

# the Village Voice

Issue No 12, Volume 23

Lanchester, December 2023



## Switching on the Christmas lights

Above right: Switching the lights on, left-right, Esther, Jessica, Sally Laverick, Reuben and Ava and in the back Keith Harrison, Chair of the Parish Council.

Above left: Children with their Christingles

Right:- The brass band play festive tunes (page 2)



## HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

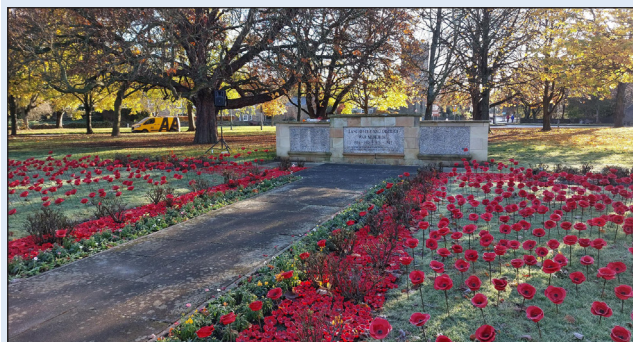
to all of our readers.

Many thanks to the advertisers, contributors, letter writers, proof readers, deliverers and everybody who has made the Village Voice happen in 2023.

*The Village Voice Editorial Team*



## Remembrance Sunday in Lanchester (page 2)



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## Remembrance Sunday

There was the usual Remembrance Service on the Green on November 12th. It was extremely well attended.

Following the opening prayers, the hymn "O God, our help in ages past" was sung by those attending accompanied by the Lanchester Band. This was followed by one of the verses of the poem "For the fallen" by Robert Laurence Binyon.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them."

Mark Draper then played the Last Post; flags were lowered, and an immaculate silence kept. Reveille was then played as the flags were raised again. A prayer was said and the names of those from the area who died in the wars were read out.

Wreaths were then laid by representatives of the Lord Lieutenant/the courts, County Council and Richard Holden MP, Lanchester Independent Party, Veterans' Association, British Red Cross and the Royal Army Medical Corps, Parish Council, Lanchester Partnership, Scouts, Boys' Brigade, Thursday Club, Women's Institute, Churches Together, and the Mothers' Union. This was then followed by those who wished to lay wreaths or crosses.

After prayers, the national anthem was then sung, followed by a blessing.



Top: Boys' Brigade lined up before the service, with Father Charles at the back

Above left: Keith Harrison, Chair of the Parish Council

Above middle: Lord Left, Representative of the Lord

Lieutenant of Durham laying a wreath

Left: Lanchester Brass Band

## 'Chalk and Cheese'

### Northern Camerata Orchestra

This excellent Durham based 16 piece string orchestra, conducted by Gordon Dyke, presented a programme of contrasting pieces, hence chalk and cheese, to a large audience in Lanchester Methodist Church on a very cold Sunday evening in November.

We were treated to a splendid first half of music from the classical repertoire which included movements from Mozart's Eine Kleine Nacht Musik, a Tchaikovsky waltz, the Capriol Suite by Peter Warlock and music written for Downton Abbey.

After a short break we settled down to a wonderful series of well-known tunes from popular songs (including the Beatles) and stage musicals (including Fiddler on the Roof). The evening concluded with tenor Paul Smith joining with the strings to sing 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas'. Loud applause from the audience demonstrated that a good night was had by all. £700 was raised jointly for Willow Burn Hospice and Motor Neurone Disease charity; a generous response to a first class evening of music.

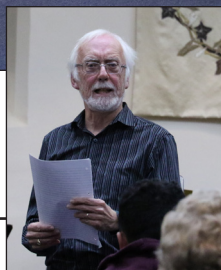
**David Hughes**



Above: the orchestra

Left: the conductor, Gordon Dyke

Right: soloist Paul Smith



## SOLDIERS

Soldiers lined up,  
Row by row,  
Above the ground  
And down below

No name,  
Just a number,  
Someone's son,  
Someone's lover

How did they get here?  
What have they become?  
Eyes looking down the barrel of a gun

Will he shoot?  
Will he fire?  
Family and home  
They desire

Soldiers lined up,  
Row by row,  
Above the ground  
And down below

"It'll be over by Christmas",  
So they said,  
But now their friends,  
Lie there dead

Gone but not forgotten,  
Of course you'll never be,  
For I thank you,  
You were once just like me.

**By Samantha Watson (Aged 14)  
10 November 2023**



## Switching on the Christmas lights

There was a large crowd, young and not so young, who gathered on the Green for the great switch on.

The weather was cool, but dry.

The proceedings started with Christmas carols from Lanchester Brass Band and Lanchester Choral Society – a nice festive start. There was also mulled wine and mince pies available and a small gift for the children.

For those who couldn't make it in person, the event was live streamed on Facebook thanks to the Lanchester Partnership and Kath Marshall-Ivens.

Sally Laverick switched the lights on this year, assisted by two children from the EP and two from All Saints' schools.

Sally was Lanchester Parish Clerk for fifteen years and Keith Harrison, Chair of the Parish Council, said "We thought it right that, as Sally had worked so hard on this event every year, that she is the person switching the lights on."



Above: Festive tractor, decorated with fairy lights to celebrate the switch on!  
Additional photos, on the front cover.

## Lanchester Flower Club

### Member of the National Association of Flower Arrangers Society

The club held an Open Afternoon meeting on Saturday 18th November in Lanchester Community Centre. Our demonstrator was Christine Ogle who did many lovely arrangements which were raffled off as prizes. Seven ladies went home very happy with a lovely flower arrangement each. Gillian Harrison and Jane Pegram kindly came along to the meeting with their home produce stall, a big thank you to them both, once again. Tea, coffee, and light refreshments were served, everyone enjoyed a relaxing social afternoon. Many thanks to all who supported the event.

We will have no further meetings until Wednesday 24th January 2024 when we intend to have a belated Christmas get together at Beamish Park Hotel. Our next meeting in Lanchester Community Centre will be on Wednesday 28th February at 1:30pm. Everyone welcome so come along and join us for a relaxing enjoyable afternoon making new friends and rekindling old friendships.

*We wish everyone a very happy Christmas but most of all a peaceful and happy 2024 from all the members of Lanchester Flower Club.*

**Lestrine Kelly**



Above: The beautiful floral arrangements  
Right: Christine Ogle with one of her arrangements

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## Dear Village...

### Dear Village Voice,

I am the secretary of the Consett and District Branch of the Royal British Legion as well as the Northumbria County Parade Marshal. I have taught WW1 and Royal British Legion history around the region to schools and Branches of the RBL.

On Monday 6th November, I was invited and honoured to speak to All Saints Primary school about Remembrance at assembly that morning. In the afternoon I made a poppy cross for the children to place their poppies into. The cross was put next to their own war memorial. During the week the children placed their crosses into the main cross. After the assembly I had to go to the Field of Remembrance at Saltwell Park and teach Remembrance to another 3 schools that day.

Once the crosses had been put into the box, they remained there until the 20th when they were removed and some of the nicest and clearest were put next to their own memorial.

The Field of Remembrance is open to all schools in the area. This year we had 7 schools, and they all had their own boxes into which to put their crosses. Hopefully more next year. There are only 6 Fields of Remembrance in the country, and we have the only one in the north of England. It opens to the public on the 1st Saturday in November and members of the public are more than welcome to add their tributes to the Field.

**Malcolm Barnes**

**Northumbria County Parade Marshal**



Above: Malcolm Barnes telling some of the pupils about Remembrance.



Left: The pupils' crosses in the main Remembrance cross in the school grounds

## Remembering...

### William (Bill) John Stephenson

The funeral of my brother, known as Bill to everyone, took place on Monday 13th November.

At Bill's request, the family attended Mountsett Crematorium for a private short, but touching, service. Bill further requested that we had a service of thanksgiving for his life at All Saints' Church, Lanchester. It was a lovely service; the hymns, the readings, the prayers, organ music and address were beautifully carried out. Unfortunately, we completely miscalculated the attendance at the church. We would like to apologise to all Bill's friends who we did not get a chance to thank personally for attending his funeral on such a cold, wet and windy day. Thanks very much to you all.

We would also like to thank Stuart Wright Funeral Services; the clergy, Lesley, and Steven; organist Peter and Eric. Also, the caterers and especially the catering staff in the Chapter House who did a remarkable job. Many thanks to everyone involved and to those who attended Bill's funeral.

**June and all the family**

### Patricia Heather Lines

It is with great sadness that we report the recent death of one of longest serving deliverers. Pat Lines, along with her husband Edward, volunteered to deliver to Alderdene over many years and she will be missed greatly. Pat died on 23rd October, 2023 at the age of 77. All our thoughts and prayers go out to Edward at this time and I know that all in Alderdene wish him well.

**Mike Stoddart**



### Donation to Willow Burn

Lanchester Bowling Club decided to donate proceeds raised from home games where we have a break for a cup of tea and a raffle. This was common practice on the bowls circuit until Covid put a stop to gatherings and then afterwards most clubs decided to play right through without a tea break, so it was decided in Lanchester to reinstate the practice.

Above: A cheque for £137.60 was handed over to Paul Jackson of Willow Burn from bowls chairman Mike Stoddart.



## Diamond Wedding

John and Muriel Garthwaite recently celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. They have lived in Lanchester with their son Peter for 52 of their 60 years of married life. John and Muriel were delighted to receive a congratulations and best wishes card from King Charles and Queen Camilla.



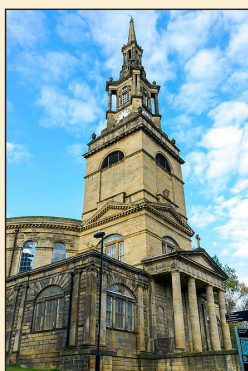
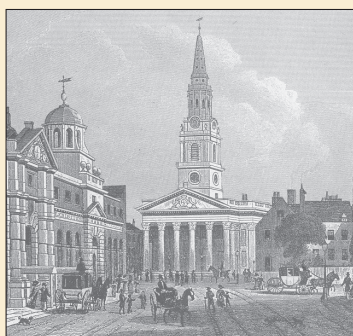
## Lanchester History Society

The history society meeting in November was a talk from Richard Pears about David Stephenson (1757-1819) the Newcastle architect. He was a founder member of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle and an early member of The Society of Antiquaries. There is a marble plaque commemorating him in All Saints' Church, Newcastle upon Tyne, located at the Newcastle end of the Tyne bridge, where he is buried.

All Saints' Church is one of his more significant works and was adapted from a scheme by James Gibbs for Saint Martin in the Fields in London. He was architect to Newcastle Corporation and laid out Mosley Street and Dean Street, the first streets to deviate from the mediaeval town plan. He went on to be appointed architect to the Duke of Northumberland designing the New Quay at North Shields and the Percy Tenantry Column in Alnwick.

All Saints has been through many changes during the 20th Century however it is now back in use as a Presbyterian Church with services - but open for self-guided tours at various times such as Heritage open days. It's well worth a visit.

**Marian Morrison**



Top: Saint Martin in the Fields in London on which the Newcastle Church is based  
Below: All Saints' Newcastle upon Tyne

## Ladies who lunch

Our latest foray into the local food scene found us motoring up the back lanes onto the A68 and onwards to Corbridge. A lovely journey, greatly enhanced by the bright sunlight shining through the glorious autumnal foliage.

Once there, Corbridge itself can prove to be a little tricky for finding a parking place - but - it can be done with a little patience. We were heading for the Black Bull, which recently changed hands - would we still like it?

Well, it was very busy - good sign, the fires were burning away, staff were very pleasant and welcoming, menus looked interesting. There was the main one, a festive one - 2 courses for £24.99 or 3 courses for £28.99 and a light bites menu.

Choices were made and our food ordered. From the festive menu we opted for roasted cod loin wrapped in crispy prosciutto with sprouts, roast baby potatoes, broccoli and hollandaise sauce followed by Christmas pudding. This was pronounced to be the 'one of the nicest meals I've ever had'. From the light bites menu, it was wholetail scampi with chips, tartare sauce and peas and, from where I was sitting, it looked more like a main meal - a very substantial offering. From the main menu we sampled smothered chicken breast with melted smoked cheese, bacon and BBQ sauce served with onion rings, chips and rocket and cucumber salad; hand battered Atlantic cod served with tartare sauce, chips and a choice of peas or mushy peas; and pan-fried seabass and seared scallops on a bed of pea, mint and courgette risotto.

Puddings were caramelised vanilla cheesecake; Bakewell tart; Christmas pudding and sticky toffee pudding.

An excellent meal in a comfy warm room, in good company - what more could you wish for?

Not a lot really- but we were in delightful Corbridge, and retail therapy abounds around every corner- what absolute bliss!

A most enjoyable afternoon.

## The Gourmet Girls



## Lanchester WI

Photo below is Lanchester WI enjoying their 98th birthday lunch on November 6th at Hardwick Hall Manor. Everyone enjoyed delicious food and a good chat with friends.

**Tracey Dobson**







## Poppy's walks

Good day readers.

The walk I am going to tell you about for this edition is three miles long. How do I know that? All will be revealed in due course.

As you will know by now, I am Poppy, a Patterdale terrier at your service.

I enjoy sharing with you readers the

walks on which I lead my humans.

The Lanchester walks all tend to start in the centre of the village, say the village green for the sake of argument. From there, for this walk, we proceed along Station Road and up Cadger Bank. But only halfway up the bank until we see a flight of steps on our right which we take. From there we go through a narrow passageway – or ginnel – which we walk through and that brings us to the top of a road called Briardene.

We walk diagonally across a grassy area with lots of trees and at the end turn right before walking to another flight of stairs with a burn on the left. We walk down the stairs and then the footpath at the foot and that takes us onto Broadoak Drive. We turn left and walk to Newbiggin Lane, left again and then right along a path called Ridgeway. There are a couple of doggie bins on Ridgeway in case I have been caught short en route.

At the end of Ridgeway, we go down yet another flight of stairs

and turn left onto the railway path.

We follow that in the direction of Consett and I usually find some pals along the line with whom to have a sniff and a chat. We keep walking along the line until we come to a high point overlooking fields and a sign which says Lanchester Valley Walk, Lanchester one and a half miles. The human usually decides to turn around here, telling me how lucky I am to be taken on a three mile walk. From this I deduce that one and a half miles is the halfway point. We retrace our footsteps as far as Lizard Cottage where we branch off onto a farm track which runs parallel to the line, and eventually takes us onto Kitwell Road. From there we walk to the centre of the village - to the shops - and I am going to let you into a secret.

I drag the human to the front of the butcher's and if I sit at the entrance looking beseeching – I am quite good at that – a nice lady called Wendy nearly always feeds me a morsel of sausage. Which is a more than satisfying way of rounding off a most satisfactory walk which takes us around 90 minutes.

## Monday Art Group

The Monday Art Group has been busy recently with a demonstration of picture making with pastels by Fiona Carvell, and a shared project, painting Matisse's portrait of Greta Moll. Both projects were very enjoyable.

We're all learning in a friendly, relaxed forum.

The Group meets at the Community Centre at 10.00am until 12.00pm on Mondays. New members are always welcome.

**For further information contact Jim Rafferty at [tojimrafferty@yahoo.com](mailto:tojimrafferty@yahoo.com)**



Top: Fiona Carvell showing the group how to paint with pastels

Below: the group who worked on the project

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## Police Report

Hello, here is an update from PCSO 8725 Jonathan Rutherford on what has been happening recently in and around Lanchester.

This month, there has been an increase in thefts/ burglaries and suspicious activity with strangers walking into people's houses uninvited. We encourage all residents keep their properties secure by locking doors and windows and, when possible, target hardening their homes via door/window alarms, nightlights and CCTV. Please also keep an eye on those vulnerable in our communities. If you see anything suspicious, please call it in on 101 or 999 in an emergency. Finally, Durham Constabulary wishes everyone a very merry Christmas, stay safe and have a wonderful day.

*If you have any queries or questions, please feel free to get in touch via email, [Jonathan.rutherford@durham.police.uk](mailto:Jonathan.rutherford@durham.police.uk). This is for general use and incidents shouldn't be reported this way. Please report any incidents via 101 (or the online report form) or 999 in an emergency.*

**PCSO Jonathan Rutherford**

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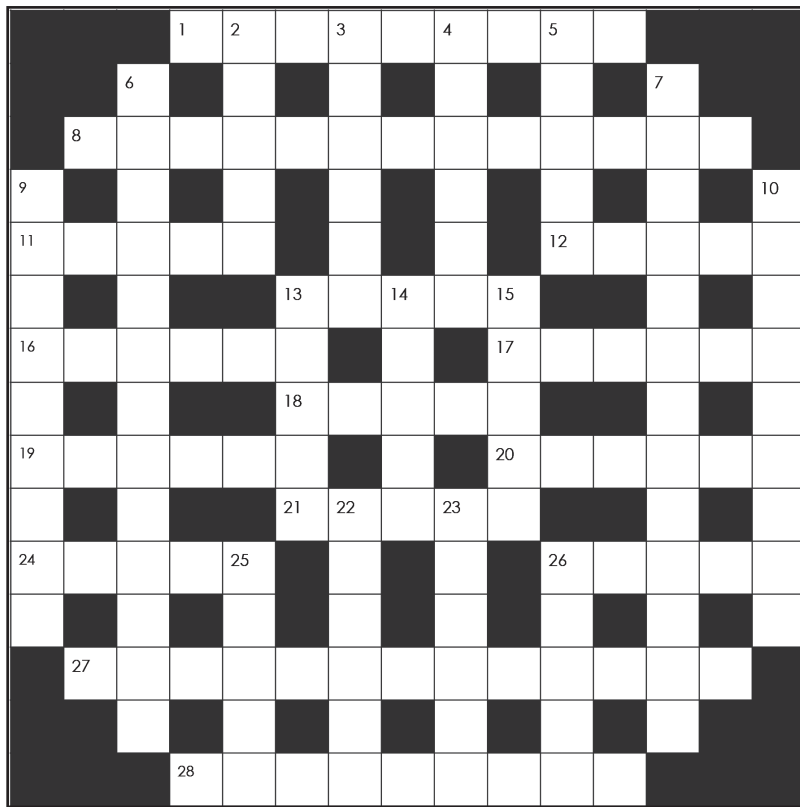
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# CLUES CROSSWORD 192

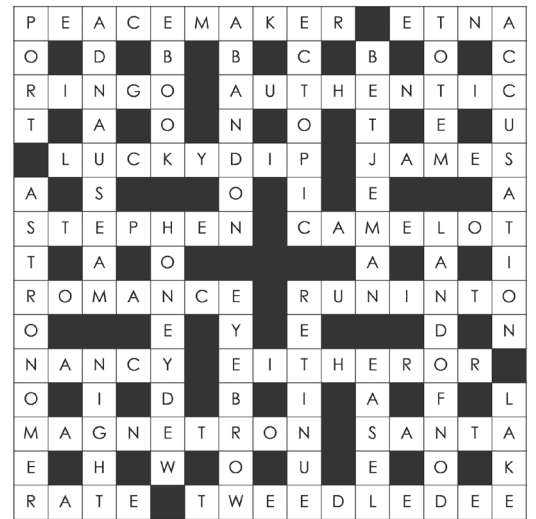


## Across

1. Bachelor party (4,5)
8. Tendency to suffer mishaps (8-5)
11. Milan based football club that wears black and blue (5)
12. Audible alarm (5)
13. Hollows caused by blows to a hard surface (5)
16. Former spouse (2-4)
17. Region of Western Scotland (6)
18. Security devices (5)
19. Type of ale once popular in the North-East (6)
20. Shows indifference (6)
21. Sarcastic use of words to imply the opposite of what you really think (5)
24. Mistake (5)
26. Bet (5)
27. Term for foods such as bread and pasta (13)
28. He befriended a lion (9)

## Down

2. They say God loves one (5)
3. Musical set in Rydell High (6)
4. Whole and undamaged (6)
5. Feels pain (5)
6. We were gannin along it on the 9th of June (9,4)
7. Collective name for 50s writers such as Braine, Osborne and Sillitoe (5,5,3)
9. Scottish 'flower' found in the Highlands (5,4)
10. Area surrounded by a barrier (9)
13. India's capital territory (5)
14. Tortilla chip covered with cheese (5)
15. Bold or fresh (5)
22. Piece of bacon (6)
23. Relating to Scandinavia, Finland and Iceland (6)
25. Christmas card bird (5)
26. Large mammal (5)



## Winner of Crossword 191

There were 19 entries this month, only 6 of which were correct.

There were two where the solution was incomplete, but the major error was in the spelling of "ad nauseam" which was spelt "as nauseum" by a number of contributors.

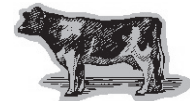
The lucky winner drawn out of the hat is

**Paul Hammond.**

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## Lanchester Boys Brigade

November has been a very busy month for Lanchester Boys Brigade starting with the 1st round of the chess competition against Gateshead which we won 6-3. The next round is against Hartlepool in December.

A visit to Teesside for the Masterteam quiz competition followed, where we managed to qualify for the 2nd round which will also be held at Hartlepool in December. Another visit to Teesside was made in order to play the 1st round of the table tennis tournament which we managed to win 5-4 in a closely fought match.

A successful coffee morning at the Methodist Church raised £165 and an excellent turnout of boys for the Remembrance service was one of the highlights of the month.

At the time of writing this several boys will be helping at the Willow Burn Hospice Nurses Christmas Fayre on the 25th and we are all looking forward to our enrolment service at the Methodist Church on the 26th.

December may well be as busy as we look forward to continuing our participation in the national competitions of chess, table tennis,

Masterteam and badminton. **Eric Hepplewhite**



Above: The Masterteam quiz  
Left: Shows the Boys' Brigade working in the kitchen at their coffee morning

## Christmas Toy Appeal

This is my 4th Christmas toy appeal for local families who are finding Christmas a struggle. I work closely with social workers, families first and local schools to identify those in need, all details can be found on our Facebook page "our biggest ever Christmas toy appeal".

We also have a gift tag tree located in Lanchester Garden Centre in the restaurant area where a tag can be chosen, the toy on the tag bought and returned to the garden centre. Alternatively, we have an Amazon wish list; to buy a toy via Amazon, scan the QR code, choose a gift, pay and it's posted straight to me. And finally, a GoFundMe page to buy gifts to fill any age gaps we don't have so much for (QR code below). No child should wake up Christmas morning to no gifts.

**Kathryn Rooney**



## Special celebrations for Father Charles Ejieji

All Saints RC Church and St Teresa's RC Church celebrated so much, in the first week of November. On the 1st of November was the Feast of All Saints and the 2nd of November was All Souls Day. Then Father Charles celebrated his special birthday as he was 40 years old. Both churches celebrated with cake and wished him many more happy birthdays.

On Sunday 5th November it was Parish Feast Day. The church was almost full to capacity. Some of the children from All Saints' School did the bidding prayers and were part of the special service. St Bede's School provided the choir and music, a lovely mass enjoyed by all.

After the mass many enjoyed tea/coffee together in the Parish Centre. We all sang Happy Birthday to Father Charles and there were scones,

cakes, tray bakes and of course a couple of birthday cakes. It was good that the church family could make this special birthday a real celebration, considering Father Charles is so far from his family. I am sure his late father would be watching and would be so proud of his son's achievements.

**Lestrine Kelly**





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## New Travel Agent Opens in the village

Say hello to your new local independent travel agent! We opened our sixth branch in the village back in September and we are so humbled to be part of such a community-spirited village. We've met so many lovely local residents and business owners, who have given us such a warm welcome and shown so much support. We cannot thank you enough!

For anyone who hasn't heard of Seaside Travel, we are a local independent travel agent and were established back in 2001. Managing Director Nicola Park opened her first branch in Easington Village, and has since opened shops in Wingate, Hartlepool, Sacriston, Haltwhistle and now Lanchester. In the next few weeks, we will open our doors to Fishburn shop, the third shop to open this YEAR!

We have a team of five here at Seaside Travel Lanchester; an experienced team with a wealth of knowledge of beach, cruise, long haul, UK breaks and tailor-made packages and there is nothing we cannot sell. Whether it's a week in the sun in Majorca, a ski holiday in Andorra, a cruise around the Greek Isles or a London break to see the ABBA Voyage performance, we have it all.

We strive on providing the best service, and giving you the best deals, and we have won many awards!

By the time you read this, the Christmas rush will be near enough over, and you will be ready to start thinking about your next getaway! Beat the January blues and come in and see our friendly team who will be happy to help you find the best deal.

PROMOTED CONTENT



Top: Outside the shop, from l-r, Molly, Beth, Nicola (Owner), Sharnie (Manager), Paige  
Middle: Joan Nicolson (Chair of Durham County Council), Vanessa (from Jet2holidays) and Nicola (Owner)  
Left: open day with Sharnie talking to potential customers

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## WHAT'S ON - December / January 2024

**Lanchester playgroup**  
Every Friday at 9:30 at Croft View Halls (no meeting 29th December). Find us on Facebook, 'Lanchester's new playgroup'.

**Wildlife Group**  
The next meeting is on Tuesday 9th January at 7.30pm, using Zoom only (no meeting in the Community Centre). Please email [lanchesterwildlifegroup@outlook.com](mailto:lanchesterwildlifegroup@outlook.com) to ask for the Zoom link if you're not in touch already. The speaker will be Michael Clark, talking about 'The Fragmented World of the Mongoose Lemur of Madagascar' and some of his zoo exploits.

**Festive Coffee Morning:**  
Saturday 9th Dec, 10am-12:30pm, Lanchester Methodist Church. Join us for a cuppa, homemade festive treats, bacon sandwiches. Enjoy festive music and a warm and welcoming atmosphere, in aid of Health & Hope UK ([healthandhope.org](http://healthandhope.org))



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### Paradiso Film Club

14th January - Allelujah, starring Jennifer Saunders, Derek Jacobi, Judi Dench, David Bradley, Russell Tovey and Bally Gill.

Allelujah is a warm and deeply moving story about old age. When the geriatric ward in a small Yorkshire hospital is threatened with closure, the hospital decides to fight back by galvanising the local community: they invite a news crew to film their preparations for a concert in honour of the hospital's most distinguished nurse.

What could go wrong? Allelujah celebrates the spirit of the elderly patients whilst paying tribute to the deep humanity of the medical staff battling with limited resources and ever-growing demand.

Lanchester Community Centre, 7pm for refreshments, raffle and DVD sale. Film starts at 7.30pm. Members: £3, Non-members: £4. Annual membership £5.

### Lanchester Library

#### Library Book Club

On Monday January 22nd at 2.30-3.30pm, the group will be discussing Purgatory by Tomas Eloy Martinez. 'A moving, autobiographical novel', 'a ghost story' covering Argentina's history since 1973. It will be interesting to listen to your views of this book. Will this book divide opinions? We look forward to seeing you there and sharing our views.

#### Thursday Book Club

On Thursday January 19th from 4.00-5.00pm, the group will be reviewing Notes on Blindness by John M Hull. 'A gift to the whole of humanity' (Author C. Rentzonbrink). This book received excellent reviews, how many stars will you give it? If you would like to join this book group, pop into the library and pick up your copy.

**Pins and Needles** will meet up on January 4th from 10-11.30am. Bring along your wool, thread

needles and patterns and share your makes and get advice too. Everyone welcome, Enjoy.

**Scrabble Group** meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30-3.30pm. Do you enjoy this word game and want to get on the Triple Word Square? Come along and enjoy the company.

**Children's crafts** are available every afternoon and Saturday. Different crafts, ideas and materials are set out in the library for children to be creative, pop along with your children and enjoy.

#### New Year's resolution?

Rediscover your village library, it offers so much more than books, speak to our friendly librarians who will help you access library services. Happy reading and exploring.

#### Musical Memories

Join us to welcome in the New Year with music, refreshments and fun activities.

3rd January 2024 at 2pm, Lynwood House, Durham Road, Lanchester.

Musical Memories is a fun, friendly and stimulating music group using the ability of music to improve your brain activity, wellbeing and mood. We welcome people living with conditions that affect memory. For further information email [lanchesterdfc@gmail.com](mailto:lanchesterdfc@gmail.com)

#### Lanchester Methodist Church Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings are held every Saturday at the Methodist Church between 10 and 12, in aid of the following organisations:  
December 16th Lanchester Band  
December 23rd Mental Health and other charities  
December 30th: Blood Cancer UK  
January 6th: CHAD Charity  
January 13th: Mary Slane and Friends  
January 20th: TBC  
January 27th: Boys' Brigade

### Thursday Club

We will next meet in the Kings Head for our Christmas meal on December 14th at 12noon for 12.30pm. On January 18th at 1.30pm, we will be back in the main hall of the Community Centre listening to Eric Gaskell giving a talk on "Local Language".

### Lanchester Social Club

1st Jan - New Years Day Party featuring Cool As Vegas. Club opens 12pm, doors Open 1pm, on stage 2.15pm. Tickets £6 from the bar. Followed by karaoke in the lounge from 5pm free entry. Every Saturday we have a solo singer in the lounge from 9pm.

### Lanchester Partnership Friends of Longovicium

The Friends will not be holding a meeting in December, the normal date being within the Christmas holiday week. So our next meeting will be on Thursday 25th January 2024. As usual, it will be at 7.30pm in the upstairs conference room of the Community Centre. We'll probably be discussing what success we had this year and what we hope to achieve in the coming year. A major success this year has been the launch of our website which details most of what we know about the fort and vicus or civilian settlement, enhanced by illustrations as accurate as can be, based on the archaeological work done on site by Archaeological Services, Durham University, and the Friends. See [www.longoviciumcouk.wordpress.com](http://www.longoviciumcouk.wordpress.com) (no dots in couk!). We will also keep our Facebook page, Friends of Longovicium, updated with any developments. Further information may be obtained from Mrs. M. Williams, 01207 520063, or Rodney Hawkins at email: [hawkins\\_15@sky.com](mailto:hawkins_15@sky.com)

### Wellbeing walk

Every Monday at 1pm on the village green next to the war memorial. Walk lasts up to 90 minutes, all welcome. To book please visit [www.durham.gov.uk/walkdurham](http://www.durham.gov.uk/walkdurham) or call 03000 262539.

### Walking Group

Meets at 10am on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month (next dates are 10th and 24th January). Walks are about 5 miles long within a 30 minute radius of Lanchester – lifts provided. For further details please call Helen Thomas on 07712425623 (or email [hdbthomas@live.com](mailto:hdbthomas@live.com)). For further details please call Helen Thomas on 07712425623 (or email [hdbthomas@live.com](mailto:hdbthomas@live.com)).

**Vintage Tractor Club** Meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm in Lanchester Social Club.

### Lunch Club

The next meeting of the lunch held at Lynwood House will be 12th December, 12pm start, all welcome.

### History Society

We will be bringing in the New Year on Friday 5th January at 7.00pm in room 3 at the Community Centre with our normal Show and Tell session. Folks bring along an item to either quiz us on its use or purpose or just tell it what it is. This event has raised much discussion and has given us many fascinating hours of entertainment over the years. Don't worry if you haven't anything to bring just come along and join the evening. See you there.

### WI

January's meeting is on Monday 8th January 7.00 pm in the Community Centre, our speaker is Tina Naples telling us about the Pendle Witches. Visitors are always welcome.

### Lanchester Brass Band Christmas Concert, Carols & Reflections

Sunday 17th December, 6pm, All Saints RC Parish Church, and afterwards mince pies, ginger wine, tea/coffee in the Parish Centre. Retiring collection (split equally between Lanchester Brass Band and CAFOD). All villagers and families are most welcome.



### Medical Centre

Lanchester Medical Centre Patient Group will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 10am in the meeting room of the Medical Centre. If you are a registered patient at the Medical Centre, come along: it is your opportunity to be the patients' voice.

### Lanchester Choral Society Concert

Monday 18th December 7.30pm at Lanchester Methodist Church. A Celebration of Christmas: songs, readings and carols for all. With guests including Lanchester Male Voice Choir, Elizabeth Woods, Paul Smith and Ian Gray. Retiring collection for Willow Burn Hospice.

### Flower Club

We will have no further meetings until Wednesday 24th January 2024 when we intend to have a belated Christmas get together at Beamish Park Hotel. Our next meeting in Lanchester Community Centre will be on Wednesday 28th February at 1:30pm. Everyone is welcome, so come along and join us for a relaxing enjoyable afternoon making new friends and rekindling old friendships.



## All Saints' Primary School Lanchester

As the Christmas season approaches, at All Saints' we are all preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Our Year 4 class began the season of Advent for us by leading a service of Celebration of the Word. They reminded us of the symbolic meaning of an Advent Wreath and shared ways in which we can prepare ourselves for this very special time of year. We have continued the Advent season by having weekly prayer stations in school where the whole community can spend a few minutes in quiet prayer away from the hustle and bustle of other Christmas preparations.

Throughout the season of Advent, each of us in school makes an Advent Promise – a small act which will improve the lives of those around us. We have a range of promises in school from: giving some pennies to our Thursday Fund, visiting relatives in care homes a little more frequently, and promising to help at home with tidying bedrooms or the washing up! Each week, as we light our Advent wreath and notice it becomes brighter the closer we get to Christmas, we concentrate on how we can take time to prepare our hearts and minds for the special day by trying to show kindness and support to those around us.

Our Christmas productions are one of the highlights of our year. We have three different productions with Nursery children, Infant children and Junior children all producing their own unique performances. Our Nursery Children are performing The Nativity Story, Infants, "Prickly Hay" and Juniors, "Children of the World". This final production does lend itself to the message that Christ brings to us all, that we are one global family who should care for one another. With this thought in all our minds, the retiring collection from these three performances will go towards CAFOD World Gifts, particularly supporting refugees as we remember that Mary and Joseph were also refugees who had to rely on kindness from others for support.

Of course, Christmas time is a very exciting time to be in school! The excitement of the pantomime, special events, special visitors, parties and gifts can be seen and felt and we have a fantastic time celebrating it all. Our Christmas Mass and Carols Around the Christmas Tree, on 22nd December, will bring our time in school this term to a perfect close when we will all be suitably prepared for Christmas Eve and for the time to be spent with our families. We hope you have a joyful Christmas with your loved ones, filled with kindness and hope, and of course, lots and lots of good cheer!

**With best wishes,**

**Alison Conlin, Acting Head Teacher**



## Santa's Christmas Trail 2023

You may have spotted that the clues for Santa's Christmas Trail started to appear in the shops in the village just before the Christmas tree lights were switched on.

Santa's elves have been busy putting clues around the village for children and families to follow, and there are free prizes for those who complete the trail.

Many of the businesses in the village support the trail by allowing the elves to display a clue in their shop window.

If you would like to take part there are 32 clues around the village, they will be displayed from 25th Nov – 2nd Jan so you have plenty of time to enjoy this with your family.

Collect your answer sheet from The Premier Newsagents or The King's Head. Once completed, prizes can be claimed at The Kings Head.

**If you would like to download a copy of the answer sheet, please go to:**

**www.**

**lanchesterpartnership.org.uk**

**and follow the link to our Facebook page.**

**Enjoy!!!**



## Lanchester Endowed Parochial School

November has been a month of bringing the curriculum to life. Year 3 enjoyed a day in school with a graffiti artist linked with their topic, Year 4 spent the day at the Jorvik Viking Centre, whilst Year 5 enjoyed a wonderful WW2 Day in school – and didn't they look the part?!

### Year 5

We enjoyed World War II Day in which we all got dressed up in wartime costumes and did activities related to the war. We began by writing postcards from an evacuee who had been moved to the countryside, this was after using AI to interview a 10-year-old girl called Francesca. We looked at digital content in creating 'Fake News' stories and then used the Green Screen to construct images from the war. To finish our phenomenal day, we did a Now Press Play experience where we found out what happened to children during the war.

**Teddy and Eloise**

### Year 3

On Thursday, Year 3 worked with two graffiti artists as part of our topic of Urban Pioneers and our class story Scribbleboy. We made our own stencils that we used later for our art. Then we used spray paints to decorate the background of our boards before using our stencils to add shapes and decorations. We really loved the session! It was great being able to be so creative. Everyone got to keep their final graffiti boards too which was cool!

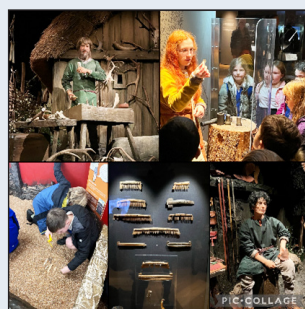
**Alexa & Sophie**

### Year 4

When we went on our trip to the Jorvik Viking Centre, we learnt about jewellery, money and we went on a ride around a Viking village. This village had a blacksmith, a carpenter and villagers playing an old-fashioned game of what looked like chess. Then, we went to the Jorvik DIG site. Here, we looked at artefacts, bones and fossils. Our last activity was where we pretended to be an archaeologist and we discovered our own artefacts. My favourite part of the trip was going on the ride because everything was so realistic, even the smells.

**Lucas**

**Mrs Jane Davis, Head Teacher**





## News from All Saints Parish Church

As we look forward to Christmas, we began with two 'firsts' - this year we held our first Christingle service at 5pm on 25th November, so that we could carry our Christingles out on to the green to see the Christmas lights being switched on (see the photo in the section on switching on the lights); and on 26th November, the feast of Christ the King, we transformed the church into Narnia, complete with White Witch, Lucy and Mr Tumnus, with six prayer stations, enjoyed by our Messy Church family and local schools.

Our Christmas Fair, held on 2nd December, featured a visit from Santa, complete with sleigh!

All three events were the ideal preparation for one of the two great feasts of the Christian year, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We have plenty to offer to get you in the festive mood:

- our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols at St Thomas' on 17th December at 3pm and at All Saints at 6pm;

- a Longest Night Service at 6.30pm on 21st December at St Thomas', for those who are grieving or who find Christmas difficult;

- our usual Holy Communion at 8am and 10.30 am on Christmas Eve;

- Crib service at St John's, 2pm on Christmas Eve;

- our pop-up Nativity at St Thomas' at 3pm;
- the ever-popular Midnight Mass at 11pm at All Saints;

- and a family communion at 10am on Christmas Day.

**We hope you'll be able to join us, and we wish all of Lanchester the peace of the Christ child this Christmas!**

**Rev'd Lesley Sutherland**

*Above: photographs of the Narnia event, including the White Witch (right)*



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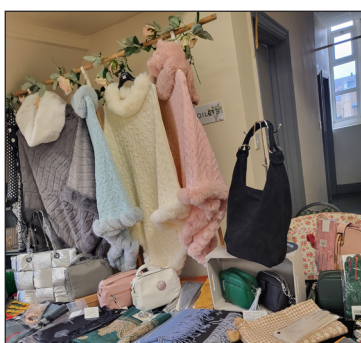
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## Lanchester Community Centre Christmas Fayre

The Lanchester Community Centre's Christmas Fayre was held on 4th November.

It was a great day, very well attended and raised £1100.



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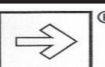
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## Delivering the Village Voice

These are your gallant deliverers who ensure the Village Voice is delivered to your door month in / month out. So, we at the Village Voice take this opportunity to wish them a Merry Christmas and thank them for their hard work throughout the year. I am sure that you agree with us that they do a splendid job so feel free to give them a mince pie and a shot of something warming if you see them on their round.

I am sure that partners and friends who help those listed above, but have not been mentioned, also get our best wishes.

**Mike Stoddart**

<b>Alan Kelly</b>	Burnside Croft Court
<b>Ben Garside</b>	Ashdown Grove
<b>Ian Murray</b>	Bede Court, Ornsby Hill
<b>Sarah Grady</b>	Alderside Crescent
<b>Eric Gaskill</b>	Newbiggen Lane
<b>Adrian Hedley</b>	Holmeside
<b>Belinda Traviss</b>	Cecil St, Railway St etc
<b>Brian Naylor</b>	Foxhills, Brierdene, Broadoak, Meadow Way etc
<b>Judith Wilkinson</b>	Foxhills, Brierdene, Broadoak, Meadow Way etc
<b>Alison &amp; Mark Grimes</b>	Foxhills, Brierdene, Broadoak, Meadow Way etc
<b>Edward Lines</b>	Alderden
<b>Alison Grey</b>	Lee Hill Court
<b>Alan &amp; Elaine Williams</b>	Woodham Court, Front St
<b>Karen McKenna</b>	Willow Burn Estate
<b>Angela Lee</b>	Maiden Law
<b>Dot Parry</b>	Maiden Law
<b>Gill Ramsey</b>	Victoria St, Fenhall Park etc
<b>Jessica Ross</b>	Mount Park Drive, Ridgeway etc
<b>Neil McKay</b>	Ford Rd, Ford Crescent, etc
<b>Ken Burnside</b>	The Paddock, Watling Way, etc
<b>Sally Laverick</b>	West Drive, Humberhill, etc
<b>Julie Sheldon</b>	Woodlea, Prospect Terrace, etc
<b>Suzanne Ward</b>	Colepike, Humberhill
<b>Denise McDermott</b>	Burnhopeside, Pethside
<b>Bob &amp; Glenys Gibbon</b>	Durham Rd
<b>Joe Newton</b>	Woodlands
<b>Jim &amp; Pat Rafferty</b>	Hallgarth, Greta Place, The Square, etc
<b>Kathleen &amp; Bill Bell</b>	Greenwell Park
<b>Ian Tute</b>	Valley Grove
<b>Sue Harkness</b>	Deneside top half
<b>Tina Patterson</b>	Deneside bottom Half
<b>Martin &amp; Rhoda Joyce</b>	Oakwood
<b>John Keenon</b>	Kitswell Rd, Croft View etc
<b>Sue Hill</b>	Sunnybanks, Kitswell Rd
<b>Julie Smith</b>	Manor Grange
<b>Dennis Laycock</b>	Deanery View
<b>Ian &amp; Georgina Taylor</b>	Satley
<b>Jackie Anderson</b>	Hurbuck
<b>Linda Shovlin</b>	Iveston
<b>Brian Oram</b>	Various around village
<b>Julia Graham</b>	Malton
<b>Julie Gillson</b>	Hollinside

### Emergency deliverers:

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## Lanchester Medical Centre: Patient Participation Group



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Get in touch with us today to see how we could support you - there's something here for everyone's ability.

Wellbeing for Life is a service commissioned by Durham County Council and delivered by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and Pioneering Care Partnership who have years of knowledge and experience of working and supporting local people across County Durham.

**Freephone: 0800 8766887**

**[www.wellbeingforlife.net](http://www.wellbeingforlife.net)**

**[cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net](mailto:cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net)**



### NEXT DEADLINE

Please submit any articles for the next edition of the Village Voice by

**FRIDAY 5th January 2024**

The deadline for advertisers is

**FRIDAY 5th January 2024**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Christmas Services

### All Saints Catholic Church

Sunday 17th December  
9.30am – Mass  
Tuesday 19th December  
1.30pm – Mass  
Thursday 21st & Friday 22nd December  
9.30am – Mass  
Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December  
9.30am – Mass  
7.00pm – Christmas Vigil Mass  
Christmas Day Monday 25th December  
9.30am – Mass  
Tuesday 26th December, Thursday 28th  
& Friday 29th  
9.30am – Mass  
Sunday 31st December  
9.30 – Mass  
Monday 1st January  
9.30am – Mass

### Lanchester Methodist Church

Sunday 17th December  
10.30am – Carol Service  
6.00pm – Service to remember those who have  
died this year (all invited)  
Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December  
4.30pm – 5.30pm Come & Go as you wish -  
Reflective Holy Communion  
Christmas Day Monday 25th December  
10.00am – All Age Celebration

### St John's Church Burnhope

Sunday 24th December  
2.00pm – Crib Service  
Sunday 31st December  
10.00am – Joint Eucharist at St John's celebrating  
St John's day

### All Saints Church Lanchester

Sunday 17th December  
6.00pm – Nine Lessons and Carols  
Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December  
8.00am Eucharist in Traditional Language  
10.30am Joint Eucharist at All Saints  
11.30pm – Midnight Mass  
Christmas Day Monday 25th December  
10am – Celebration Eucharist for Christmas Day

### Churches Together Events

Christmas Eve 24th December 6.00pm  
Carols on Lanchester Green, with Lanchester Band



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## Thursday Club

There was a slight hiccup with our November afternoon meeting - our speaker failed to materialise due to a very sad circumstance.

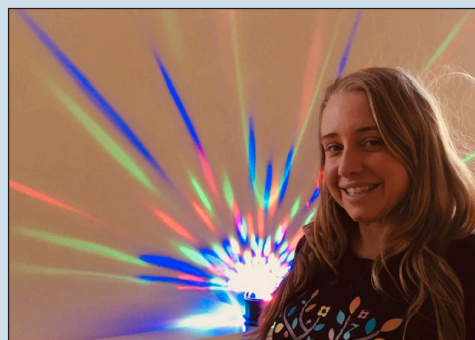
All was soon forgiven as we began with a chat about our favourite books. These ranged from early memories - Peter Pan and Heidi and The Famous Five to modern day comparisons with Netflix and BBC adaptations. For example, the Herriot books and the Vera series which do have a sprinkling of poetic licence applied.

The Sycamore Gap by L.J. Ross is also a current favourite with many of our group. An author from Weardale, Carol Graham, is coming to talk to us in March next year and she was mentioned as a recommended good read.

Following this a lovely young lady came through from another room in the community centre to soothe us with soothing music, colourful lights and her voice giving directions for controlled breathing and relaxation. Hayley (below) runs a playgroup for young mums and their babies on Thursdays, so we were very lucky to be able to have her help at such short notice.

We then shared tea and coffee and biscuits and had a good old chat with our friends.

**Jan Vasey**



## SteelTown HANDYMAN

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## Lanchester Parish Council

### Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held in Lynwood House on Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 7.00pm

**Minutes – Ordinary Meeting 10 October – approved.**

**Police Reports** – The PACT report for October was received.

#### **Correspondence**

**Letter from resident** – Kitswell Bike Track – Councillors considered a request received from a resident about the maintenance of the bike track – a site visit to be arranged.

**Clerk & Councils Direct Magazine November** – received.

**Durham County Councillors – An update was received on:**

The recent flood - County Councillor Oliver is arranging a site visit with Durham County Council to walk around the village and discuss all aspects of the flood.

**Information on road works** – County Councillor Oliver is going to arrange for the Parish Council to start receiving information about road works in the area.

**Greencroft Forest Park** – Councillors discussed the proposal. Councillors are advised to send their individual responses to the Pryor & Rickett Silviculture.

**Lanchester Community Centre** – A request for a donation to the Community Centre was received – Clerk to send the forms over to the Community Centre and if they would like us to consider their donation this will be done at the next March meeting.

**Christmas Light Switch on Event** – Councillors were given an update on the event, everything in hand and going according to plan.

**Flooding** – the recent flood was discussed in length. A meeting has been arranged in December with Durham County Council and the Environment Agency to discuss the issue further.

**2023/24 Pay Agreement** - Councillors were informed that the National Salary Award for 2023/24 had been agreed and would be applied to salaries.

**Poppy Wreath** – agreed that a donation of £100.00 is made to the Royal British Legion

**Financial report** – approved.

**Accounts for Payment** – approved.

## Post-flood drain inspection

On a sunny but cold day Brian Weatherall from Durham County Council Drains department met with Councillor Doug Oliver, Paul Jackson, and me to talk about the current situation following the recent flood in the village. The two drains on Front Street in front of the bridal shop were discussed and a suggestion was made that it would be better if it was one larger drain rather than two small ones. We all agreed that the work that had already been done on Front Street and Newbiggin Lane with extra gullies and drains was working well.

The culvert on the Alderdene burn was viewed and Brian stated that this was a high priority for his department. Work should proceed in the near future to improve this. The drains around The Square and Church View were discussed with suggestions made for more drains and to check that all the drains were logged on the DCC records. The work on Station Road had been difficult because it was required in the middle of the road and rather than close the road, they had managed to complete the work using only traffic lights. Once finished they then continued up Cadger Bank checking all the drains. The channels at the bottom of Maiden Law Bank and Peth Bank were also discussed. Thanks must go to Councillor Doug Oliver for organising the meeting with Brian Weatherall who I am sure better understands the situation in Lanchester.

**Eric Hoplewhite**



Right: Brian Weatherall, Paul Jackson, and Councillor Doug Oliver in Front Street



## Willow Burn Hospice's Nurses and Carers Christmas Fayre

Willow Burn Hospice's Nurses and Carers Christmas Fayre proved a huge success once again this year for visitors - young and not quite so young. It raised nearly £5,000 – described by the chair of Willow Burn as “Brilliant!”. There was a large assortment of craft and food stalls, tombolas, raffles, Santa and even a festive pony called Amey. The Potting Shed was decked out as a Christmas gift shop and the weather was kind enough to allow some visitors to use the picturesque gardens.

The many items of food on sale, sweet and savoury, seemed to be well received by the crowds who flocked to Willow Burn to get into the festive spirit.

Fundraiser Ali English said she was delighted with the turn-out and added: “All proceeds from our Christmas Fayre go to fund the vital services provided by the Willow Burn Nursing and Care Team.

“It is a wonderful turn-out, local people have come along to support Willow Burn.”

Ali said many of the items on sale on the stalls were made by Willow Burn day patients and also by nursing staff.”

**Neil McKay**



## Notes from the House

The last few weeks have flown by as the nights have drawn in and the Christmas displays appear in the shops. Less than a fortnight ago, I was asked to join The Cabinet as Minister without Portfolio and Chairman of the Conservative Party. While I'll

continue serving the people of Lanchester, Burnhope, and the surrounding villages as dutifully as ever, this is a massive change to my role in Westminster.

There are three elements of my new job that will change and are important for you. Firstly, it gives North West Durham a voice at the top table. I will see the Prime Minister, all of his top team, as well as the Chancellor and other big figures on a regular basis. This will enable me to use my voice to fight for North West Durham at the very highest levels of Government. Secondly, as Minister without Portfolio, I can operate across Government. This is not a role that is particularly high-profile and not many people know what it does. I do not look after one specific Government Department but that means I am not limited to one specific policy area. This means I see all the major policy changes in domestic legislation, from trade to criminal justice while they're being worked on in the background.

Finally, as Chairman of the Conservative Party, I will help run the Party. As part of this, I will be speaking to people from across the country to hear their views, knocking on doors and pounding the pavements as well as going on the airwaves more often. However, one of my duties that will impact you the most is that I will play a leading role in organising the next General Election. Whether you vote for the Conservative Party or not, this is a massively important part of the democratic process - a pluralistic democracy where ideas are challenged on both sides is important to us all.

Rest assured; the most important part of my job is still being Member of Parliament for North West Durham. It is one I love and cherish and what everything else rests on. Without the faith placed in me by you in 2019, none of this would be possible. This new additional role will enable me to do even more for people in our area. So, please if you have anything you feel I could help you out with, do not hesitate to get in touch. I'm as accessible as ever and always here to help. There is lots of work to do and - as ever - I'll be getting my head down and getting on with the job.

**Richard Holden**



## Cricket News

The book capturing the 50-year history of the club is nearing completion and in order to gauge the interest for printing purposes, anyone who has not already done so, should contact me to let me know...mcconnellaj63@gmail.com...it isn't a binding decision but it will determine how many copies we get printed.

The book will be around 250 pages long, includes photos and lots of lists and stats, as well as revealing some things that you probably didn't know about the club and giving a year by year run down of the cricket where possible. The book will cost £12.50 with postage to be added if it is to be posted out.

### Hall of Fame

#### Dawn Fairlamb

Dawn very sadly passed away on 9th November and is greatly missed. She was Club President for four years and for over those years, with Peter her husband, avidly watched and supported the teams at home games whilst also helping on the bar. She was interested in the growth and development of young people and kindly donated the most improved player trophy. She was a very strong supporter of women's cricket and was delighted to see the strides made by the club to establish girls' teams.

#### Anne McPhail

During the last 25 years, Anne, has always shown a willingness to help, supported by husband Steve and has worked tirelessly to ensure the club is a welcoming place to visitors and members. She has spent many hours, ensuring the club is 'spick and span' or running the bar and helping with major events such as beer festivals and now the 50th celebrations. She has taken time to get to know people and then help to integrate new members into the club.

#### Michael Dodd

Mick played Junior and Senior Cricket from the mid 70s into the early 90s. In that time as Club Secretary and 2nd team captain his enthusiasm and dedication helped drive the club forward. Mick was a determined cricketer always ready to take responsibility and lead his teams from the front. He was always ready to take his turn on the bar, an example of him being a club man through and through.

#### Darren Wingfield

Darren started playing cricket at Lanchester as an under 13. He played through all the age groups through to senior cricket where he captained the third team to a league and cup double. As a committee member his commitment to the club has facilitated its substantial growth. Darren instigated the club's series of beer festivals, spending many hours securing sponsors, sourcing beers and equipment and ensuring the events ran safely and smoothly.

#### John Bell

John had the pleasure of bowling the first ball of competitive cricket at Ashley Park even if it was for Burnhope Juniors. Several years later he joined Lanchester as a player and groundsman. Very fortunately for the club he has been ever present since that day. Bowling tirelessly from the river end with his left arm over, he picked up many wickets, and he has maintained the ground and prepared excellent wickets ever since. His service was recognised in 2019 when he was presented with an OSCA at Durham CCC. We thank you John for your many hours of dedication to many things in the club.

**Andrew McConnell**



## Lanchester Bowling Club - Further Reflections - Angry Men

When most people think of lawn bowls, they imagine a genteel game played on a balmy afternoon by elderly people dressed in white clothing. This is an image reinforced by films and clips from the fifties and sixties although the comedy "Blackball" did try its hardest to dispel this myth.

To a certain degree, however, these clichés are true. After all, the majority of bowls players in our leagues are on the wrong side of sixty and I've even come across players in their nineties! That's not to say much younger players can't participate and, indeed when they do, they tend to excel. It's also still regarded as a genteel game - players shake hands at the beginning of a match and wish their opponents well (even if they don't really mean it!). They applaud good play, congratulate success and, win or lose, shake hands at the end. In most games there is good banter between the players, many of whom you've got to know well over the years. If tea is provided during or after the match, then this socialising is extended.

Thankfully the need for all whites, however, has now gone. Trousers (and even shorts) are grey in most leagues and Lanchester play in white casual shirts with blue and yellow collars and a badge showing All Saints church. If Mike, our chairman, had his way we'd play in even jazzier shirts emblazoned with Lanchester Lightning or some such alliterative name.

I used the phrase "most games" above, but politeness and laughter are not always the order of the day. A few years ago, when I was a novice bowler, I watched Lanchester in a cup final played on a very wet day in Dipton. On one of the rinks the opposition skip became increasingly irate with his own players as the game progressed, culminating in him shouting abuse at them because they struggled to do exactly as he asked them. As the air turned blue you could tangibly feel the resentment towards him growing.

Sometimes the abuse is aimed at the opposition. I was playing second in a triples match at Sherburn earlier in the season. Being second player, it was my job at the culmination of each end to consult with my opposite number as to who had won the end and by how many shots. At first, I counted two, but then noticed the wood I was standing beside also scored and

agreed that we'd in fact scored three. I duly shouted this down to our skip so he could mark the score card appropriately. We then proceeded to play the next end. As we changed over so the skips could bowl their woods, I noticed the opposition skip making a beeline towards me shouting angrily and gesticulating wildly. As his face turned puce he shouted that I was in the wrong and was going to "report me." Who to, he didn't say. Apparently, according to him, I'd declared two shots which he'd written on his scorecard so couldn't then declare three. Amazingly, I kept my temper. Even though the other four players, including the two on his team, insisted I'd only ever declared three he continued ranting and scowled at me on every end change. Needless to say, he didn't shake my hand at the end of the game.

Stuart Lee, one of Lanchester's committee, tells an equally bizarre tale. "One instance that springs to mind was in our game against Mainsforth when the opposition skip was so competitive, bearing in mind he was well into his eighties. We were leading 18-16 at the commencement of the final end and we had a wood about six inches from the jack when their skip decided to fire. [This is where a player bowls his wood with force, taking away the bias and hoping to scatter the head in their favour]. His wood careered down the rink missing everything, smacked the backboard and then ricocheted back onto the green, landing against the jack. I picked his wood up and placed it off the green as, by the rules, it was dead having left the top of the green. He literally ran down the green and vociferously argued that his wood should still count despite leaving the green. I now smile when I think of the game and how some people never lose their competitive edge and are prepared to bend the rules to gain an advantage."

Notice that it tends to be skips who lose it; the saying: "If your skip wants an opinion, he'll give it to you" certainly holds true. It's Christmas and there's still time to get the bowler in your life

that bowls related gift. It's easy enough to find mugs, personalised towels and bowling cloths, key rings, tee shirts, drinks bottles and even vacuum flasks. I should know, I've been given them all in the last few years! Merry Christmas to all, from all at Lanchester Bowling Club.

**Bob Cuthbertson**



### Community Centre News



**We would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and hope that you all have a very happy and healthy 2024. We would also like to say a big 'Thank You' to our committee, volunteers and everyone who has supported us throughout the year by attending events, giving us financial support and even 'likes' on Facebook.**

The beginning of a new year is always a time for making resolutions about improving our health and fitness, expanding our interests, learning something new and meeting new friends. Your Community Centre is the ideal place for you to do this, we are local, friendly and have great facilities! There are lots of activities and events to choose from for all ages, abilities and interests and all in the heart of our lovely village.

Do you have any family occasions or parties planned for the coming year? Does your business need a conference/training/meeting room? The Community Centre is a really great venue. The office is staffed Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am-1.15pm. On Tuesday and Thursdays, it's 9am-3pm. If you have any enquiries about any of the activities or clubs available or you want to know more about hiring our brilliant venue, please get in touch on 01207 521275 or drop in and have a chat it will be good to meet you!

**To keep up to date with what's going on check out our Information Point; follow us on Facebook 'Lanchester Community Centre' or check out our website - <https://lanchestercc.co.uk/> Scan the QR code for our website.**



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