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February 2022

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Welcome to our February issue.

Thank you to all our contributors in this issue and to Jake at Diane Makepeace Aerial Photography for the fantastic front cover image.

If you'd like to submit something for our March issue, please send it to us by 12 February.

We are having some problems with our email address, so have included an alternative address below to use if you try to send something to us and get a bounce back message.

All the best, Alex

editor@haydon-news.co.uk

editorhaydonnews@gmail.com



Festive cheer at Shaftoe Wise Academy

Community News

Gardening Group

The group continues to grow, and we have a fairly regular email newsletter to keep everyone informed about what is happening and how to help. Drop me a line if you want to keep up to date, there is no obligation on you to do anything at all.

Following the award of a grant from the County Council's Community Chest (£1,200) and an annual contribution from the Parish Council (£250), work has been able to continue at the Ratcliffe Road site opposite the Community Centre. Thanks to a mass crowd-planting in the driving rain at the end of December - thank you all, you know who you are - the box hedging is done and 4 small fruit trees are in place. There is one each of apple, pear, plum and cherry and all of them have 2 varieties grafted on. Should be interesting and productive too. Some of the plants rescued from the site in autumn have been repositioned and spring bulbs have been potted up to add later in the year.



Dreadful weather couldn't dampen the community spirit!

The next phase is to continue to position the remaining rescued plants and then mulch the site to keep weeds down. If anyone can source good mulch or composted bark at a reasonable price, we would love to hear from you. Even the cheapest commercially available (B&Q bulk) would take all the funds we have left. We plan to add herbs and fruit bushes for communal use, strawberry plants have already been offered but if you have any other soft fruit bushes or herbs such as Rosemary, Sage, Mint etc, we would be delighted to take them off your hands. Also, any spare snowdrops (or other bulbs) in the green would be very welcome.

Finally thinking ahead, we intend to have a plant sale to raise funds for village planting on Northumberland Day (late May) so if you are sowing seeds for the summer, please sow a few more for us.

caroleannprice@hotmail.co.uk

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HAYDON PARISH COUNCIL AT 7.30PM ON THE 16TH OF DECEMBER, IN HAYDON BRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE.

Present : Cllrs E. Charlton, E. Faulks (Chair), J. Keyte, A. Kirsopp, A. Sharp, R. Snowdon, and J. Thompson; 1 member of the public, & C. McGivern (mins.)

Public participation – none.

Apologies - were received from Cllrs J. Bates, I. Burrow, B. Howard, K. Richardson, D. Thornhill. Several Cllrs had stepped down to allow for social distancing at the meeting.

Declarations of interest – none were received.

Minutes of last meeting – having been circulated were agreed and signed with the following amendment. In the October minutes it had been mistakenly stated that planning application **21/03704/FUL : Change of use from grassed area to a designated area for parking and turning horse trailer (retrospective), Blackhill**, Heugh House Lane had been withdrawn, this was incorrect.

Report from Northumberland County Council –

The yellow and white lines have now been reinstated on the road outside Shaftoe School, opposite the Showfield entrance, and the road markings have also been refreshed along John Martin Street and Shaftoe Street.

The road sweeper has been around Haydon Bridge and cleared the leaves. Cllr Snowdon confirmed that the road sweeper had also been to the Woodhall area. Additional 20 mph signs will be installed on Martin's Close shortly.

The road signs for the roundabout on Church Street/Ratcliffe road junction were removed after the last meeting.

Cllr Sharp had reported that all of the other matters discussed the last meeting, but unfortunately due to staff having to be deployed to deal with matters following Storm Arwen many of these matters have not been able to be progressed.

Cllr Sharp had sent around a report on the 9 December 2021 regarding the electricity being off in various properties in the village following Storm Arwen and these issues were discussed fully at the meeting on 10th December 2021.

Cllr Sharp had been told that the parts for the new litter bin at Peel Well corner have still not been received, but he had been assured that this work would be done in the very near future.

Highways

(a) Roadlink had written to say that they would be undertaking tree removal works within the landscaped areas between Haydon Bridge and Hexham over the next few months. Recent surveys have identified significant Ash Dieback within the landscape plots posing a hazard to the carriageway if not actioned. All of the work would be undertaken from within the highway boundary under traffic signals. At such times that the forestry works are in operation, it will be necessary to place 'Footpath / Road Closed' signs along the old road adjacent to the A69.

The works will involve the removal of Ash Trees within falling distance of the carriageway. Industry guidance requires that due to loss of structural integrity affected trees be removed mechanically. The motorised equipment does generate noise and they apologised for any inconvenience that this might cause. They are proposing to carry out work in the above area

week commencing 13 December with one evening closure to remove some of the larger trees, which would require traffic to be stopped in both directions for a short period of time for safety reasons. They are planning to undertake works outside of morning and afternoon peak times.

(b) Cllr Charlton said that the road from New Alston to Grindon was in a terrible state. It was noted that the surface had been removed, to allow resurfacing to go ahead, but this had not happened. In contrast the road down to Joicey Shaft had a new tarmac surface.

(c) Transport North East had written to inform the PC about a significant project they're working on in partnership with [Go North East](#), [Durham County Council](#) and [Northumberland County Council](#). The project is for the delivery of 73 new zero emission buses in the North East. Following the North East's successful expression of interest for the delivery of the new electric bus fleet earlier this year, we have been busy developing a business case to secure funding through the Department for Transport Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) programme with an expected submission date of that business case in late January 2022. Cllr Charlton said that during work on the Neighbourhood Plan it had become clear that a number of people who travel from Haydon Bridge to Newcastle by bus were transferring to a faster bus service at Hexham, which also had wifi. If this continued she feared that it would skew the statistics and make it look as though people did not travel through to Newcastle from Haydon Bridge. She feared it could lead to the bus service being reduced to Carlisle to Haltwhistle, and she requested that this was highlighted in the response.

Lighting

Cllr Sharp said he was dealing with a report of a light out at Tynedale Close.

Planning applications –

There were no applications to discuss. Cllr Snowdon had said that the discussion at the previous meeting about a planning application had been very useful. He felt that there was not normally time at the PC meeting to give applications the time that they deserved. He suggested that a planning scrutiny group be set up to look at plans more fully and report to the full PC. All agreed that this would be a good idea, and Cllr Sharp welcomed the idea. Cllr Bates had offered to take part and Cllr Howard was volunteered in his absence. The Clerk will ask him if he is willing to do this.

Accounts – as in budget.

Correspondence

Northumbrian Water had replied to a request for an update following problems with the drains at Park Stile saying that they had "located the data which you reported to us back in May 2021 (BP Ref:366973123238); I regret to advise that I am unable to locate any information relating to the proposal of an air-tight manhole installation. I have spoken with the technical support advisor who attended the site, on the day you reported it to us and confirmed he is not aware of any requests for new manholes. I have asked if the team can re-attend, to verify if new manholes are required. As soon as I receive an update from our technical support team, I will be back in contact to keep you updated." David Robson had been informed of this, and he restated that the air-tight manholes had been suggested to him. The Clerk will chase this up again.

Alan Batey had contacted the PC about moles in the green burial area. It was agreed that he should get a quote for dealing with them.

Hexham Council's Planning & Infrastructure Committee had written to the neighbouring PCs to express support for a cycle route from Haydon Bridge to Corbridge and to start partnership working. It had also been agreed to contact NCC and request the Tynedale Local Area Council consider a cycle route and invite the respective Councils to discuss this. It was agreed that the Clerk would reply with the PC's unanimous support for this.

A modification to the Definitive map of Public Rights of Way was received from NCC. This made alterations to byways 68-71.

The Tyne Rivers Trust had written to say that they had received grant money and were looking for ideas on how to spend it. An interpretive panel was suggested to inform people about life in the river, possibly to be located on the South bank.

Parish projects

Development Trust and the Bridge – Cllr Charlton said that there had been discussions at the library about remaining open. As all of the volunteers are in the vulnerable category and some are shortly to meet with relatives they have not seen for two years, or are awaiting operations it was decided to close the library until the New Year.

Update on extra-ordinary meeting on 10th of December – Cllr Faulks said that he had received a letter from Aidan Pollard regarding the length of time it took to restore power to some homes in the village after Storm Arwen and the very poor communication with Powergrid. He felt that the letter summed up the problems well, and he went on to say that the Clerk had written to Powergrid, with copies to NCC and the Police. He went on to say that Cllr Snowdon had suggested that the existing flood groups be extended to help with other emergencies. However, he went on to say that the Flood Group was set up in 2016 and there was a need to get younger people involved.

Cllr Snowdon said that in 2019 an article had been included in the Haydon News which provided information about preparing for a flood. This had included a pro-forma to be completed with insurers details and emergency contact numbers etc and kept handy. He thought this could be expanded to include other emergencies. Cllr Charlton wondered if this could be included once a year to remind people. Cllrs felt that something that needed to be highlighted was with everything was moving toward electricity, people did not have an alternative source of heat or cooking.

Part of the problem recently had been communication, with Powergrid asking people to contact them on social media. In the first instance people should contact their electric supplier by telephone, the contact number will be on the back of electric bills.

Cllr Faulks said that prior to the meeting on the 10th of December a member of the PC had been subject to abuse from a member of the public, he had been horrified to learn of this. Cllr Thompson said that she had been unable to be present at the meeting but

wanted personally to thank all members of the council, Cllrs Richardson and Thornhill for handling facebook. Cllr Sharp and the Clerk for the professional way they had dealt with this. The whole council are good public servants. She said she would not resign, but she had never experienced such an unsettled week as a Cllr. The whole thing had been very intimidating and had been very difficult for the whole council.

Any other business –

Cllr Thompson said that the area behind the Community Centre that had recently been discussed had now been fenced by Karbon Homes and looked much better.

Cllr Charlton wondered whether Greenwich Hospital had replied to a query about the lane behind the Community Centre. The Clerk will chase this up.

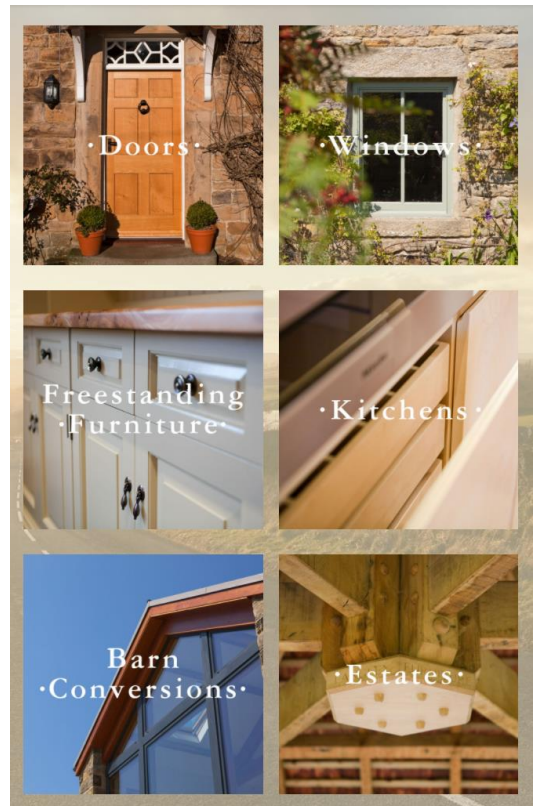
Cllr Thompson asked what was to be done about the damaged barbecue stand at the picnic area. It was agreed that the PC would ask the builder for advice on how to proceed.

Members of the public had reported that High School students had been seen along Station Road and at the picnic area before school, and they'd been noticed smoking. This issue will be raised with the school.

**For Councillors contact details
see back cover**

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Haydon Bridge Walking Group

Following on from the Neighbourhood Plan Footpath Survey, a walking group has developed.

We had our first walk between Christmas and New Year, a very enjoyable 8 or so miles starting and finishing at New Alston. It was a good way to walk off those extra mince pies, get some fresh air and enjoy the company of others.

Initially the walks will be local but it is hoped that we will venture further afield, taking in places such as The Lakes, Allen Valley, Swaledale or our beautiful Northumberland coast.

We will meet monthly, on the third Thursday of the month, however there will be some walks on the third Saturday or Sunday to allow every one the opportunity to take part. They will be about 8 – 10 miles in length.

So, dust off those walking boots as we have walks planned for Thursday 17th March, Thursday 14th April and Sunday 15th May. The May walk will be on Hadrian's Wall incorporating a talk on the life of the Curlew, by Tina Taylor the RSPB's Curlew LIFE Project Officer.

If you are interested, please contact Anne Suddes on 07761 908793 or anne.suddes123@btinternet.com for more information about the walk on Thursday 17th March.



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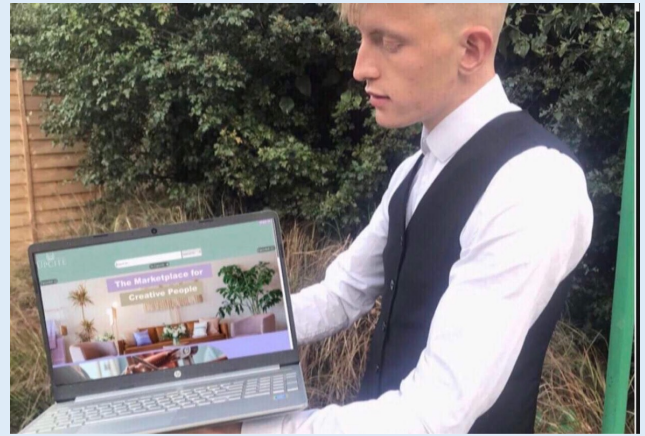
A young Haydon Bridge entrepreneur has started a business to give old furniture a new lease of life.

Cole Glover, originally from the village, is currently studying business and finance at Lancaster University. After the idea of buying and selling furniture from his car went well, he set up a website to find items that could be upcycled for new owners to enjoy.

‘Upcite is a marketplace to find beautiful upcycled furniture and also furniture that you could upcycle yourself.

‘Whether it’s older or slightly damaged furniture which could become upcycle projects, it all means less furniture going to landfill. When I started selling furniture from my car, I met a lot of keen ‘upcyclers’ looking for unique or quirky pieces to transform. I also discovered that many businesses have furniture in storage that is being wasted and so saw the opportunity to launch Upcite.co.uk’

The website profiles all the furniture currently available and anyone can get in touch if they have furniture they think might be suitable. ‘People have sent us photos of the ‘before and after’ of what they’ve done with furniture they bought from us and it’s great to see how creative people are with really unique refurbishments.’



What to do in your garden in February

Adam Howells

As predicted, we have been as busy as ever through the winter months without a day to spare in January at all! Often, at this time of year, gardeners are busy with one off clear ups and larger maintenance jobs, but we’ve not been able to take much of this on at all thanks to our loyal regular customers – all great news for an expanding business!

February at least, isn’t January! It’s also the shortest month so we can all feel that it won’t be long before spring is in full bloom again. Personally, I’ve really been enjoying seeing the snowdrops and early irises coming through, heralding in the soon to be here daffodils and crocuses which are such a glad sight after the barren days of midwinter.

Now the days are lengthening and the sun is climbing a little higher in the day, we can turn our thoughts towards the summer and the preparation which we can do now to ensure bountiful blooms and a bumper crop.

February Jobs include:

- Mulch. Put a top dressing around plants after pruning, planting etc. I prefer to use a good soil conditioner as year on year this improves the soil structure and your plants will be happier for it.
- Turn compost to speed up rotting
- Last chance for bare root planting
- Repot house plants (where needed)
- Cut back perennials – clear any remaining dead material to make way for new shoots
- Divide snowdrops. These replant ‘in the green’ so lift, split, and replant as soon as flowering is over.
- Chit your potatoes!
- Look out for loose tree ties – the winter winds may have loosened these and there may be bark damage.
- Retrain climbing roses.

Don’t panic. There may seem like masses of things to prepare, but take your time and enjoy the process as much as the results. See you in the spring!

Shaftoe Wise Academy

Happy New Year from everyone here at Shaftoe! What a jam-packed festive period we had (doesn't it seem like a lifetime ago), and we have picked up where we left off this term.

Owing to Covid restrictions, Christmas again had a different look in 2021, however our schedule was full of seasonal fun. Our festivities in fact began back in November when we visited the Theatre Royal in Newcastle to see their annual Pantomime, which this year was Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. Having not been able to attend last year, staff and pupils alike were thrilled to be able to attend and the show didn't disappoint, with laughs from start to finish. By the last week of term the festivities were already in full swing as the children had already enjoyed their Christmas lunch, Christmas party day and taken part in the nationwide santa dash the previous week. We were also delighted to be able to take our year 1 and 2 children to the village's luncheon club at the community centre where we brought our Christmas cheer into the community in the form of poems and carols. We must thank everyone in attendance for their warm welcome and for the gifts the children received, they were over the moon! It's great to have the support of local businesses and organisations at this time of year, and we were grateful to Phil and Gary at 'Roman Wall Christmas Trees' for their kind donation of our school tree and also to the village churches for the advent calendars they provided. The last week of term brought our annual Christingle which took place in school and is available to view on our Facebook page (Shaftoe Trust Academy) and our Christmas fair, where the children took turns with their year group to visit the stalls, play games and sample some tasty treats.

This was the culmination of what had already been a busy term! In the classroom there had been a big focus on Design & Technology, as children were hands-on to produce a range of different creations, with topics covering fire engines, cooking & nutrition and designing and sewing cushions. The children thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to get creative and displayed teamwork, problem solving, patience and perseverance. This supplemented our continued work on core subjects, and December saw the conclusion of our reading challenge, where 40 children had passed the mark of 40 reads at home to earn the reward of a chippy lunch, supplied by Haydon Bridge Fish & Chips, a big thanks to them for their efforts, clean plates all round! We have also been able to embrace the outdoors with our newly introduced forest school sessions, delivered by our trained forest school teachers Miss Phazey and Miss Nash. The children haven't been deterred by the wintery weather, exploring the forest through guided tasks, challenges and play. We are looking forward to continuing our forest school progression, with more staff to be trained over the coming months.



Looking forward we have a number of exciting projects in the pipeline with exciting developments coming for our Early Years outdoor area which is sure to introduce a wide range of new opportunities for our children. Places in nursery are still available but filling up fast so spread the word and contact school to secure your place now. Our new library is also taking shape. Brand new furniture is on its way and the newly painted walls are to be transformed by a number of colourful murals courtesy of a local artist. Another of our current projects will see the introduction of a nurture room in school, where children will be able to take advantage of a calm and quiet sensory space, which will become a great tool in maintaining a happy and vibrant atmosphere around school!

Watch this space for further news and developments and please visit our Facebook page for regular updates.

Adopt a footpath

One of the issues which came out of the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan was our network of footpaths, bridleways and byways and how to protect and enhance them.

The Footpath Group is a group of volunteers each of whom have adopted a roughly circular route of Rights of Ways. The paths are surveyed and problems found reported back to Northumberland County Council (NCC). The County has a duty, along with land owners, to maintain most aspects of our Rights of Ways. The Footpath Group will also carry out some work ourselves, particularly those items which are neither the land owners or NCCs responsibility.

The Group has met twice and our NCC Area Countryside Officer, Tim Fish has attended both meetings. The first meeting we agreed how to carry out surveys and the second to report back on the results. Tim is currently working through the surveys deciding which items he can address, either through direct work by NCC or by contact with the landowner and those the group itself can sort out. We will deal with issues such as replacing broken signage, cutting back vegetation and minor repairs to styles, gates etc. The Parish Council can take on responsibilities for our Rights of Way, particularly in regard of improvements and accessibility. We have asked them to look at the link between the top of Cemetery Road and the Spring Wood footpath where currently users have to walk alongside the busy Allendale Road to access the Spring Wood path, a potentially dangerous stretch of road.

We plan to survey the routes again next May. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Phil Hartley – philhartley41@yahoo.co.uk



Could you help protect our local footpaths?

Haydon Action for Community Hub

Part of the Neighbourhood Plan was taking forward 'Community Actions', so some of the steering group have worked on how to take these forward. This is still at a very early stage – we now need to make them happen, and this means people getting involved. So, if you are interested or have knowledge that would help, please get in touch.

These ideas arose from the consultation with the people in the Parish during the Neighbourhood planning process – it doesn't mean there aren't other initiatives happening in the village now or in the future. The projects worked on will be monitored by the Haydon Bridge Development Trust, who may also take a more active role in some of them. The projects are:

- Northumberland County Council (NCC) Climate Champion Programme
- HBNZ – Haydon Bridge Net Zero
- Haydon Action for Nature and Diversity (HAND)
- Thriving Community

To find out more and get involved, contact HACH, c/o The Bridge Community Library, Church Street, Haydon Bridge, NE47 6JQ



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William Glasser

One aspect of my first year in teaching which I have yet to mention is involvement in the Combined Cadet Force.

When applying for the Classics teaching job, I had mentioned in the hastily compiled and hand-written CV that, under the rigorous tuition of my father, I had learned to sail from an early age. I had been vaguely aware of the CCF as there was no sport on Thursday afternoons and the area in front of the main school building became a rather noisy parade ground at 2.15pm, but I was grateful for the non-contact time which I diligently devoted to marking and planning. This oasis of calm did not, however, last for long and I was press-ganged into service as a Sub Lieutenant in the Royal Naval section.

For readers who may be unfamiliar with the CCF, it is an organisation predominantly but not exclusively present in independent schools, sponsored by the Ministry of Defence and usually comprising of Army, RAF and Royal Navy sections, although there are a handful of Royal Marine affiliations. Its aim is to ‘provide a disciplined organisation in a school so that pupils may develop powers of leadership by means of training to promote the qualities of responsibility, self-reliance, resourcefulness, endurance and perseverance.’ It was formed in 1948 from the Officers’ Training Corps and approximately £28,000,000 per annum of funding is provided by MOD.

The Royal Naval section was the least popular option, possibly due to the fact that each cadet in the RAF section was able to go flying at least twice a term and the Army section appealed more strongly to the macho types. Conscientious objectors were able to opt for Community Service.

In charge of the Royal Naval section was a very old-fashioned schoolmaster whom we shall call the Commander. He was the most charming of men who, although no longer in the first flush of youth, resided in two rooms in the attic of one of the older school buildings, with no cooking facilities and a shared bathroom, commonly known as The Bridge. He was infamous for the depth of his generosity when pouring drinks; indeed, upon entering his sitting room, one was always impressed by the array of optics attached to the opposite wall, catering for all alcoholic tastes, and the choice of beer, wine and mixers crammed into two tiny fridges. Indeed, a post-CCF session on The Bridge inevitably resulted in a stagger home and a thick head the following morning.

Unsurprisingly, the Commander was a regular in the local and enjoyed a most unusual relationship with an elderly spinster who took in his laundry and provided him with an evening meal in return for companionship and the occasional bottle of gin. The Commander knew that his meal would be on the table at 7.00pm every evening but was rarely punctual. We would often have a few quiet beers together after a hard day at the chalk face. Whenever the ‘phone rang (remember that this is long before the first mobile ‘phone appeared) all conversation stopped and a dozen worried faces focused on the barmaid, all thinking that the call marked an end to their evening’s entertainment. Once it was Marigold, informing the Commander that his dinner had been on the table for 20 mins and that if he wasn’t home in 10 mins it would be in the dog. He calmly drained his glass.....and ordered another couple of beers. ‘Don’t worry, Mark’ he said ‘She’ll have calmed down a bit if I stay for another pint’.

During the Autumn and Spring terms, the curriculum for the Royal Naval section was fairly limited and it soon became even clearer why the Army and RAF sections were more popular; there are only so many sessions on knot-tying that can be tolerated, both by pupils and teacher. But the Summer term gave the opportunity for sailing, windsurfing and generally just ‘messaging about in boats’. We had access to a fleet of Bosun dinghies in addition to a few Toppers and windsurfers of our own; the sun always seemed to shine, accompanied by a gentle breeze, although I am sure that this was not always the case. For some of the cadets whose parents were able to pick them up later, the afternoon extended into early evening and I rarely got home before 9.00pm. As Ratty said to Mole in Kenneth Grahame’s classic novel ‘Wind in the Willows’:

‘Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing – absolutely nothing – half so much worth doing as simply messaging about in boats’

SUDOKU

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	9	2	7	5				
7			3		9		4	
				3		9	5	7
5								8
2	1	9		7				
	3		1		2			5
				6	3	4	1	
1								

Sudoku is played on a grid of nine by nine spaces. Within the rows and columns are nine squares (made up of three by three spaces). Each row, column and square (nine spaces each) needs to be filled out with the numbers one to nine, without repeating any numbers within the row, column or square.

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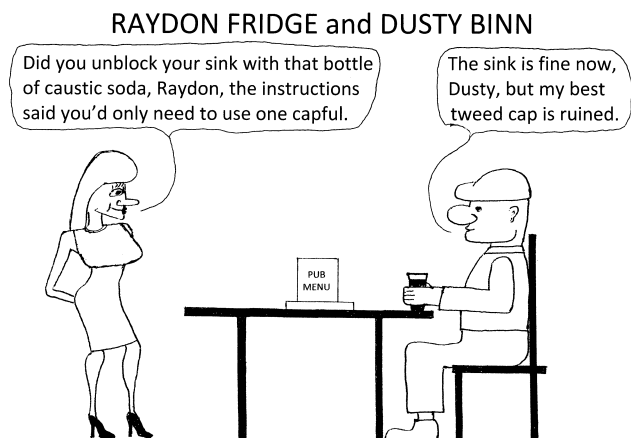
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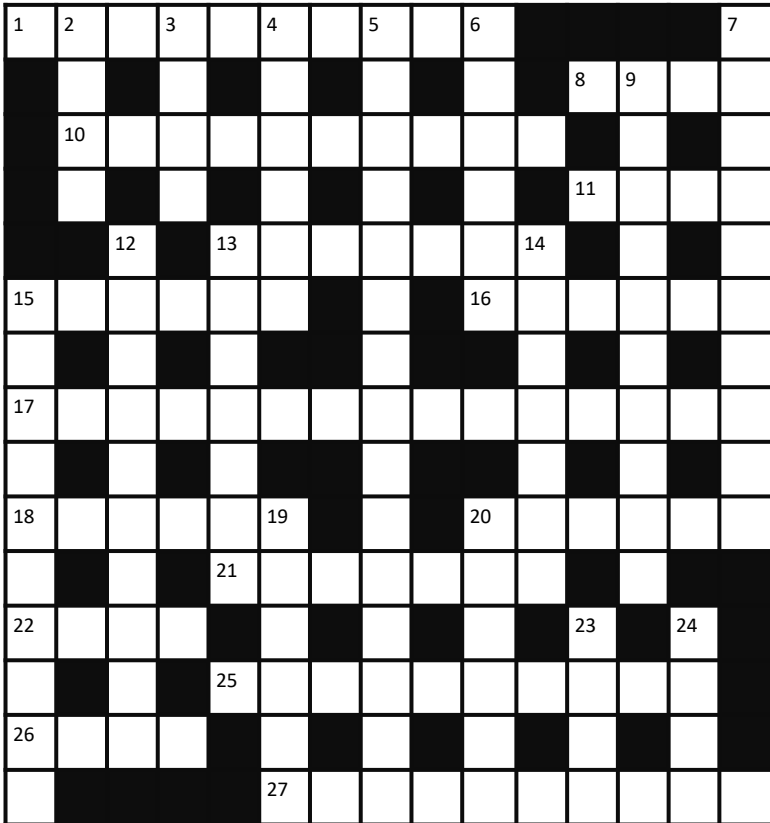
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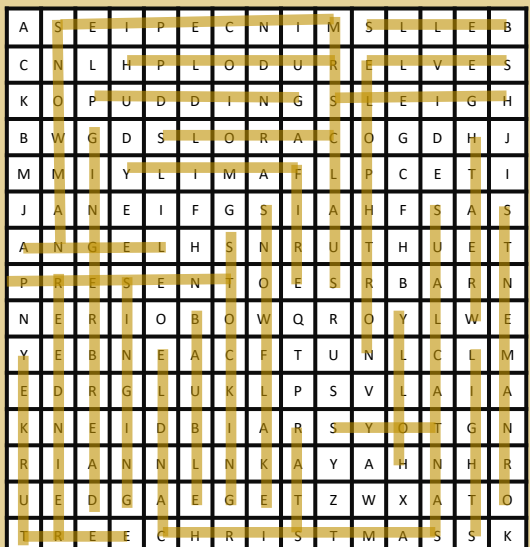
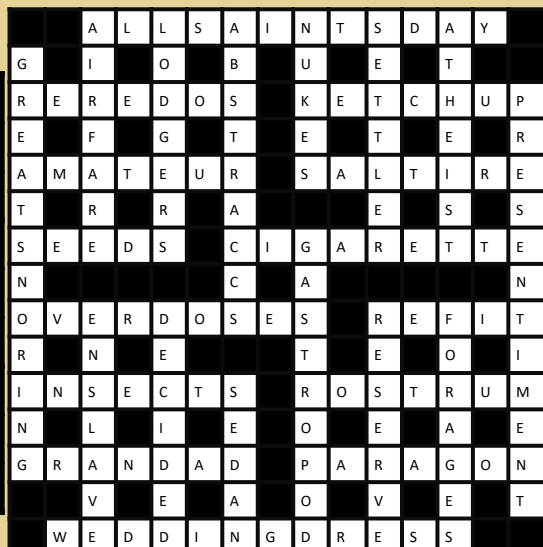
1. Parasitic plants of the *Orobanchaceae* family (10)
8. First name of the actor who played Dr. Zhivago (4)
10. British food brand whose name derives from the Uruguayan port where the products used to be processed and packaged (4,6)
11. A male deer (4)
13. John _ won an Oscar for best supporting actor in the film "Arthur" (7)
15. To slide text, images or video across a display or monitor, vertically or horizontally (6)
16. In metaphysics, the not-I, whatever is not the conscious self (6)
17. Author of "The Old Man and the Sea" (6,9)
18. A spouted vessel for pouring out a particular liquid (6)
20. _ Crowther, presenter of "Crackerjack" from 1960-68 (6)
21. Popular motoring magazine (4,3)
22. Surname of the Conservative politician who was Home Secretary from 2016-18 (4)
25. A creature with a backbone (10)
26. Thomas _, composer of "Rule Britannia" (4)
27. The Greek god of fire (10)

DOWN

2. The male of a reeve (4)
3. The _ home ground of Surrey County Cricket Club (4)
4. To bring eg. water back to 100 deg. Centigrade (6)
5. Character in the Wacky Races (8,7)
6. Military Japanese dictator between 1185 and 1868 (6)
7. A cave dweller (10)
9. Scottish football team who play at Fir Park (10)
12. Possibly fictional medieval torture device, a casket with spikes inside (4,6)
13. Native city of Charles Rennie Mackintosh (7)
14. German aircraft manufacturer of flying boats and airliners, particularly between the world wars (7)
15. The thymus or pancreas of a lamb or calf as food (10)
19. To separate seed or grain from a plant (6)
20. The eleventh Greek letter (6)
23. Russia's largest news agency (4)
24. Where Paddington Bear came from (4)

December puzzle answers:

2	7	5	4	8	3	1	6	9
8	6	9	7	2	1	5	4	3
4	1	3	9	6	5	7	8	2
1	5	2	8	9	4	3	7	6
3	8	6	5	7	2	4	9	1
9	4	7	1	3	6	2	5	8
7	3	1	6	5	8	9	2	4
5	2	8	3	4	9	6	1	7
6	9	4	2	1	7	8	3	5





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Climate Change Corner: Christmas Cards to Leeks!

A year ago, I wrote an article in Haydon News about waste – which showed this photo of Christmas cards amongst other stuff added to the compost heap. I'm showing this again, as this very heap (I keep track of each pile!) has today (11 Jan 2022) turned into large leeks. There were a good crop of onions there too.

Also, at the far end, 90 trees obtained from Northumberland County Council tree give away, on behalf of all those who participated in the Neighbourhood Plan consultation event in August 2021, are temporarily housed, awaiting delayed tree guards and planting, by the public space gardening group, as a hedge in the cemetery...

This was my first 'No Dig' bed – have a read of this month's **Clarty Boots** article by Ali, for more information on why 'no dig' is good. This shows it works! Please see the article from last February, which you can access online, or email me, for more information on how. siobhansib@protonmail.com



From cards to Leeks!

Leek soup recipe

Most of my leeks turn into leek and potato soup, which I make in bulk and freeze in portions of about 3 ladles per person – it is surprisingly yummy for how simple it is!

If you have a very large pan, use 3 **large** leeks – don't bother trimming all the green off, that's the best bit! Slice these up (after cleaning). If you're going to blend, they can be quite thick slices, about ¼ inch or more.. cook the leeks in the butter on quite a low heat – should bubble and sizzle a bit, but not enough to burn on the pan, for about 10 mins, covered.

Meanwhile boil a kettle for stock – make about 2 ½ pints with 4 stock cubes – and chop about 4 pounds of potatoes into about 1 inch chunks. Add the potatoes and stock to the leeks, along with a teaspoon of salt, some marjoram or oregano (about 2 big pinches) and thyme – 1 teaspoon. You could also add a bit of chilli or tabasco sauce. And black pepper. (if you don't have herbs it will still taste fine!)

Bring to the boil then turn down to simmer for about half an hour – or until cooked. I can't remember how many portions this is altogether – but quite a lot! Half the amounts if you're using a smaller pan.

Mark Davison

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'The Escape Experience'

To escape: The dictionary definition is 'an act of breaking free from confinement,' 'to fail to be noticed or remembered by someone, 'a form of temporary distraction from reality or routine

In my little mind if I think I really need to escape it usually runs parallel with a nice holiday.

However, our Escape Room Escapade -there were 6 of us- (I wonder what escapade means?-just looked it up-it means 'an act or incident involving excitement, daring or adventure'). Well again, to my little mind the dictionary definition is wrong in this instance, because it was none of that. It was frustrating, we all felt thick (well, I did) we verged on having an argument.

We thought we had escaped -true enough the dictionary is correct here because we were confined, although not in an imprisoned way (I'm not looking that up in the dictionary or I'll be here all day)-but our allotted escape time came to an end and we were told by the adjudicator (that's not the right word but I know what I mean) that we still had another room to 'break free' from, so unfortunately had failed the task.

It was, to me at least, also a great deal of fun. It was obvious who was competitive and who just thought 'Bugger it then!' I fall into the competitive group and can now quite understand what the adjudicator means when she told us there are groups of people that almost become 'Escape Room Addicts'

For anybody that is still reading this drivel and wants to know what an escape room activity is, then use a dictionary or even try the modern equivalent-good old Google.

Anyway, I hope everyone on the activity enjoyed themselves as much as me. The Hexham 'haunt' was preceded by alcohol when we arrived at the station-lovely little bar on the station platform which may have addled our brains in the first place or-god forbid-heightened any brain activity. If the latter is the case, then I think we are doomed, as an unsuccessful escape group.

The evening ended on a snowy note when we were let out of our confinement into quite a wintery scene. Thank goodness it was only a few minutes' walk to the next watering hole and some food. I would definitely do it again.

Snowdrops and Hope

We've been deluged by storms throughout these last months -- fierce wind with rain alternating with hail, and snow blanketing the ground. It feels as if the weather is mirroring the storms the COVID virus has thrown at us. But I'm trying to hang on to the sense the great wheel of the seasons has begun to turn. One token of the change is the emergence of snowdrops as their small white bells pierce through the frozen ground and shining bright, amongst mulch and moss. Every time I see snowdrops at this time of year, I feel a wave of joy and I have no difficulty understanding why this small flower is a symbol of hope. Its appearance as the earliest of the year's blooms is visible proof that the worst of the winter is over, and that spring and summer are on their way. And when I consider how hard the frozen ground is, and how delicate the snowdrop's stems, their presence seems miraculous to me.

It is not surprising, therefore, that snowdrops have taken on a cultural and religious significance. February 2 is a cross-quarter day that falls halfway between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox and snow drops are a sign, in this threshold month, that the good times are to come and that the pale winter sun is now strengthening by the day. 2 February, is also Candlemas Day, a Christian festival, which celebrates Christ as the light of the world. As the name 'Candlemas' suggests, candles are traditionally lit in church to mark Candlemas, and it is likely that the practice of kindling flames and lighting candles on this day originated in pagan times to mark the turn of the season and the earth's re-awakening after winter. But another source of brightness was also closely associated with Candlemas, and that was the snowdrop, for they were the flowers of the feast. It is easy to see how they were perfect for it, flawless symbols of purity that they are. Once called Candlemas bells it is not hard to imagine what pleasure must have been taken in gathering them in, or merely having them grow by the church as a sign of hope that better times are to come.

So, as we emerge from the harshness of winter, take time to notice the snowdrops and let them gladden your heart. For they are a sign that we are on the journey to Easter. And if you look closely you will see in their small fragile bells emerging from the frozen ground, that they are a symbol of rebirth; a sign that God is making all things new and gently pulling us toward the light.

Rev'd Gill Alexander, Associate Priest, St Cuthbert's, Haydon Bridge

Churches Working Together

Methodist Church Sunday Services 10.30 am

6th February Rev. Paul Dunstan
13th February Joint Service at Fourstones Methodist Church (10.30 am)
20th February Deacon Anne Taylor
27th February Rev. Barrie Morris
6th March Ms. June Beeby
(Refreshments are now served after Sunday worship)

Informal Worship on Wednesdays 7pm

2nd and 16th February 2nd March
Please note that **Meeting Place** meets at the **Methodist Church** on **Tuesdays only** 10 am to 12 noon why not call in for coffee or tea and a friendly chat

St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church Sunday Services 10.30 am (except one)

6th February Rev. Lesley Chapman (Eucharist)
13th February Rev. Gill Alexander (Eucharist)
20th February Revs Nigel and Mary Warner (Eucharist)
27th February Rev. Gill Alexander (Eucharist) **9.00 am (please note the time)**
6th March Gill Valentine (Morning Prayer)

All Hallows Henshaw Sunday Services 10.30 am (All Eucharist Services)

6th February Rev. J. Van Der Berg
13th February Rev. Michael Jackson
20th February Rev. E. Ryder
27th February Rev. G. Alexander
6th March Rev. K. Teasdale

Catholic Church Services

St. John of Beverley Haydon Bridge 9.00 am Sundays
St. Oswald's Bellingham 11.00am Sundays
(to book your place visit Heavenfield bookings and choose a Church)
St Wilfred's Haltwhistle 9.30am Thursdays
St Mary's Hexham
Public Mass and Live Stream (please check St. Mary's website)

PLEASE NOTE: WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY 4TH MARCH 2PM
ST. JOHN OF BEVERLEY (more details nearer the time)

Churches Together Services at Christmas 2021 (Carol and Crib Services)

Very many thanks to all who contributed in any way to the Carol Service at St. John's - to those who organised, those who led the service, read lessons, and those who attended. Monies from the collection plate which amounted to £161.70 have been divided and sent to the three Village Churches chosen charities (Action for Children, Cafod and The Children's Society).
Thanks too to all who came to the Crib Service on Christmas Eve which this year was held in the grounds of St. Cuthberts, to Deacon Anne for leading this, to those who helped with 'setting the scene' ie the sound system, providing extra lighting and preparing the background, to those who acted out the Christmas Story and to all who came to join in and thanks too to our 'photographer' who took some lovely 'unprepared snaps' - everyone's help was much appreciated.

Kathleen Armstrong (Churches Together Secretary)

For Church contact details see back cover

“CHEERS”

Part 4

The Wheatsheaf - Haydon Hotel

As I continue our ‘pub-crawl’ through the parish, started in the October issue of the Haydon News at the Carts Bog, in November at Nilston Rigg and in December at the 1960s Working Men’s Club, this month I make my way to the former ‘Wheatsheaf’ public house and it occurs to me that I could fill the pages of a book with my rhyming memories of around 24 years as a twentieth/twenty first century customer of this welcoming Inn on Shaftoe Street.

Maybe someday I, or those who follow me, will do just that; in the meantime, I will recall earlier days in the life of this public house.

Firstly, a history lesson and a brief look back to our Langley Barony’s formative years:

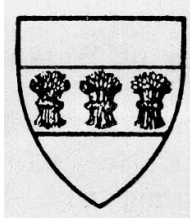
In the year 1165, Adam de Tindale (or Tyndale) reigned as the first known Lord of Langley Barony. Adam of the Tindale family was married to Helwise, the daughter of a local chieftan.

In those days, Langley Barony was comprised of eight ‘townships’: Warden, Fourstones, Allerwash, Haydon and Langley; and to the west, Featherstone, Wydon and Blenkinsopp.

When Adam died, circa 1188-91, his son Adam the Younger held the Barony, and he was superseded by his daughter and heir Phillipa de Tindale who married Nicholas de Bolteby in 1220. As a result, the male line of the Tindale family was no longer in charge!

And, why this look back? You might ask.

The date of the Wheatsheaf Hotel’s origin is unknown to me, but, I do know that the Inn’s original name was a reference to those earliest days of The Langley Barony and the three garbs in the Tindale family’s Coat of Arms.



It is not until the nineteenth century that we can offer some historical certainty as to life in the Wheatsheaf, however, when records show that the Waugh family were licensees for twenty years or more.

Mathew and Ann Waugh were farmers at Main Ridge, Whitfield where they lived with their ten children. Mathew, the head of the household, died in 1839 and by 1851, his widow Ann Waugh was innkeeper at the Wheatsheaf at Haydon Bridge, where she lived with three of her children: John, Elizabeth and Isabella.

In 1861, the Wheatsheaf innkeeper was Ann Waugh’s twenty year old unmarried daughter Hannah, who had been a housemaid at Coanwood. Living at the Wheatsheaf with Hannah were her brother John (a railway labourer), her sister Isabella and her husband John Maughan, and another brother Job who was a ‘chimney top and brick tile manufacturer’.

Our regular Haydon News’ correspondent, William Veitch, surmises that: ‘Strange events were taking place at the Wheatsheaf Hotel in the 1860s’ as, on September 6th, 1862, John Paul Atkinson Waugh, the illegitimate son of innkeeper Hannah, was baptised at Haydon Bridge. Then, on June 19th, 1864, Ann and Isabella, two more of Hannah’s illegitimate children were baptised. Sadly, John and Isabella both died as babies and by 1871, Hannah and her daughter Ann had moved from the Wheatsheaf and were living on independent means in Hector Street at Gateshead.

This was not the end of the Waugh’s involvement in the Haydon Bridge Inn, however, as in 1871, the brother of Hannah, Job Waugh, was the innkeeper. Job had previously been a farm servant at Dewlaw, Matfen and also lived at Sanquhar in Dumfriesshire where he had married Margaret Dryden in 1857. Job and Margaret had three children and all the family were living at the Wheatsheaf by 1871.

Job Waugh didn’t stay long at the Wheatsheaf, as in 1881 he was farming ninety five acres at Irving House, Thirlwall, Haltwhistle; although Job did end up back in Haydon Bridge, returning to become innkeeper at The Scotch Arms Inn. *(More about that when we visit The Scotch Arms in the next part of this series.)*

It seems that the next tenants in the Wheatsheaf were Joseph and Catherine Cowing who, as well as licensees, were named as, ‘Wine & Spirit Merchants’. We know that Joseph and Catherine were at the Wheatsheaf in 1880, when a presentation was made to Mr. William Chatterton. William’s great grandson Peter Marren was a correspondent to The Haydon News in 2010 and he referred to a newspaper article in 1880 that mentioned his great grandfather:

‘A very pleasing ceremony took place on Monday night at the house of Mrs. Cowing, Wheatsheaf Inn, Haydon Bridge, namely the presentation of a purse of gold to Mr. William Chatterton, who has been Chief Engineer to Messrs. Bewick and Partners for six years but who has now left that company and is going to pursue his fortune in Colorado.’

The ceremony for William Chatterton continued with Mr. J.W. Hetherington a Civil and Mining Engineer of 'South View' making a speech, as did Mr. William Lee a local antiquarian and, at the end of the meeting, a vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Tom Clemitson, a Haydon Bridge Saddler and Ironmonger who was a supplier of hardware to Bewick and Partners.

Many readers will be aware that from 1873 to 1893, Bewick's company mined for lead on the banks of the Honeycrook Burn, north west of Haydon Bridge.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the popular Wheatsheaf Hotel, with Mrs. Cowing in charge, was the venue for the South Tyne Angling Association's annual 'Fish Supper', held under the chairmanship of Gabriel Wood, the Haydon Bridge Station Master. Once the official business was concluded the evening became one of song and entertainment. We are told that Charlie Dodsworth, 'Father of the South Tyne Angling Association' which had been established in 1869, looked on as Gabriel Wood sang 'My Pretty Jane', Jack the Loter on the tongs and Old John Hunter on the fiddle accompanied Harry Walton, Jim Strickland, Bob Watson and Irving Reay, while William Potts gave his annual rendition of 'All Among the Barley'. The public bar-room in the Wheatsheaf Hotel was a place of music and merriment, circa 1869.

Catherine Cowing's husband Joseph died in 1873 and by 1891, the innkeeper at the Wheatsheaf was Albert Coates, with his wife Jane and son Frederick. Albert had previously been a Saddler on Scotswood Road in Newcastle. This was an unusual occupational change, perhaps, but unfortunately Albert died in 1894, not long after coming to Haydon Bridge and aged only 31 years. Interestingly, Albert's widow Jane Coates eventually took charge at the General Havelock Inn on Ratcliffe Road.

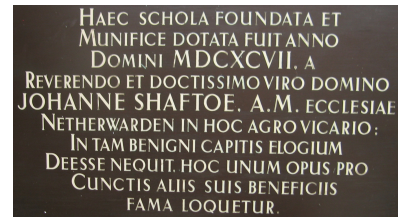
Taking control of the public house at the north west corner of Shaftoe Street around 1901 was Mary Jane Weatherald. Mrs. Weatherald lived in the public house with her adult children, Mary, Ann and Lilley. The family had been at the Anchor Inn in Haydon Bridge from 1891, but fewer than ten years later moved to the Wheatsheaf. Mary Jane's husband, George, died on December 3rd, 1898.

The Wheatsheaf Inn was now renamed the '**Haydon Hotel**', and Mrs Weatherald used advertising in local publications to encourage the many visitors who made Haydon Bridge their holiday destination, to stay the night at her 'Hotel'.

Mary Jane Weatherald remained in control at the Haydon until she died there on September 25th 1913.

'LOST IN TRANSLATION'

In the November 2021 issue of your Haydon News I recalled my school days at Shaftoe Trust School and the inscription in Latin that is a feature on a plaque in the school hall.



Thanks to Haydon News reader Henry Swaddle, I can provide a hint of what the inscription tells us:

THIS SCHOOL WAS FOUNDED GENEROUSLY IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1697. FROM THE RIGHT AND MOST LEARNED MAN JOHANNE SHAFTOE. A.M. THE VICAR OF THE CHURCH OF NETHERWARDEN IN THIS FIELD: IN SO KIND THE CAPITALS OF DEESSE CANNOT BE FOUND. THIS ONE WORK ACCORDING TO THE REPORT WILL ADDRESS ALL HIS OTHER BENEFITS.

In 1719/20, a marble stone bearing the inscription was placed on the north elevation of the school and later, the inscription was inserted in the east wall. Unfortunately, the lettering today is almost illegible.

CORRESPONDENCE

Via The Haydon News facebook page

August 2021

Dear Editor,

I live in Sydney, Australia and my mother (Marjorie Rumney) was born at New Alston, Haydon Bridge in 1918.

My mother lived in one of the row of cottages on Tofts Bank at the cross roads after the North Bank corner and her parents were Featherstone Rumney, who died in 1930, and Amy Rumney, who died in 1932.

I hope that someone viewing this post might have some further information about the family.

I understand that for a time after her mother's death Marjorie worked in the Co-op in Haydon Bridge.

I would also appreciate a photo of the row of New Alston cottages. I did have one but have lost it.

Yours faithfully,

Phil Drew.

We have sent Phil a 2021 photograph of New Alston and would be grateful if anyone with additional information about his mother, Marjorie Rumney, and/or the Rumney family, would contact: dennistelford636@btinternet.com OR the editor.

Thank you.

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A mechanic, a priest and an IT expert were travelling together when the car engine cut out and the vehicle ground to a halt. The mechanic suggested that they had run out of fuel, while the priest suggested that they should say a prayer. The IT guy suggested that they should close all the windows get out of car, then get back in again and restart the engine. I have recently finished working on the weather statistics for 2021 which at this time of year can be a frustrating task, so I was mildly amused when I came across this short story. Over the course of each year we accumulate nearly 4000 individual items of information which are then subjected to statistical analysis. Bearing in mind that there are several thousand climate stations across the world, playing with columns of numbers can be a tedious exercise, and rarely reveals identifiable climate changes. In my long career as a climatologist only once did I discover a rare nugget of an identifiable progression of change – in this case, it was a noteworthy increase in annual rainfall across Scotland in the late 1970s.

Continuing with the climatic change theme in the last issue, I would never recommend spending hours going through columns of figures in the hope that some form of sequence may appear. On the other hand, it would be unwise to ignore the number of extreme storms that have affected the British Isles in recent years. A combination of strong winds and heavy precipitation have far exceeded our human capacity to deal with the damage that they inflict. Averil and I were driving home from Newcastle the day after Storm Arwen had cut a swathe through northern England (November) and we were horrified at the amount of physical damage, mainly to trees.

This was then followed by Storm Barra and yet further wind and rain at the end of December. What we now need is a review of the risk of storm damage, based on new data. I would venture to suggest that recurrence intervals are now shorter (ie more frequent damaging events)

Month 2021	Average Max. Temp (Daytime) deg C	Relative to long-term average degC	Average Min. Temp (Night-time) deg C	Relative to long-term average degC	Rainfall mm	Percentage of long-term average
November	9.9	+1.2	4.2	+0.7	46.6	57%
December	7.1	+1.1	1.8	+0.6	99.4	117%

Gladys' brother sent her a really expensive bird for Christmas, which she duly cooked and enjoyed. When she thanked her brother for her delicious meal, he was more than a little upset. Apparently it was a rare Latin American bird which was highly trained and could speak four languages fluently. "Well it should have said something when I was putting it into the oven" was Gladys' reply.

Haydon Bridge: Plunderheath Weather Station Annual Summary 2021

Weather Highlights in 2021: This was characteristically another roller-coaster of a year with The Jet Stream playing a major part. The first notable event was Storm Christoph which brought floods, strong winds and heavy snowfall between 11th and 19th January. February was a cold month with snow falling on ten days, delaying the start of the growing season. A warm March compensated for this but the region then experienced an exceptionally dry (20 Rainless Days) and cold April. May not only brought an end to the drought but did so in a mixture of snow and hail, sometimes accompanied by thunder and lightning. (including the unpleasant experience of watching one's house being struck by lightning on the 5th.) June was exceptionally warm and dry with 25 rainless days – an excellent month for a staycation. During August, daytime temperatures exceeded 30 degC across the UK on many occasions. Whirlwinds affected the South Tyne valley on the 29th October, followed by Storm Arwen from 25th November, and its associated snowfall and strong winds. There was a considerable damage to local woodland and many properties lost their electricity supply.

Month	Max degC	Min deg C	Rainfall mm	Air frosts	Rainless Days	Days ≥0.2mm	Days ≥1.0mm	Days ≥5.0mm	Snow falling	Snow lying	Hail	Fog	Thunder heard	Average Wind Speed mph	Pressure mb	Cloud Cover %
January	3.6	-0.6	128.5	17	8	22	16	7	16	16	0	2	0	8.9	1006.1	73
February	6.2	0.8	98.3	11	7	19	16	5	10	10	0	0	0	12.0	1008.3	70
March	10.1	3.9	55.4	4	10	18	10	3	1	0	0	0	0	12.2	1015.5	73
April	11.6	0.2	11.9	15	20	9	3	0	6	1	1	0	0	8.1	1018.4	50
May	14.1	4.6	105.4	2	10	18	15	6	0	0	2	2	3	8.8	1000.9	79
June	20.1	9.5	12.6	0	25	5	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	12.7	1013.8	72
July	22.1	11.8	83.0	0	16	12	9	5	0	0	0	0	3	8.0	1007.9	74
August	19.5	10.9	65.2	0	9	15	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	8.2	1008.4	64
September	18.5	10.9	62.2	0	6	17	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	6.0	1014.0	82
October	14.3	7.6	100.5	1	3	22	17	7	0	0	0	0	0	11.4	1004.4	90
November	9.9	4.2	46.6	3	2	18	9	2	4	1	0	0	0	11.1	1005.9	79
December	7.1	1.8	99.4	6	2	22	15	6	3	0	0	3	0	7.8	1002.8	77
YEAR	13.1	5.5	869.1	59	118	199	130	48.	40	28	3	7	6	9.6	1008.9	74
Relative to long-term average	+0.4	-0.1	+37.6	+17	-11	-1	-9	-4	+14	+17	-3	+1	+1	-0.1	-0.9	+3

Clarty Boots: The Soil, the Plant, the Livestock and Carbon Storage

We've all heard the phrase 'You are what you eat', well that goes all the way down the line. If the soil is healthy and working well, plants can interact with it receiving much of the nutrition they need. The animals can then eat nutritious plants and they become nutritious for us to eat making us healthier.

What are soils made of?

That's quite an easy question to answer, but the more you look into it the more complicated it becomes. Basically soils are composed of minerals, living organisms, dead organisms (organic matter), air and water. These four ingredients work together in amazing ways that supports much of the life that lives on this planet.

We can classify soils as being made up of 3 different particles, clay, sand and silt. At that point however, you just have dirt. Add water and air to the mix and you just have damper dirt. It's the organic life forms, both living and dead in this dirt that make the difference.

Soil Organisms

Bacteria In a teaspoon of healthy soil there is between 100 million and 1 billion bacteria! Most are decomposers helping in the final stages of nutrient breakdown; others help in nutrient cycling and nutrient retention. There are also bacteria that play a part in the soil Nitrogen cycle fixing it from the air. Others change the Nitrogen compounds within the soil. Bacteria also produce a number of antibiotics

Actinomycetes are a group of bacteria that grow hyphae like fungi, now commonly referred to as Actinobacteria. They are responsible for that earth smell of freshly turned soil and are especially important at decomposing hard to decompose compounds like chitin and cellulose. They produce a number of useful compounds that have been made into antibiotics, antifungals and anticancer too.

Fungi, Saprophytic fungi help in the breakdown of organic matter (decomposers) while Mycorrhizal fungi act like extensions to the roots of plants and lastly the pathogenic or parasitic fungi. They produce antibiotics like penicillin.

Protozoa are larger microbes and consume bacteria, other protozoa and sometimes fungi. As they eat bacteria they release Nitrogen as they have a lower concentration of it in their cells, so they release the excess some of which can be used by the plant. They help to regulate the bacterial populations, and are also a favourite food for worms.

Nematodes are very small worm like microbes; some attack plants while others can infect animals. There are nematodes that eat bacteria, fungi, nematodes and protozoa and those that feed on plants.

Arthropods vary in size from the microscopic to several inches in length. Most of them in the soil eat fungi, worms or other arthropods, helping to regulate population, some also shred organic matter. As they feed they mix the soil up and help to aerate it.

Earthworms can dramatically alter the structure of soils, nutrient cycles, distribution of organic matter and water movement. They are live off the bacteria and fungi growing on decaying matter that they ingest. Their presence is usually an indicator of good soil health.

So there is a lot going on beneath our feet. But how do the plants interact with it? Plants have roots that grow into the soil giving them anchorage and a source of nutrients and water. They have the ability to source these alone, but have built up a symbiotic relationship with the soil organisms to the advantage of both. Mycorrhizal fungi attaches itself to the roots and in exchange for Carbon gained through photosynthesis as sugars ($6\text{CO}_2 + 6\text{H}_2\text{O} = \text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6\text{O}_2$) by the plant and released as exudates, the fungi deliver the required minerals the plant is looking for. Rhizobia bacteria form a symbiotic relationship with legumes and convert Nitrogen from the air into ammonia that the plant can use.

How can we increase the amount of Carbon stored in our soils and what shouldn't we do? If you mechanically turn the soil you destroy any fungal network, upset the soil biome and release stored Carbon back to the atmosphere! So the first thing to do is no-dig if you're a gardener or no-till if you're a farmer. Always keep a growing plant in the soil so that it's taking Carbon out of the air through photosynthesis and feeding it into the soil. Plants function better as a diverse plant population rather than a monoculture. Always armour the soil with organic matter if there are no plants. This maintains a better temperature, reduces evaporation, increases carbon pulled into the soil and also feeds the soil biome. By using livestock, but not in the set stocking rates that you normally see with grass being grazed short all the time.

How to lock Carbon into the soil using livestock

The more foliage above ground, the more leaf area to photosynthesise, the more carbon can be captured the better it can grow and the more it can pump out its roots as exudates to feed the soil biome (can be as much as 20 – 40% of photosynthesised Carbon). So the first part is to get the plants to photosynthesise as much Carbon as possible. In Africa the Wildebeest graze nomadically at a high stock density. They take only a proportion of the forage, trampling the rest to the ground, it is then available to the soil biome to pull into the soil. The animals also defecate and urinate returning more organic matter and nutrition to the soil surface as well as the gut biome from the animal. The idea is to try and mimic nature by mob grazing. Electric fences are used to create small paddocks that have enough forage for one day. The livestock are put on at a high stock density (farmers have achieved over 500,000lbs per acre, that's over 400 cows! Set stocking density is going to be around 1500-2000lbs per acre) for a day or even half a day, before being moved on to the next paddock. The paddocks are then left to regenerate for 40 to 100 days, as they have big root systems and nutrient reserves they grow back rapidly. Ideally you would follow with chickens, they spread the muck and eat any parasites and fly larvae. Sheep can also be mob grazed with the cattle (does that make it a flerd?), separately or prior to them.

Livestock are part of nature's plan and if we use them in ways that nature intended the ecosystem becomes more resilient, healthy, more diverse and productive and helps more water to infiltrate into the soil slowing its movement within the landscape reducing flood risks and pollution from soil particulates and nutrients. clartyboots@yahoo.com

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