received and dated **April 7th, 1918**: 'Lance Corporal Philipson passed away on Sunday morning. There is for your memory that he gave his young life in a glorious cause ... he was such an exceptionally nice and appreciative lad and in his weakness never lost thought for others.

He had intended to write to you with his left hand in a day or two, but God's will has been otherwise.

As well as having his name on Haydon Bridge War memorial, Ainsley is also commemorated on the Reredos in St. Cuthbert's Church, in the Methodist Church, and on the Shaftoe Trust School Memorial.



**Died April 7th, 1918
Aged 24 years**

Ainsley Morris Philipson of Haydon Fell Cottage, Haydon Bridge, is buried in Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Normandy, France.

My brief story of Ainsley Morris Philipson is in remembrance of all those from Haydon Parish who fought and lost their lives due to two World Wars

*My thanks for information are due to:
Janet Philipson, Jane McCormick,
Pam & Ken Linge and the Hexham Courant.*

**PLACES OF WORSHIP AND
PAGES OF HISTORY
Part 1**

St. Cuthbert Church's 'Living Faith On The Frontier' project, designed to secure the future of the Haydon Bridge and Haydon Churches, has encouraged me to take an overview at the history of today's living places of worship.

Haydon (Old) Church:

Worship in the district can be traced back through ancient stones and architecture to the twelfth century, when the early chapel of St. Cuthbert, built high above the River Tyne, served the farm hamlet of Haydon and its rural community.

Haydon's twelfth century church is associated with a date much earlier, however, as it has been written that the body of St. Cuthbert was rested here in 800 A.D.

Certainly, the chapel was built of stones of Roman origin; maybe they were carted from Borcivicus or Housesteads or, were they from an earlier chapel on this site where the body of St. Cuthbert lay and to whom the twelfth century chapel of Haydon was dedicated. Much of the atmospheric old church at Haydon still stands, of course, and is used for occasional services today.

For more information on the twelfth century chapel at Haydon, read my publication: 'Haydon Old Church ... A Short History and Guide.' Available from The Bridge and Claire's Newsagents.



Haydon Old Church

Langley Chapel of St. Mary and St. Katherine:

For hundreds of years, the scattered population of the district, who earned their living from the land and its minerals, could join together and share their religious beliefs in two chapels, in Haydon and Haydon Bridge.

The old chapel at Haydon was a 'chapel of ease' - in other words, a chapel for the convenience of residents living a distance from Warden Parish Church, when the Haydon district was a chapelry within the parish of Warden. In the middle ages, however, the district of Langley and Haydon was administered by Lords of the Barony of Langley, and their 'Chapel of St. Mary and St. Katherine' stood on the south side of the River Tyne, on land to the east of the site of today's Shaftoe Trust School; land that was named 'Chapel Hill Close'. The Chapel of St. Mary and St. Katherine has long gone and, unfortunately, it is difficult to trace accurately its history, but, it is recorded that it was given, along with the church of Warden and the chapels of Stayncroft and Hayden (sic), to the canons of Hexham by Adam de Tindale, one of the first twelfth century Lords of Langley.

To Adam de Tindale's grant to the Hexham canons was added seven acres of land in Haydon and common pasture for two hundred and sixty sheep.

The last known mention of the Chapel of St. Mary and St. Katherine on Chapel Hill Close, seems to have been in 1715 when the well known antiquary John Warburton, on his visit to the old chapel at Haydon, recorded that:

'On ye south side of ye village (Haydon Bridge) is another neat little chapel.'

By 1723, the chapel was no longer in use and it had probably been demolished and, by 1810, twenty alms houses had been built and let there. The properties were named Shaftoe Terrace, after their benefactor, John Shaftoe.

St. Cuthbert's Church in Haydon Bridge:

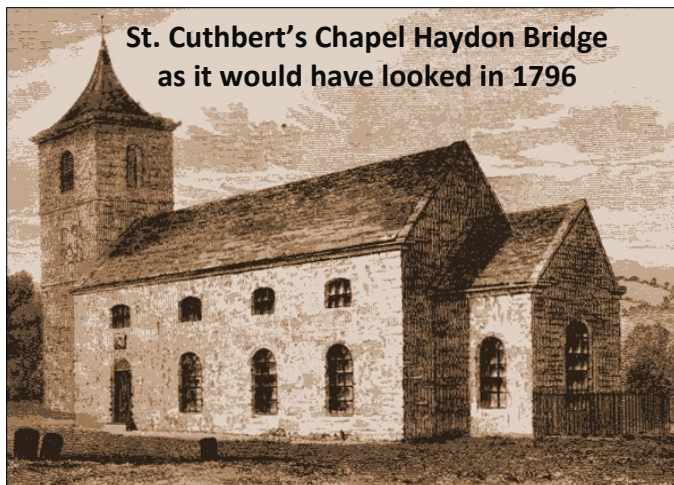
It is clear that by the 1790s, the structure and internal fabric of the Haydon chapel of ease were showing serious signs of neglect, and when it was agreed to build a new chapel in Haydon Bridge, the nave, tower and south aisle at the western end of the Haydon chapel were demolished and carted into the valley, where the stone was used to build the new chapel.

The site for this new chapel in Haydon Bridge was 'Green's Croft', alongside Bridge Loaning - *Church Street today* - and it was donated by Governors of Greenwich Hospital, owners of much of the land in Langley Barony from 1749, following the Radcliffe family's ownership and subsequent demise.

Partially demolishing and rebuilding the ruined Chapel of Haydon in the village of Haydon Bridge was carried out under an Act of Parliament passed in 1794 (George III) and on July 20th 1796; the new chapel, dedicated to Saint Cuthbert, was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Durham.

When a decision was made to build a new place of worship in the chapelry, there was never any doubt that it would be sited in Haydon Bridge. The importance of Haydon had waned, other than as a small farming community, while Haydon Bridge was experiencing significant growth.

Replacing the Haydon 'chapel of ease' in 1796 with a new chapel in Haydon Bridge, reflected these economic and social changes that were taking place, and the movement of the population into the valley where trading opportunities were being developed at each end of the River Tyne bridge crossing, at Haydon Bridge.



Formerly a chapelry in the Parish of Warden, with its St. Cuthbert's 'chapels of ease' - first at Haydon and from July 1796 in Haydon Bridge - it was June 26th, 1879 before the Chapelry of Haydon was constituted as a separate 'Haydon Parish' that was independent from the former mother church of Warden. The new parish was endowed with a stipend of £300, Saint Cuthbert's Church in Haydon Bridge became Haydon Parish's, parish church, and the Reverend John Heneage Mandell MA of Exeter College was the new parish's first Vicar.

St. John of Beverley Catholic Church:

In the seventeenth century, Stonecroft, a property near Newbrough and belonging to a family called Widdrington, was let to tenants who would, 'keep a priest for the help of poor Catholics in Parishes of Warden, Hexham and places adjoining'. (*Haydon was a chapelry within the Warden Parish until June*

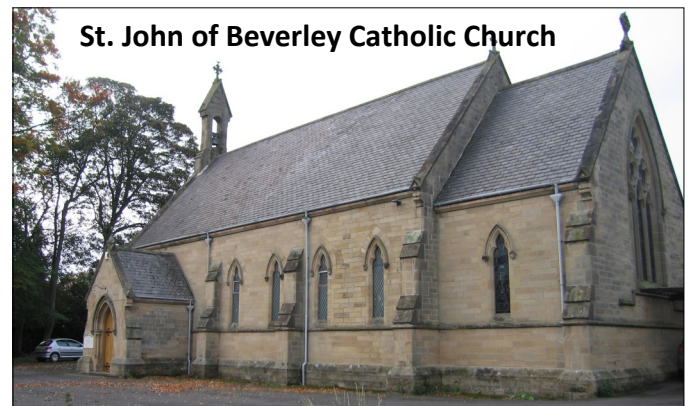
1879 and, as such, came within the Stonecroft/Newbrough Catholic edict.)

There was a Catholic chapel in the dwelling at Stonecroft until 1822, when the property passed into non-Catholic ownership.

In 1860, Friar Francis Kirsopp was appointed to serve the western portion of the large Hexham Catholic mission area; namely Haltwhistle and Haydon Bridge, and the new mission at Haydon Bridge was established in 1862.

The Catholic Church and the adjoining presbytery were built at Haydon Bridge in 1872-1873, in later thirteenth century English Gothic style and on a modest budget of £1,500. The building costs were defrayed out of a 'Newbrough Fund', by which the new mission to the west was also endowed.

The Church at Haydon Bridge was opened in 1873 and Friar Francis Kirsopp was the first Parish Priest.



Haydon Bridge Catholic Church was dedicated to St. John of Beverley who was Bishop of Hexham between the years 687 and 705, when he became Bishop of York while still governing the Hexham diocese until his retirement. John died on May 7th, 721 and was laid to rest in Beverley Minster.

Saint John of Beverley wasn't the only site of Catholic persuasion in Haydon Bridge as, by 1914, a small private chapel in the south east tower at Langley Castle had been rebuilt and consecrated by the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. It is interesting, then, that Josephine Bates - formerly Josephine d'Echarvines of Haute Savoie, and from 1895 the wife of Cadwallader John Bates the historian/antiquarian and owner of Langley Castle - donated the stained glass, east window in St. John of Beverley.

Mr. C.J. Bates died in 1902 and it was his wife Josephine, who oversaw the restoration of Langley Castle that her husband had started in 1895, from its seventeenth century ruin, and the chapel in the

Castle tower was dedicated to her husband.

C.J. Bates had converted to Catholicism in his later years and special permission was granted by the Pope for him to be buried in Langley Castle's grounds.

Thanks to recollections of life at Langley Castle by Mrs. Bates' niece, Mrs. Jeanne Hadcock who was married at St. John's, we know Mass was held by Canon Dunn, the Parish Priest at Haydon Bridge, once a month in the chapel at Langley Castle. It seems that the Priest used to stay the night at the castle and celebrate Mass the next morning.

Once a year on Christmas Eve, and carrying a storm lantern, Josephine Bates walked with her maids (although, not Catholics according to her niece) to St. John's for midnight Mass.

We know that the private Chapel at Langley Castle was used regularly between 1914 and 1932, before Josephine died in 1933 and was laid to rest in the Castle grounds, alongside her husband.



It wasn't until 2006, that Langley Castle Chapel was beautifully restored and brought back to life by the owner Dr. Stuart Madnick, under the watchful eye of General Manager, Anton Phillips.

Returning to St. John of Beverley's Church; there will be Haydon News' readers who can recall the 're-ordering' of the Haydon Bridge Catholic Church in 1984, when alterations to the altar area were made and a packed congregation of around two hundred, were witnesses to the reopening and consecration on May 10th, 1984 by Bishop Lindsay. And even more recently; when In December 2018, Father Leo Pyle retired as Parish Priest with St. John of Beverley, after he had ministered here at Haydon Bridge for twenty one years.

I will continue next time with Part 2 and a closer look at the non-conformists and Haydon Bridge's first Methodist Churches; and a time when there were as many places of worship here as there were public house ... 6 of each!

In the meantime, Best Wishes for Christmas and 2021.
Dennis.

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TWTD – A Series of Reminiscences.

“I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.”

- Albert Einstein

The year 1987 was remarkable in the south of England for two separate weather phenomena, the first of which occurred in early January. Most of the boarders made it back to school on the Sunday afternoon before the snow really set in but by Monday morning we were all but cut off from the rest of the county. A handful of very local day pupils made the tricky journey into school by foot, no doubt gently encouraged by parents who were eager to get rid of their charges after the Christmas holidays, but the vast majority were forced to stay at home. After an emergency assembly to establish numbers of both pupils and teachers, classes were merged and a makeshift timetable was produced for the morning lessons; the afternoon was dedicated to fun in the snow, with sledging, snowball fights (much to the dismay of vulnerable senior members of staff who hid themselves away in their classrooms!) and snow sculpture competitions taking the place of Maths and English lessons. The sledging proved to be particularly popular, with some quite challenging runs created on the slope leading down to the river, and the CDT Department began work in earnest to produce increasingly aero-dynamic machines. Not once, to my knowledge, did anyone question the obvious dangers involved or venture to suggest that a risk assessment be worthwhile. As more snow and darkness fell, the slopes froze again and many of the younger and more adventurous teachers took to the slopes; salopettes and balaclavas became essential wear, night lights were placed on the edges of the runs and confidence was bolstered by the warming contents of hip flasks.

My living accommodation was chilly at the best of times, but the ancient storage heaters struggled to raise the temperature beyond freezing. Even my labrador Ben was suffering and attempted to sneak onto my lap as I sat fully clothed and huddled up in a duvet, trying to plan tomorrow morning's lessons. Sanctuary was, however, not too far distant; a knock on the door proved to be a wonderful colleague who had overheard my pathetic moaning about being perpetually cold and invited both Ben and I up the house he shared with his wife and boisterous dog Sammi. I didn't need to be asked twice; flinging a toothbrush and other essentials into a rucksack, we set off and in half an hour I was sitting in front of a flaming log fire, sipping a glass of mulled wine and savouring

the delicious smells emanating from the kitchen.

By the end of the week, however, with roads still impassable to delivery vehicles and with supplies of bread and milk beginning to run out, the Headmaster summoned one of my colleagues, Jeff Jefferson, to ask if he knew anyone with any four-wheeled drive transport who would be able to help out. Remarkably, the landlord of a hostelry on the outskirts of town owned such a vehicle and, with no email or mobile phones and land lines down, he generously offered to walk to the pub and ask for assistance. “I'll need to take someone with me though – that young Classicist perhaps”. Foolishly, the Headmaster agreed.

So off we trudged, suitably attired against the still freezing conditions, passing numerous cars abandoned in the middle of the road almost totally covered by snow. In those days, pubs always closed between 2.30pm and 5.00pm and it was touch and go whether we would make 'last orders', but I need not have worried; the pub was jam-packed with locals making the most of the fact that they were unable to get to work – no such thing as working remotely in the 1980s! It seemed as though Jeff knew just about everyone in the bar and was universally greeted as a long lost son, and so even the act of pushing through to the bar, let alone making contact with the landlord, was hugely time-consuming. No bell sounded and the beer continued to flow throughout the afternoon. I became side-lined into a conversation, which proved to be more of a monologue, with a gentleman known as 'Brian the Train' who proceeded to regale me with his knowledge of train timetables, while Jeff held court at the bar, telling risqué jokes and anecdotes to the raucous amusement of a healthy number of retainers.

Many pints later, with darkness set in, the freshly fallen snow beginning to freeze again, and my understanding of the workings of Southern Rail complete, Jeff decided that we needed to make our way back to school. It was only when we reached the school gates that the awful truth hit us.....we had both completely forgotten about the purpose of our visit! As a senior member of staff, it fell to Jeff to trudge up the stairs to the Headmaster's study and confess!

And as an afterword, remember that punctuation is vital:

There's a Maypole dancer.

Theresa May, pole dancer.

THE HAYDON NEWS CROSSWORD

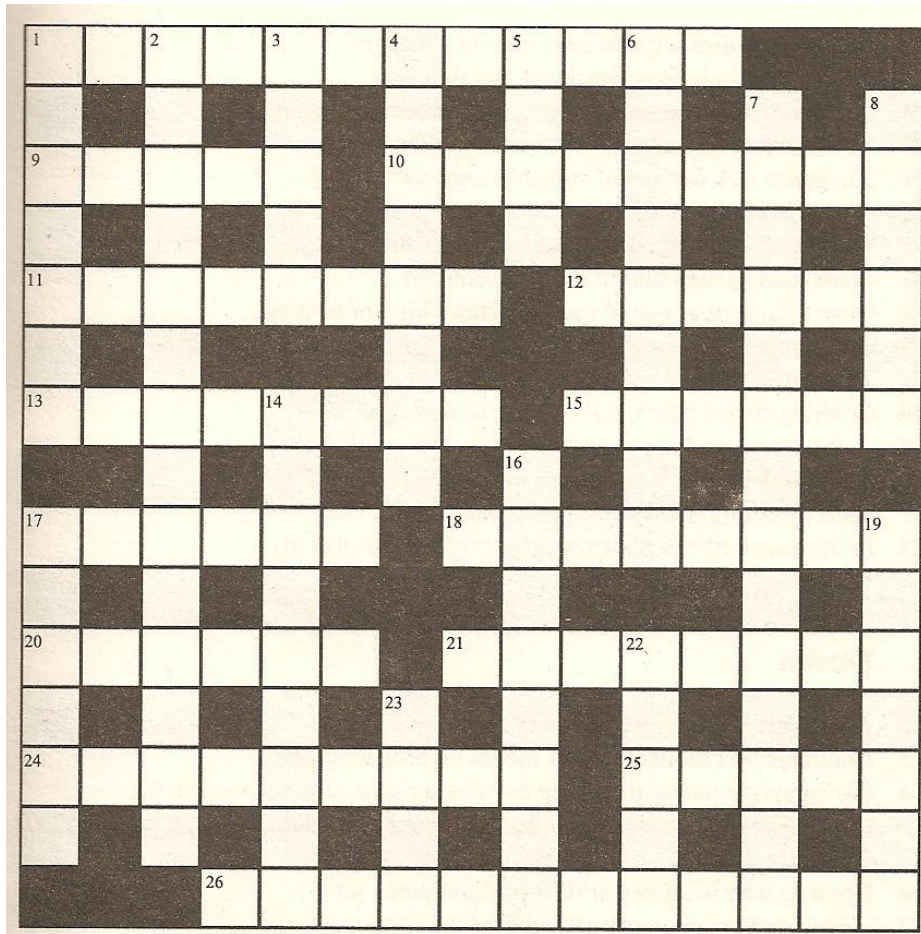
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ACROSS

- 1. REGENERATE
- 8. OBEY
- 10. INTEGRATED
- 11. SWAN
- 13. SLANTED
- 15. PLACES
- 16. RENTAL
- 17. COBBLED TOGETHER
- 20. BEANIE
- 21. TANGIER
- 22. IBEX
- 25. PLEASANTRY
- 26. LASH
- 27. TANK-ENGINE

DOWN

- 2. EMIR
- 3. EATS
- 4. ENGELS
- 5. AGAINST THE GRAIN
- 6. EXETER
- 7. BY AND LARGE
- 9. BEWITCHING
- 12. DAMBUSTERS
- 13. SEALANT
- 14. DEMETER
- 15. PECCADILLO
- 19. TABLET
- 20. BERATE
- 23. STAG
- 24. HYMN

ACROSS

- 1. Ready from convertible running advantages (6,6)
- 9. Animal sound from etching Top Cat left in tatters (5)
- 10. Quiet type of jazzy opening loses nothing, it's clear (9)
- 11. In first seabird little Albert is domestic perhaps (8)
- 12. Become inflexible in part of cyclo-cross if you crash (6)
- 13. Surge around Ted as indicated (8)
- 15. Joined well, did you say? (6)
- 17. Containing blood, irregular machine lost nitrogen (6)
- 18. Artist reformed by her bugle (8)
- 20. First off (or not!) and never shut up (6)
- 21. OK in good French resort (8)
- 24. Café with orchestral part on lake (9)
- 25. Plane's heavenly body (5)
- 26. Like Dracula, centre pairs enabling gloomy soundtrack awhile bursts stye (12)

DOWN

- 1. Touching down at the top of the flight? (7)
- 2. And French out of five players vital to most perfect form (14)
- 3. In the veins of the gods a queer choir (5)
- 4. Lively as Captain Pugwash could be? (8)
- 5. Evil god named as Adam's son (4)
- 6. Time enlightened philosopher had to take on honeymoon (9)
- 7. Backing paper isn't up to date (6,3,5)
- 8. Remained sober, or so it was claimed (6)
- 14. A joint like this can turn all ways (9)
- 16. Posh printer brought about itching (8)
- 17. Train set maker from North Yorks village? Sounds like it (6)
- 19. Distance unknown but may be tedious (7)
- 22. Every other glum cyclist wears this designer label... (5)
- 23. ...therefore Giant is flipped (4)

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I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

With a great big sack of toys, for the little girls and boys,

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh,

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

With *one* reindeer down, we can still get around,

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

Looking down, there's a chimney over there,

Silently I'll land the sleigh down there with care.

In the morning they will see, some presents by the tree,

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

Oh what a trip, what a flight,

We travelled all around the World tonight.

With a great big sack of toys, for the little girls and boys,

I'm flying in on the wind in a sleigh.

Rudolph's pace is slacking, my sack's no longer full,

We'll set the compass Northwards, as we make the final pull.

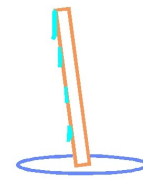
Another year's work is over, the World's a happier place,

I'm flying home on the wind in a sleigh.

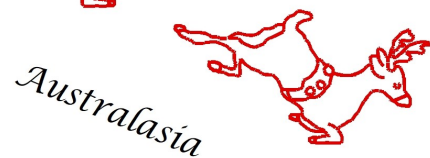
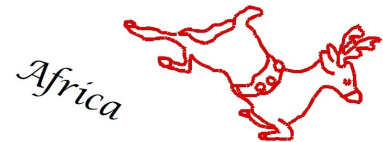
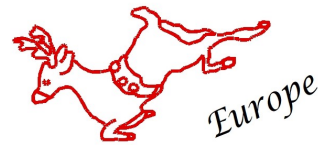
Phil Harley

Hear it at: https://youtu.be/FQHPP_rJNlo

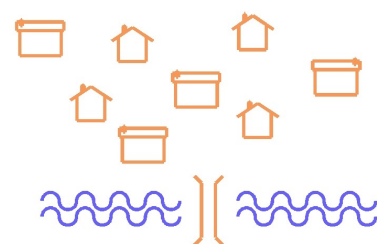
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The North Pole



Haydon Bridge



I've always been a "bah humbug" and so have a limited number of Christmas songs in my repertoire., but I was cajoled into writing this parody of the Adamson/McHugh wartime song by friends at the Brampton Howard Arms Folk Club.

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A VIEW FROM UP THERE

John Harrison

Near where Averil and I used to live there was a narrow section of road which ran along the northern edge of the harbour and at both ends was the standard warning sign which is a silhouette of a vehicle falling over the edge. All very worrying, especially when you see the rusting remains of an old car wedged in the mud below. This came to mind recently when a local newspaper reported that the Ofsted Report on a local school referred to its situation as 'standing at the edge of a precipice'. The headteacher's response was reported to have been to the effect that he accepted the school's position and would drive it forward immediately. Direction not specified !!!!

As usual at this time of year, we have been experiencing a number of autumn storms with gales and heavy rain. While most of these start their lives out in North Atlantic and are driven eastwards by a powerful Jet Stream, some are born out of tropical storms which have been active on the other side of the Atlantic. At this early stage they have very different characteristics to mid-latitude cyclones, which contain frontal systems (warm and cold fronts) and are energised by contrasts between warm tropical and cold polar air. Decaying hurricane Epsilon was such a storm and approached the British Isles 26-27th October. This was followed by a more traditional middle-latitude storm, Aidan, on the last two days of the month.

October was, on the whole, a dull and cloudy month with rainfall recorded on almost every day. A sure sign that winter is on its way was the arrival of large flocks of Fieldfare enjoying the berries in our hedgerows. The cloud cover resulted in relatively cool days while ensuring that night frosts were largely absent. The one exception was the 2nd when a sharp ground frost did some measurable damage to garden plants.

A complex area of low pressure dominated the weather for the first ten days. The 3rd (Storm 'Alex') was the second-wettest day in the ten years of records at Plunderheath but flooding was not a major problem following a relatively dry September. As pressure began to rise, the wind turned towards East/North-East. Rainfall amounts decreased significantly and much fell as drizzle. Winds were relatively light. A complex area of low pressure and associated frontal systems took control from the 19th onwards and rainfall was recorded every day up to the end of the month.

Monthly Weather Summary (Haydon Bridge : Height 162m asl)

| Month | Average maximum temperature (Daytime) deg C | Relative to long-term average degC | Average Minimum Temperature (Night-time) deg C | Relative to long-term average degC | Rainfall mm | Percentage of long-term average |
|---------|---|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| October | 12.3 | -0.4 | 6.2 | +0.2 | 114.8 | 133% |

And finally, Gladys tells me of a young man in her village who has recently developed the habit of drinking car brake fluid. Concerned about this change in life, Gladys challenged him the other day only to be told that he felt that he could stop any time. She also tells me that she has stopped going to her local village pub. Every time she sits in the bar, voices keep telling her that she looks great. When she asked the barman why this should be happening he suggested that it was due to the complimentary peanuts on the bar.

A spooky story!

A talented young writer from Haydon Bridge wowed judges to win a new writing competition last month.

Annabel Wakeman's spooky story came with a warning 'Do not read if you are easily scared!'

The competition was part of a series of activities and competitions for young people in the area over the Half Term holiday.

We thought it was excellent and with Annabel's permission, have included it in full here.

Emily

I was jolted into wakefulness to the ringing of the nearby church bells. My heart was a staccato beat in my chest. There were goosebumps prickling the back of my neck and arms and I was drenched in a cold, feverish sweat. I pressed a trembling hand to my forehead; I was burning. I pushed myself upright and had to fight not to fall back down from the wave of dizziness and nausea that met me. In my fevered state I thought I heard someone whisper my name "Emily ...". Heart thumping, I gazed into the darkness surrounding my bed and waited for my eyes to adjust. There was no one there but my breath still caught in my throat. I felt as though someone was there, just out of sight. I wondered that I must be quite ill. Groggily, I counted the bell chimes - 10 pm; I had been asleep for only two hours. With shaking slowness I moved my legs over the side of my bed and pushed myself to my feet, my weakened arms clutching my bedpost as a second wave of nausea hit. The back of my neck still prickled with dread as my ears strained to hear another whisper. I decided that I was going to try to go downstairs and see if Mother and Father had come back from Father's business trip. They had been gone for five days now and were due to come back late at night. I hoped they were back so Mother could comfort me and soothe my fevered skin and tell me I was being silly for being so scared of imaginary voices. I pulled on my shawl and lit a candle. There was still no-one there. With it, I stumbled out onto the landing - to underneath the trapdoor.

The door that wasn't there before.

My house doesn't have an attic so why was the shadowy, cobwebbed panel suddenly in my ceiling? Was I hallucinating? I must be hallucinating. Trapdoors don't just appear out of nowhere; I must be sicker than I thought. And yet despite that thought, I was still gazing, entranced, at the oak. I couldn't look away. I'm not sure how long I gazed, as though hypnotised at the ceiling. All I know is that after a while I stopped feeling ill; I stopped feeling much of anything at all. My heartbeat slowed; my limbs felt numb and heavy and a hazy sort of calm began to fill my head like

cotton. So, when the trapdoor began to open before my eyes, my heavy limbs and heavy mind began to automatically climb the ladder that fell down, neither knowing nor much caring whatever was in the room beyond.

The room was decaying, bare and panelled with rotting oak. The floor was coated in a patina of what looked like soot or dirt. The tiny room's only illumination came from the dim light of my candle, its' guttering light casting shadows on the dark walls that twisted as though they were in the tight fist of agony. After a few seconds, the light caught on a small box at the end of the room, pure black and inspiring such a sudden feeling of sharp dread that it almost cut through the dreamlike state I was in. And yet my feet still moved towards the box, each footstep sounding like a thunderclap through my trance: through the silence. I felt like I was moving an inch a minute and yet I couldn't have stopped moving if it had even crossed my mind to. After what felt like many hours, I lifted the lid. The silence felt like mud around my ears. At the bottom was a mask, semi-obscured by dust. I put the candle down beside me and knelt on the ground to get a closer look, my cold knees pressing hard on the black covered floor through my nightdress. It looked like it once was a plague doctor mask, except now it was mottled all over with a greenish-black mould. There was something else staining around the eye slits and along the sides of the pointed beak. It was a brownish-red substance. The haze that enveloped me began to recede, replaced by a growing sense of apprehension and a rising spike of terror. I slowly reached out to pick it up. I stopped right before I touched it. Breathed in. Breathed out. Before I could lose my nerve, I grabbed it. Silence.

Silence. There was just silence. I almost couldn't hear my heartbeat, couldn't hear my breathing. There was just silence and the mask in my hands. The rusty brown stains on the old thing, patch-worked over the mould were almost all I could see. The more I looked the more terrible it was. The silent terror I felt at those stains was almost irrational, except I somehow knew it wasn't. So much was my attention on the mask that I didn't even hear the trapdoor slowly shut behind me. I didn't see the shadows cast by the candle writhe and leap and shudder in almost ecstatic pain. I could only see the stains on the mask. It was as though the more I looked the further they spread: the clearer they got. And it was after what felt like hours of staring and staring that I finally started to notice. I noticed that the trapdoor had shut behind me. I noticed that I couldn't move; noticed the shadows jumping all around me. I noticed that the stains were getting clearer, spreading further, getting redder. I noticed the trickle of blood that ran down my wrist.

A drop of blood fell on the floor. Then another. Then another. Soon there was a constant stream trickling down my arms and snaking away along the floor. The mask was covered in blood. No, it was bleeding. Rivulets of blood were pouring from the eye slits of the mask like it was crying. The blood was just pouring faster and faster, staining the mask and then my arms. It was pooling on the floor before slithering its way

behind me like some sort of deranged serpent. The mask fell from my grip. I was frozen in shock, unable to voice the terror caged in my chest. My pale skin and nightdress were almost completely stained red from the mask now violently spewing blood from its place on the ground. From the part of my mind that was still working despite the mind-numbing terror of my predicament, I wondered if this was going to stop, was I going to drown here in a sea of blood? The blood was almost completely pooled around my legs. I willed myself to get up - to move!- but I couldn't. Just as I began to truly panic about my possible fate, it stopped. For a moment there was stillness. Silence. The mask suddenly slid behind me as though yanked back by an invisible rope. The blood still pooled around me began to crawl backwards too. Even the redness that had seeped its way into my nightdress and skin began to almost reluctantly peel itself away and go to join its' fellows.

There was no noise but the sound of the blood gurgling. It was quiet at first, just the noises of it moving across the soot-covered floor to join the mask behind my back. I didn't dare look behind me (I was too scared to) but instead focused on the spluttering light of the candle beside me that was somehow still burning. I stared at the flame and the manic figures it was casting, trying to focus on that slightly maddening sight and not the sounds of the blood. It trickled. It gurgled. It bubbled and squelched like it was being moulded like some demonic wax. It got louder and louder and more ghastly as the shadows danced with more demented ferocity. The sounds slowed, stopped. The shadows still writhed. I held my breath, waiting. There was a footstep. The candle shook slightly. Another. It sounded like some demon wading through mud. The candle trembled, even more, this time. Another. And another. They stopped. I felt breath on the back of my neck. A voice whispered "Emily..."

Finally, I had to turn around. I still didn't want to but I didn't have a choice. I was being called to turn around by something in my bones, by something old and angry. I turned slowly, numbly. There was a dull thud from next to me. I was greeted by the mask, the wickedly pointed plague doctor mask. It was clean now - no mould. Just an entrancing, moving blackness. A single bead of blood trickled from the eye slit, sliding down to join the jagged redness and ash of its' being. Its' being was indescribable simply because of the sheer amount of red and black that was clouding my vision. The mask. The blood. The soot. The smoke. My fever seemed to be back, the brightness of the room much increased. My feet were burning - I couldn't move. I could only stare at the mask and the bead of blood from its eye. The mask. The blood. There was so much red, everything was burning now. The mask. The blood. The flames. The shadows were screaming, howling in pain and ecstasy. Or maybe I was. Or maybe we both were. I couldn't see the mask anymore.

Everything was back to how it was. The mask was in the box. The soot was coating the ground and the shadows danced on the walls. There was shouting from under the trapdoor. "Emily? Where are you? We're back!". Emily saw a familiar woman climb up the ladder. She watched her walk, entranced,

across the room to the box. She writhed with the shadows as she set down the candle and opened the box. She saw the trickle of blood that ran down her wrist and turned into a flood. She danced in agony as the woman froze as the masked monstrosity formed behind her. She watched the candle fall as she turned around to gaze at it. Emily screamed with her mother as she began to burn.

by Annabel Margaret Wakeman

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