

Esh Leaves

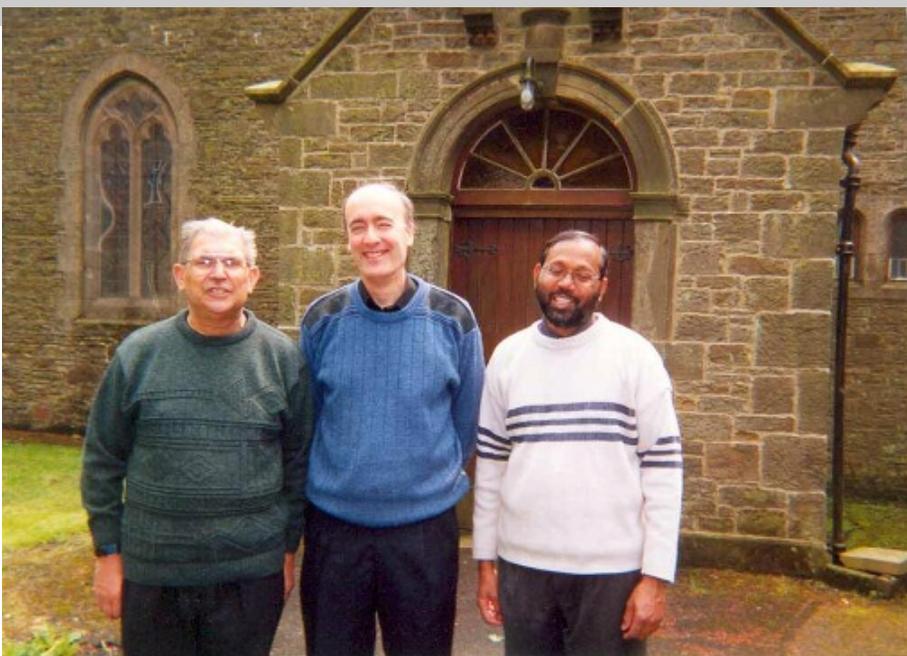
Your newsletter from Langley Park, Esh and Quebec

An Esh Parish Council production for the people of Esh Parish

Deadline for contributing to the next issue
7 October 2002

Thank you and Farewell

The three Claretian Missionaries at St Michael's Presbytery in Esh Laude, Fr Philip Blandford, Fr Frederick Correa and Brother Denis Casey, will be leaving the Parish on 1st July. We are very sad to be going. We have made so many friends and acquaintances here in the area. The Claretians have received so much support from the local community throughout their 24-year presence in Langley Park and Esh, both in their parish ministry and in the preparation of their students for priesthood.



Brother Denis Casey, Fr Philip Blandford and Fr Frederick Correa

I have served here for six years as Parish Priest, and will be moving south to Buckden, Cambridgeshire, to work at our Retreat Centre there. Fr Frederick will return to his native India to work there, and Brother Denis has been appointed to our new Claretian Mission in Belize, Central America. So we'll be scattered far and wide! We look forward to our new challenges, but we leave with heavy hearts.

The Parish ministry here is being entrusted to Fr Martin Morris, who lives in Ushaw Moor, and to Fr Tony Battle

of Langley Moor. They will work in a re-structured "Pastoral Area", which comprises five Catholic churches: St Patrick's Langley Moor, St Joseph's Ushaw Moor, Queen of Martyrs Esh Winning, St Michael's Esh Laude and St Joseph's Langley Park.

St Michael's Presbytery, which has been our home for the last 7 years, will become the home of Paul and Helen Shogren and their five children. They are moving here from Newhouse Presbytery, Esh Winning. From here they will continue

to carry out their Christian ministries in the area. We Claretians want to thank all of you who have supported and befriended us over the years. We wish you well and many blessings for the future. Farewell!

Fr Philip cmf.

Thank you to the Claretians and Good Luck for the future.

*In this issue:
Golden Jubilee Celebrations,
guided walks, coffee mornings,
Parish Council information and lots
more...*

News from around the Parish

Golden Jubilee Celebrations

As part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations the Parish Council launched the reprint of Esh Leaves (the book) in early February. A report of that night was included in the last edition of Esh Leaves.

On Jubilee weekend Sunday an Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving, Intercession and Commitment, to mark the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen, was held at St Michaels and All Angels C. of E. Church, Esh, attended by over 30 residents. The Rev Michael Peers led the Service with the support of the Assistant Priest, the Rev Trevor Hubble, the Honorary Assistant Priest, Bryan Middlebrook and Father Philip Blandford from St Michael's R. C. Church, Esh.

It had been intended to hold the Service on Esh Green but owing to the slightly inclement weather the Service began in the Church with a Call to Worship, Prayers of Thanksgiving and Confession, Hymns, Readings, Prayers and the National Anthem.

The Service was then adjourned onto the Green to dedicate the Parish Council's

new flowerbed which had been laid in the shape of a Cross to match the old stone Cross at the other end of the Green.

The "new" cross had been planted by a local nurseryman, Paul Snowdon, with the assistance of several children from the Esh Schools. The plants (busy lizzies and petunias) in a range of red, white and blue,



Paul Snowdon and some of the schoolchildren



The Service on the Green

were kindly donated by Poplar Tree Nursery, Shincliffe.

The new Cross looks splendid and again our thanks go to all those involved in this unusual project and in particular to a local resident, Alan Wilkinson for looking after the Parish Council's tubs and flowerbeds on Esh Village Green.

Hazelwood Court Street Party



After decorating the street in bunting, balloons and flags, the residents of Hazelwood Court, Langley Park, were ready to commence their party.

Throughout the day, there was a disco, tombola, guess the name of the teddy, raffle tickets and football card.



The proceeds of over £400, which includes a donation from Esh Parish Council, are to go to the Charitable North Durham Neo Natal Unit.

We toasted the Queen at 12 o'clock and the fun began. Barbecues were on the go. Children played on the bouncy castle, eagerly awaiting the magician, face painter and treasure hunt. Later they took part in a fancy dress competition and both adults and children participated in a slow bike race and family quiz.



Trina Hodgson, Alison Adamson and Mirielle Jackman

Alison Adamson, Mirielle Jackman and myself, Trina Hodgson, organisers of the event, were thrilled that our hard work and planning came together. All the residents agreed, that despite the weather, it was a wonderful day and would like us to start preparations for the Diamond Jubilee.

**Northumbria in Bloom
Children's Calendar
Painting Competition 2002**

Entries were invited in the following categories:

GROUP 1 - Up to and including 6 years old - Painting depicting any month

GROUP 2 - Aged 7-8 years - Painting depicting April, August and December

GROUP 3 - Aged 9-10 years - Painting depicting January, May and September

After holding their own competition the Parish Council nominated submissions from three pupils at St Michael's R.C. School, Esh Laude and these are shown below.

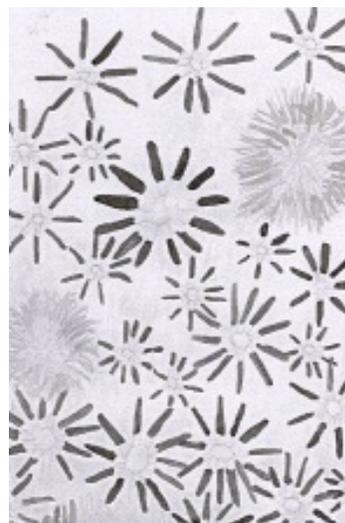
For Group 1
- a painting by Thomas Cowie (aged 6) depicting March.



For Group 2
- a painting by Philippa Heslop (aged 7) depicting December (Winter Pansy).



For Group 3
- a painting by Stephanie Croxford (aged 10) depicting September.



**Headteacher Study Visit
Nanjing, China
Easter 2002**

At Easter, I took part in a Headteacher Study Visit, funded by the British Council, in Nanjing, China. The purpose of the visit was to find out about the Chinese education system and forge a link between a Chinese school and ours.

The school that I visited is in the centre of Nanjing. It is a three storey, modern concrete building built around a running track/play area. In the gymnasium, twelve hundred cheering primary-aged children welcomed me to their school. The Headteacher and I exchanged framed pictures of our regions before I spoke to the children with the help of an interpreter. The warmth of their welcome was a feature of my next three days in school.

The school is well equipped. The science laboratory, computer suite, dance studios, gymnasium, and music rooms are facilities that many English secondary schools would envy. The school day starts at 8.00am. On Mondays, there is a special ceremony to raise and honour the flag. Each day begins on the play area with the children in rows exercising to music for ten minutes.

I observed several lessons. The children were taught in classes of fifty and the discipline in and out of the

classroom was excellent. The curriculum was similar to a secondary school in that children were taught by different teachers for different subjects. Teachers delivered their lessons in their subject, and the children's attention and concentration were remarkable. Lessons lasted 40-50 minutes followed by a ten-minute break. Lessons followed a similar pattern of teacher instruction, and children learned by rote. I saw little differentiation or creativity. In lessons where interactive whiteboards were used the teaching was very effective.

Twice a day, pupils do eye exercises to music. They massage the acupuncture points around the eyes to strengthen the eyes and help concentration. The children were delightful, conscientious and enthusiastic. Parents, children and teachers were focused, purposeful and clear about the importance of education.

Observed by thirty teachers, I taught an English lesson to fifty 12 year olds in the lecture theatre. The lesson was videoed and featured on Chinese TV. I was also interviewed for the newspapers. Fame at last!

We hope that staff from Nanjing will be able to visit our school next year. We are establishing e-mail links between the children, and are planning joint projects to find out about daily life and

festivals. I look forward to developing links between our schools.

Dorothy Brennan
Headteacher of Langley Park
Primary School

Langley Park Community Transport Goes From Strength To Strength

The good news is, after six successful years, we now have three buses with another new one due on the 10th June. The new bus is a joint venture, called 'The road to freedom' project, where we work in partnership with The 'Gateway Wheelers', a local charity helping disabled and blind, to experience and safely enjoy the countryside on specially adapted cycles. The new vehicle will meet the needs of both projects.

We have just gained a contract to run 'Wheels 2 Work', a scheme where young people aged between 16 to 24 could qualify for the loan of a motor scooter for up to six months. The package also includes full kit, training and insurance cover. This scheme is intended to overcome the difficulties young people have in getting to work, due to the fact that there is no suitable transport.

The new building (attached to the old Fire Station) is working really well, and we feel proud of our achievements. The bad news is, we are constantly plagued with vandalism, and

the area outside the garage is constantly covered with broken glass and stones. Even though we have shutters and alarms, the sweet little darlings are constantly trying to break the garage shutters with wedges and poles stuffed under the rollers!!! One day we will urgently need the vehicle to help the disabled, and the door will refuse to open!!!

Vandalism is increasingly becoming a village problem and needs to be addressed, please help us by calling your local police officer!!!

Community Spirit in the Village

Langley Park Community Transport has been given **FREE** a specially adapted Ford Escort van/car for a single wheelchair.

Margaret and Ted Fryer of Willow Park, no longer require the vehicle, and wanted it to go to good use within the community.

We are very pleased to accept this very generous offer, and wish to publicly thank Margaret and Ted for their kindness in thinking of others.

'Have a cup of tea'

Delightful circumstances led me to a bungalow in Langley Park where I met a remarkable Lady I will never forget.

Behind her warm smile and gentle pale blue eyes I could see a wisdom of years that made me feel she understood everything before I even spoke.

'Have a cup of tea', she said, in such an appealing manner you would not want to refuse. I soon realised how important that simple cup of tea was in making everyone feel welcome, and I quickly experienced her overwhelming kindness and generosity as the table was filled with home-made cakes, and the cooker fired ready for action.

Now in her mid 80's she had a sharpness of mind that most people in their 20's would feel proud of. I was fascinated by her stories of the old days, told so clearly I felt I was almost there. Very quickly the conversation turned to Formula One, and she surprisingly engaged me in an in-depth discussion about Michael Schumacher and his tactics for the next race.

I wasn't quite sure what to call her at first. Her name being Isabella Alderton, but her friends called her 'Belle' or 'Bette', and it was important I make the right impression as I had just

started a friendship with her daughter Brenda.

Eventually I came to learn much more about Isabella. She was born the daughter of a coal miner on March 31st, 1910, and was one of six surviving children, three boys and three girls. They all lived in a small house in Thomas Street, Langley Park where the children shared a single bedroom, and although her father received only 32 shillings a week wages, the children wanted for nothing. Indeed, these were some of their happiest years.

Her father kept a number of goats on a patch of land, about where the Aged Miners' Homes are today, and before going to school she would take them up the hill and peg them out, often resulting in harsh words from the teacher when she was late.

At the age of 20 she married Charles Edmund Alderton, a coal miner, and they had two children, Kenneth and Brenda. Sadly Charles Edmund died at the age of 40 when Brenda was only 18 months old.

These were very hard times for Isabella who now had to raise two children on very little money, but with great strength of character and help from her family she was able to provide a wonderful home for her children.

Isabella's special qualities were passed on to her much-loved children Kenneth and Brenda, yet in January 1999 Isabella's dear son Kenneth passed away aged 68 years.

This was a bitter blow for her to bear at the age of 88, and very frail after a ten weeks illness herself, but the loving care and attention from her devoted daughter Brenda gave her the strength to carry on.

With her characteristically sharp mind she continued to take a keen interest in local and world news and could engage you in an informed conversation about most things. She also followed television sport and became an ardent fan of Manchester United with such excitement she worried about disturbing the neighbours.

Now only able to leave her bungalow in a wheelchair, she went on to charm many new friends with that lovely smile and friendly personality.

Sadly dear Isabella passed away on May 8th of this year at the age of 92 years. It was a devastating loss to her very close family. Yet I know that all who were touched by her warmth and sincerity will never forget this very special lady from Langley Park.

Terry Chilton

Parish Council Pages

Esh Parish Council Meetings

All Meetings commence at 7.00pm in the Parish Room, Church Street Community Centre on the following Tuesdays:

9th July
10th September
8th October
12th November

Members of the public are welcome to sit in for the non confidential part of the Agenda.

Esh Leaves (the book)

In the previous Issue we reported on the reprinting of this important item of local history.

Despite our best efforts we were unable to trace the current senior descendant of the Wiggen family, nor indeed could we find any photographs of the author. However no sooner was the launch night over than a local resident made contact to say that in her treasured copy of the book was a photograph of Mr W. R. Wiggen. We are more than delighted to reproduce the photograph and would welcome suggestions from residents as to where it was taken.

We have also unearthed a verse written by Mr Wiggen, which was found tucked

away on the inside of another copy of the book which is currently in public ownership. The verse is repeated underneath Mr Wiggen's photograph.



"To John Wilson Esq^{re} M.D.
with the Author's kindest wishes
Remembrances and best wishes.
June 1914
Health to hours of manly toil,
Grace to his starlit dreams,
Who loves alike the furrowed soil,
The music haunted streams:
Sweet smiles to keep forever bright,
The sunshine on his lips,
And Faith that sees the ring of light
Round Nature's last eclipse."

For those of you who would like to read more about the reprint you should try and obtain a copy of the Summer edition of Durham Town and Country, which includes an article by Parish Councillor Terry Chilton and also 3 pages and several colour photographs of Esh Village.

Finally we are delighted to report that we have now sold nearly 500 copies of the book and indeed there is the distinct possibility that by the time this Issue is distributed all remaining copies might have been sold. Our considerable thanks to all who sold the book including Bearpark, Esh, Esh Winning and Langley Park Post Offices, Esh Winning Library, Londis and Reays Newsagencies.

If you are still looking for a copy of the book you are advised to contact the Parish Clerk on 0191 3736687 as soon as possible, although we are not making any promises that he will be able to find you a copy, it is at least worth a phone call!. Who knows, the next time a copy of the book comes up for sale might be at auction at either Sothebys or Bonhams!

Job Seekers Direct

In conjunction with the Parish Council, a Job Seekers Direct drop-in session was held in the All Saints Youth Centre on 16th May.

If any resident was unable to attend that session, and would like to contact Job Seekers Direct to find out more about the services on offer, they should ring 0845 6060234.

Local Councillors Surgeries

To be held at 11.00am in the Parish Room (opposite the Post Office), Langley Park on the following Saturdays:

27th July
28th September
26th October

Citizens Advice Bureau

In conjunction with the Parish Council, CAB arranged three consultation sessions in the Parish Room during May and June.

The sessions were all fully booked and a further 3 sessions are planned. Leaflets have been distributed throughout the Parish advising residents on the latest sessions.

Anyone wishing to attend one of these sessions should first contact CAB on 01207 281867.

Esh Noticeboard

The Parish Council has been awarded additional funding under the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme to provide improved access arrangements to the board.

The work will involve the temporary removal of the board to enable the creation of an attractive flagged area.

Esh Parish Council Annual Assembly 2002

The Chairman, Allan Harling, thanked the Council for their support during his year of office and presented his annual report outlining the main activities for the year including:

- **Outgoing Councillors**
Chris Bloor, Ruth Hughes
- **Incoming Councillors**
Terry Chilton, Joan Geany, Wallace Tyrie
- **Christmas Decorations**
In addition to the trees in Langley Park and Esh a tree had also been provided at Quebec.
- **Play Areas**
Ongoing problems with vandalism. Two Public Meetings held in Quebec but unfortunately no support locally to establish an Action Group to access funds not available to Parish Councils.
- **Noticeboards**
New board provided in Esh, one to follow in Quebec.
- **Esh Leaves Newsletter**
Now firmly established. Contributions always welcome.
- **Esh Leaves book**
Resounding success at no cost to the Parish.
- **Technology**
Lap top computer and printer acquired
- **Manual Work**
Following retirement of handyman all equipment sold, the garage let and all work now undertaken by contractors.
- **Winter Gritting**
Following detailed discussions with the County Council and the Parish Council's Insurers a limited amount of gritting had been carried out.
- **Village Appraisal**
Consultations had commenced and a Parish Transport Working Group had been formed.
- **Donations**
Several made including support to the Langley Park Transport Group and the ICT facility in the Church Street Community Centre.
- **Speakers**
Representatives from Primary Care, Countryside Agency and the Durham Rural Crime Initiative had attended various Monthly Meetings of the Parish Council.
- **Future Areas of Work**
Including Access for the disabled, Quality Parish Council Initiatives, Transport Grants, Training for Councillors, review of the Play Areas and the Parish Council's office accommodation.

It was also reported that the Parish Council's precept for 2002/03 was the same as for 2001/02, which represented a slight reduction in rates for the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax demanded by the District Council.

At the AGM the following officers were elected for 2002/03

Chairman: Alison Hiles

Vice Chairman: Marie Tyler

Responsible Financial Officer: M. G. Ackroyd

Model Code of Conduct

Notice is hereby given that Esh Parish Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for its Members under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000. All Councillors have now signed up to the Code and completed their Declarations of Interest. A copy of the Code is available for inspection at the Parish Rooms by prior appointment with the Parish Clerk on 0191 3736687.

M. G. Ackroyd
Parish Clerk

Play Areas

As mentioned in the previous Issue of Esh Leaves the Parish Council has commissioned reports on the remaining items of equipment on its various play areas. Unfortunately, and despite various reminders, these reports have not yet been received.

In the circumstances, and with some regret, the Parish Council is unable to authorise any use of these sites. It will however endeavour to keep residents aware of any developments.

Calendar 2003

Esh Parish Council, in conjunction with the 3 Primary Schools, is hoping to print a 2 colour calendar, for 2003, based upon historical

events during the Queen's reign.

The calendar should be of a similar format to the Millennium Calendar ie the pictures will be reprinted onto large size postcards attached to each monthly page, serrated for use later. It is hoped to launch the Calendar in September, with details advertised through the Schools and local shops.

Parish Walk

Following the abandonment of last year's Walk, owing to the closure of the footpaths during the Foot and Mouth epidemic, the Parish Council was able to resume the old tradition of Beating its Bounds on Rogation Sunday.

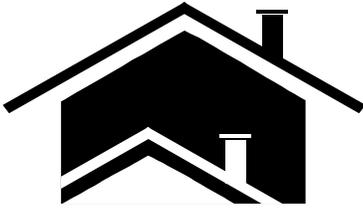
However before starting the Walk a team of volunteers had, the night before, spent a considerable amount of time removing rubbish from one particular section of the Walk to make it reasonably passable. Our thanks go to a local farmer, Allan Mace, for helping with the clearance, using a JCB in the process, such was the scale of the problem!

Chris Bloor acted as our leader, Alison Spenceley provided the much needed refreshments at Quebec Village Hall and Allan Harling, the then Chairman of the Council, and his family, accounted for half of the 20 walkers who helped to check our boundaries.

A big thank you to all concerned in helping us to maintain the old traditions.



Planning Matters



Continuing our series of extracts from Derwentside District Council's Planning Handbook, we look at objecting to a planning application.

In notifying neighbours of proposed development the Council is asking for views on planning matters such as the effect of traffic which the proposal may generate, or the potential for noise and disturbance to affect the amenity of residents.

Neighbours are asked to try to inspect the plans submitted and consider the implications of them before they lodge any comment or objection, and to obtain advice from a planning officer to understand the proposals. The fact that a large number of people object to an application does not mean that the Council has to refuse planning permission. The Council has to weigh up the planning advantages and disadvantages and decide which are most important. The Council cannot consider comments about non-planning matters such as licensing, moral issues or private matters such as rights to light or rights of

way, the effect on property values or disputes about land ownership.

Any views which you want the Council to consider, should be put in writing, addressed to the Director of Regulation & Resources. Please be clear and concise, and include the application reference number. All comments on planning applications are open to inspection by the public, the applicant and the press. Under the terms of the Access to Information Act 1985, copies of correspondence can be requested by anyone. Please note that the Council do not automatically advise objectors or supporters when the particular application will be considered by the Committee. The onus is on the interested parties to keep in contact with the planning case officer.

The Council unfortunately does not have the resources to enter into detailed correspondence with all objectors about planning proposals. However, if you comment on an application you will receive an acknowledgement letter and be notified of the outcome a few days after the decision is made. If you object to an application, but it is approved by the Council, you do not have a right to appeal.

The Planning Division considers the information

contained in the application, the replies of consultees, and any public reaction, against the framework of the Development Plan for the area, before reaching a recommendation on whether planning permission should be granted, subject to conditions, or refused.

In the next issue we will look at what happens next in the planning process - the decision and appeals.

You can access the full Planning Handbook and other information on local planning matters by visiting the website at

www.derwentside.gov.uk/planning

Hanging Baskets

The Parish Council this year invited local nurseryman, Paul Snowdon, to prepare nearly 60 baskets for distribution throughout the Parish, including some new locations.

It is hoped that local residents will find the baskets an attractive feature during the summer months.

Our thanks to all those who help to water the baskets.

Events and Opportunities

Church Street Community Centre Marion's Coffee Morning



Every Thursday
9.30am to 11.00am

All Welcome

In aid of Community Centre funds

The Durham Miners and Mechanics Helpline

Call FREE on 0800 587 1277

There is still time for you to register a claim for compensation for chest problems but you should not delay - a cut-off date is likely to be imposed for new claims.

If you have a chest problem do not diagnose yourself. Put in a claim and let the experts help you.

Claims can also be made by the widow, children and grandchildren of deceased miners.

Miners have also been receiving compensation for the effects of Vibration White Finger, Occupational Deafness and Asbestos

related diseases for some years now through the Durham Miners and Mechanics' Compensation Schemes. If you think you suffer from any of these conditions call the helpline and we will do our best to help you pursue your claim. **DO NOT DELAY!** Cut-off date for Vibration White Finger claims is 31 October 2002.

If you would prefer to write for further information, please write to:

The Miner's Family Compensation Helpline
PO Box 317
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE99 1ZP

St Andrew's, (Langley Park) Methodist Church

Every Sunday
Worship at 10.30am

Every Friday
Coffee Morning 9-11am

Every Monday at 2.15pm
Women's Fellowship Meeting

19 July 2002
Table-top Sale & Coffee Morning

Sunday 1 Sept at 10.30am & Monday 2 Dec at 2.15pm
Women's Fellowship Rally

Sunday 29 September 2002
Harvest Festival Celebrations
with Linda Bosworth

'You and Your Baby'

Classes are specially designed for mothers and babies aged approx. birth to 9 months.

The class provides an opportunity to share feelings about motherhood, some gentle exercises for mums and exercise, dance, fun and massage for the babies. The class gives an excellent opportunity for mums to meet other mums with small babies and to give mothers some well deserved time to focus on themselves!

'Baby Boogie'

A creative movement class for children aged approx. 9 months-3/4 years.

The class provides a space for children and parents to explore themed movement in a safe space with props, instruments, singing and imaginative dancing. This class can fuel children's imagination and help build confidence in movement.

Both these classes meet every Tuesday morning and there will be classes on during the school holidays.

For more information ring Beth: 0191 373 5109

Langley Park Branch Friends of the Durham Hospitals

We were able to report another good year at our A.G.M. with £887.00 raised in Langley Park.

A large group of members attended a Service for Volunteers at University Hospital when the new Chapel was dedicated. The League's contribution to the Chapel is Stained Glass panels designed by Maralyn O'Keefe. The Chapel, though small, is well worth a visit.

Future events include a talk on Guide Dogs for the blind, another concert and a talk by Maralyn O'Keefe. Look out for notices in the shops.

We thank all those who support us in any way and we always welcome new members and visitors to our events.

Contacts

Maud Lowdon 373 1662
Brenda Moralee 373 1356

Derwentside District Council's Funding Development Team

The Funding Development Team is able to provide a wide range of advice and support to community groups, for example:

- Development of constitutions

- General advice on provision of financial information to support applications e.g. annual accounts
- Identification of funding sources for project proposals
- Liaison with other Council Officers
- Liaison with funding bodies
- Assistance with the development of funding applications.

If any group with a project in mind wish to apply for funding and would like discuss how their organisation could benefit from funding programmes or require any form of assistance, please contact either Claire Smith or Marie Moore on 01207 218203 in order to arrange a meeting so that we can discuss your requirements in more detail.

Recently we sent all community & voluntary groups/organisations a questionnaire that allowed us to create a database that is now being used to inform groups about funding opportunities available to them. If your group didn't receive a questionnaire please contact: the Funding Development Team on 01207 218203.

STOP PRESS Congratulations

to
Bobby Robson
on his recent Knighthood,
a well deserved honour!

Hamsteels Inn, Quebec

John Hanley has now been awarded a BIIAB Level 2 National Certificate for Licensees and has obtained a further temporary Justices Licence for the Hamsteels Inn.

John is now taking bookings for special events and Christmas functions (not Christmas lunches).

The Hamsteels Inn FC has also arranged

Five a Side Football Tournament



Sunday

14 July 2002

kick-off 12.30pm

on Quebec Green.

There is no admission charge.

While You're Away

Most burglaries happen when a house or flat is empty. Don't advertise your absence when you are on holiday, or even when you are out shopping.

Use time switches – available from DIY shops – to turn on lights, radios and other appliances, when you're out. This will make it look as though your house is occupied.

Don't let your TV or video show through a window.

Draw the curtains if you are going out for the evening.

Get a friend or neighbour to look after your home when you are on holiday – to collect mail left in the letterbox, adjust the curtains, sweep up the leaves, even mow the lawn and generally make the house look lived in.

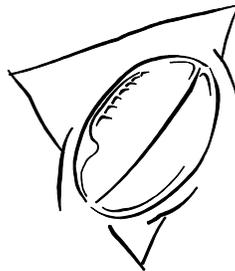
If you go away, cancel the milk and newspapers.

“An Outlandish Place”

Well that is how the West Hartlepool Daily Mail Rugby Reporter described Quebec when Hartlepool Rovers scored a record 77-0 win over Hamsteels Rugby Club in a Durham and Northumberland League Match back in 1902!

Yes, Rugby was played in the District, for back in the period between 1890 and 1919, the records of the

Durham County Rugby Union and newspaper reports mention places in the district that once boasted a Rugby Club. Hamsteels was the most prominent, emerging in the 1890's and lasting until at least 1919 and playing the leading North East Clubs of the era.



Rugby records show that a Mr Jas Burgoyne Johnson represented the Club on the County Committee from about 1892 to 1912. J. Burgoyne Johnson held the Presidency of the Durham County Union from 1904 to 1907 when Durham was quite a force in English Rugby and he appears on team photos from that period.

The Club itself boasted a number of Durham County players from 1899 to about 1909 with H. Gibbon, ? Wilson, J. Gordon, J. Smith, T. Davidson all listed. Gordon joined Hamsteels from the Tudhoe Club which was a force in Durham Rugby from 1884 until 1904 when the Ironworks closed. He later joined the Northern Union with Hull K. R. and I recently had a contact with his descendants.

The last record we have of the Hamsteels Club is

1919/1920 when J. Laykin of 3 Chapel Street, Quebec is listed as the Secretary.

The Hamsteels side was one of a number running in the area during the 1890's when the Hamsteels Club featured in the Durham Junior Cup, which is still run by the Union, along with the Langley Moor Colts, Belmont Church Institute, Durham YMCA, Sherburn House, Brandon Mechanics, Ushaw Moor, Sleetburn United and a side called Henderson's Creelers, apparently playing on a Factory Field in Durham.

Sadly it's only brief references in Minute Books etc that remind us of these Clubs, no other records appear to have survived so if anyone in the Esh district has any photographs of Rugby in the area, Durham County Rugby Football Union would be interested to hear about them.

We would particularly be interested to know about Mr Burgoyne Johnson and what work he did in the area, even at this distance in time no doubt some local historian will have some idea.

Please contact:
Chris McLoughlin,
Hon Secretary,
Durham County RFU,
“Ravensworth”,
31 Tunstall Avenue,
HARTLEPOOL
TS26 8NE

Tel. 01429 236177 or e-mail
cb-honsec-durham@therfu.com

Out and About

Two shorter walks this time – both suitable for a summer evening or a Sunday afternoon. The first is based on Langley Park and is about 5 miles (2-2½ hours). Doing this walk from Esh adds about 2 miles on though, so there is also a 3½ mile (1½-2 hours) circular walk from Esh.

The first walk uses the Lanchester Valley Way again, this time heading off towards Bearpark. On your way look over to the field immediately after the second bridge over the river. You will be returning across this field, but there are often Charolais cattle kept in the field, so if you feel unsure of crossing a field full of cattle you will need to return from Witton Gilbert via the road. Continue along the walkway until you reach the old Bearpark ruins. These are all that remains of Beau Repaire, the country retreat for the monks of Durham, and it is a corruption of beau repaire that gives the present day Bearpark its name – nothing at all to do with bears or parks I'm afraid! Not so long ago the ruins were more substantial. There is an illustration in 'The Architectural Antiquities of the County of Durham', published in 1846, showing them to be so. Turn left down the road towards the ruins, stopping to have a look at them if you like. Go over the Browney, following the farm track round the right-hand bend and for

about 50 metres, after which you will see a way-marked farm track going off to the left. Follow this track for about 400 metres. At the point where the fence on the left of the track ends, turn left and go down to the valley bottom where you will find a stile. Go over this stile and follow the well-marked path up the hill. At the top turn left again and continue to follow the field boundary behind Nelsons' yard. Don't worry about the rather fierce looking Rottweilers – they are safe behind a secure fence! Go over the next stile and almost immediately over another one to your right into the field next to Nelsons. The path goes diagonally across the field to a stile in the opposite corner. You now have to cross the main Durham road and walk about 50 metres towards Witton Gilbert before turning right and, keeping the field boundary on your left, continue to the triangulation point. The path then turns back on itself and continues towards Witton Gilbert. The field hedge is initially on your left, then on your right. The path goes along the right-hand side of Witton Gilbert recreation ground, exiting through the trees near the far left-hand corner to Front Street. Continue along Front Street, then turn left down the lane towards the church. The way forks to the right of the church and continues to a bridge over the Browney, then across the next field to the stile in the top left-hand corner before joining the

railway walkway to return to Langley Park.

Now for the walk from Esh and Quebec. Make your way via the Parish Walk to Heugh Farm. Go through the farmyard, following the path down through the farmyard to Esh Winning. Turn left at the main road and go into the village centre, then straight across the road and down to the Deerness Valley walk. Turn left on the walkway and follow it for a mile until you see Flass Hall on your right. Turn left after the Hall on a track which meets the main road after 25 metres and continues across the road to Hag House Farm. Go through the farmyard and past the wood on your left. At the top of the field above the wood there is a stile which takes the path along the top of the field, then over a stile in the corner back to Esh by the side of Esh Hall.



The day I had planned to do the walk described in the last issue of Esh Leaves turned out to be pretty miserable and quite sensibly, no-one turned up to do the walk. I had an American visitor, however, and he insisted that if he had come all the way from New Jersey he was going to do the walk.

We got soaked! Fortunately the weather did clear up about an hour before we finished the walk so we were more-or-less dry by the time we got back to Langley Park. We were rewarded, though, by the sight of a Kingfisher darting across the Deerness, and of a Heron lazily flapping its wings as it flew off after a meal of best Deerness fresh fish.



In the hope of better weather I will be doing the first of these two walks on

Wednesday
24 July 2002.

If you'd like to join me, meet at 6.30pm at the Parish Rooms (opposite the Post Office).

Christmas and other events

If you are planning any event why not include an article in Esh Leaves?

The next issue will be going out in early November, so please send in details of Christmas events in particular.

Send your notices to the Parish Clerk as soon as possible or email them to

eshleaves@hotmail.com

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for the next issue?

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