

THE VILLAGE VOICE

Issue No 1 Volume 10

Lanchester, January 2009

For contact information, see page 2

KITSWELL PARK PROGRESS

You will know from previous editions of the 'Village Voice' about the ambitious plans to improve Kitswell Park by the addition of a bike track and play equipment, together with cricket nets and an electronic scoreboard for the cricket club. You will have read how the young people of Lanchester tried out other bike tracks in the area, decided on the design that they wanted, developed plans with Simon Green and were awarded a grant of £40,000 - and how the Parish Council

contributed the land at Kitswell Road and another £40,000 to make the whole scheme possible.

Well, in January the project was given planning permission and construction has now started! The contractor is G & B Civil Engineering. Their Director, Mr Dave Norcott, hopes they will complete the work by the end of March.

Mr Norcott is arranging for our young people to take their bikes onto the site sometime in February, when the humps and bumps have been shaped,



Soon the track takes shape

to try them out and make sure they are right. If anyone would like to take part in this "test-driving"

of the track please ring Mike Gladstone on 528114 straight away. Arrangements are being

made for a grand opening of the refurbished park. Look out for details in next month's Village Voice.

BRASS BAND CAROLS



Some members of Lanchester Brass Band are pictured in Newbiggen Lane during a tour of the village on 19th December. The tour was in thanks to the people of Lanchester who support the band.

TO GRIT OR NOT TO GRIT

Many people in Lanchester, especially those trapped in their houses when the roads and pavements outside their houses were a sheet of ice for two weeks, will be wondering who to turn to for help.

As recounted in the Parish Council report, people asked the Village Handyman if he would grit the pavements, especially in Front Street. Naturally he consulted his employers, the Parish Council, for permission to do this.

In its turn the Parish Council consulted its insurers, Allianz. The answer was that gritting pavements and roads was the job of the County Council. If the Parish took on the County's job, they might be liable if someone claimed they had not done

it efficiently enough and sued after an accident. On the other hand, if they did nothing, they could not be blamed.

The Village Voice consulted the County Council to ask if they would grit Lanchester's pavements. No, was the answer. What about the roads, which are the responsibility of the County. No, their policy was only to grit main roads and bus routes. The route used by the Village Bus, for some reason, does not count as a bus route.

However, anyone can apply to the County to have a box of grit placed in their street, so that householders themselves can grit the pavements. Ring the Highways Action Line, 0191 3706000. If you do so, please tell the Village Voice.



Dear Village....

The views expressed in letters to the editor are not necessarily those of the newspaper, the editor or persons working for the newspaper.

Dear Sirs,

On Monday 17th November, my bag was snatched in Deneside and left me traumatised.

At my age I am now afraid of being out in the dark and have decided to leave work as I could not continue to do the job.

I would like to thank all my customers for their friendship over the last 10 years.

I have seen children grow up, get married and have their own families. It has been a delight to attend birthdays, weddings, christenings, etc. I will miss you all and although it is a little late, I wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year.

God bless, Alma Gardiner

TO CONTACT THE VILLAGE VOICE

By email:

lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk (please include Village Voice in the Subject line)

By post:

The Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0JQ

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THE VILLAGE VOICE

IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

Dear Sirs,

I went to the National Blood Service donor session held at Lanchester Club in January. I had an appointment and was in and out in about 45 minutes.

I have been a donor since I was 18, but lapsed a bit when my children were younger. However due to good publicity, NHS records and because I feel it's a good thing to do for others, I am once again a regular donor. It seems however that the number of donors has fallen in this area.

The system has improved for donors over the years. I am able to choose my next appointment time at each donor session. I am sent a reminder letter with a consent form nearer the time, so no forgetting! Sometimes I get a phone call to nudge me to really make sure I will attend!

On arrival, there is a selection of current magazines to read. Donors are called to answer the general health questions and have the quick finger prick to test the blood. Once on the bed, the insertion of the needle doesn't really hurt if you relax. The staff are always efficient, helpful and friendly and there's

time for a chat once the equipment is in place. After your donation you sit up and rest, then you are encouraged to have a cup of tea or coffee and some lovely (Bronte) biscuits, for about ten minutes. It's lovely to bump into old friends, chat with other donors and take a well earned break. It was in chatting to the staff that we discovered that because donors are so few 'some of the old rules have changed'. Many people at one time couldn't give blood due to medication or medical conditions. It appears that scientific advancements and necessity have allowed some changes!

So I urge you if you are a lapsed donor, thought you were unable to donate anymore or have just turned 18 why not call 0845 7711711 to speak to National Blood Service staff or check out www.blood.co.uk for information. The next session is Wednesday 22nd April, 2.45pm - 7pm at Lanchester Club, Newbiggen Lane.

I know time is precious, but so is blood.

Tina Patterson

Dear Sirs,

We in the Lions Club appreciate very much the coverage given by the Village Voice of our fundraising events such as the Carnival and the Bonfire. But how we use the money we raise is equally important. In 2008 we spent £4,225 helping groups and individuals both here and abroad. For the benefit of your readers here is a brief summary of how the money was distributed.

£2,100 paid for a variety of 'treats' such as a very enjoyable Christmas lunch for 100 pensioners, a bus trip for pensioners and donations to 7 local Schools towards their Christmas activities and other projects. A further £1,200 was shared between 11 local groups and appeals such as the Scouts' Gang Show held at Stanley. Finally £925 was donated to 6 overseas projects to help towards overcoming blindness and the lack of clean water and to provide aid in areas hit by natural disasters.

At our January 2009 meeting we identified more groups and projects

where a donation will make a difference. We earmarked £2,200 to spend on them in the near future. It means that the Lions Club will have to start raising money again to replenish the coffers. We look forward to your continuing support and help. A date for your diaries - the 2009 Carnival will be on Saturday 20th of June.

If anyone feels they would like to know more about our activities please give me a call on 520087.

Brian Naylor

Lions Club Secretary

COMMUNITY DRAW

The winning number for December 2008 is 73. The draw was made by G McGee of Richmond Fellowship.

FOUND

Found in a pub car park in Lanchester in the New Year, 3 hand held console games. Have you been looking for them everywhere? Did you perhaps drop them whilst getting into the car? Ring 520924.

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JOHN AND ANN ARNELL

John and Ann Arnell of Broadoak Drive, celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at Lanchester Social Club on the evening of Saturday 20th December 2008. They were married on Saturday 20th December 1958 and their celebrations marked the precise day they had been married for 50 years. Friends and relations

helped John and Ann rejoice and enjoy this event including The Best Man (Alfred Lant), two of the three original Bridesmaids (Victoria Johnson and Vee Wintrell), many of the original guests at their wedding in 1958, John and Ann's three sons (John, Brian and Derek) and John and Ann's various grandchildren.

A buffet was laid on and this included their cake which carried a photograph of their original wedding day in 1958.

The evening was a tremendous success and John and Ann wish to thank everyone who attended for their presence and everyone who gave them such wonderful gifts.



John and Ann pose for a photograph showing them cutting their cake with their photograph on it from their wedding day fifty years ago.

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

A comparatively mild Christmas Eve drew a large gathering to the Village Green for the Churches Together Carol Service. Canon Peter Waterhouse opened proceedings with a short address followed by a prayer. He handed over to David Hughes who led the service. His theme this year was 'Emmanuel - God is with us'. In each carol David emphasized a line for the congregation to think about at Christmas. The singing was accompanied by Lanchester Brass Band. Canon Bob Spence read a traditional Christmas Reading, and the Reverend Gavin Hume gave the final Blessing.



The children who sang 'Away in a Manger' so well



Some of the congregation on the Green

HOSPICE

The sum raised by Lanchester library for the Willow Burn Hospice as part of the 'Passionate About Health' campaign has reached £1,044.

After an initial launch involving Hospice staff there has been a concert by 'Young at Heart', coffee mornings and a sale of books, many donated by the public. Library staff would like to thank all those who have contributed.

PLAYGROUP

Lanchester Playgroup and Tiny Tots would like to thank all the businesses and shops who, very generously, donated prizes for their Christmas raffle. They would also like to thank all those people who bought the raffle tickets, and of course all those people who sold them. After expenses, a profit of £377 was made for Playgroup funds.

Liz Smith

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CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

The carol concert which is organised every December by the Male Voice Choir in collaboration with the Choral and Operatic Society was held this year in the Roman Catholic Church of All Saints on Monday December 22nd. The formula is traditional, with the congregation enjoying a concert from the best musical talent in the area, but also participating in the singing of the great traditional carols. Canon Robert Spence welcomed those present to his church and gave the blessing, and Canon

Spence, Canon Peter Waterhouse and the Reverend Gavin Hume told the Christmas story through bible readings. As we have come to expect, the two choirs were well rehearsed and in good voice, modulating from slower and reverend songs early in the evening to a faster tempo beginning with The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy from the Male Voice Choir, the lively Mary Had a Baby from the Operatic Society leading up to the cheerful Nowell for the Merrie Citie by the Choir. It is always a pleasure to hear the two choirs

together, and on this occasion they joined to sing Come Now With Awe early in the evening and preceded the final Hark The Herald Angels Sing with a powerful combined Lo He Comes With Clouds Descending. The Choir was conducted by Harry Carr, the Operatic by David Hughes, they were accompanied by Noreen Bridgewater and Lilian Dixon respectively, and Bill Gray at the organ accompanied the communal singing. A retiring collection raised the sum of £390 for Willowburn Hospice.



Lanchester Male Voice Choir and the Choral and Operatic Society join for the Celebration of Christmas

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE - PARISH CHURCH



A moving service was held at the Parish Church on the Sunday before Christmas, conducted by Canon Peter Waterhouse. Some of the congregation holding their Christingles.

LANCHESTER NURSERIES CHRISTMAS FAIR



Lanchester Choral and Operatic Society sing their hearts out at Lanchester Nurseries Craft Fair with a collection for Willow Burn Hospice

THE LITTLE ANGEL

A delightful production of the Nativity was performed by KS1 children of Lanchester EP School. The costumes were beautiful, some fine acting, the narrations clear, and singing was excellent. The little girl who sang the solo pieces was quite exceptional, not only in voice, but also in confidence. It was a fun Nativity in which even Santa Claus was included,



The Little Angel - a Nativity by children from the EP School

arriving with all the toys. All the hard work put into Children, staff and the performance certainly audience enjoyed it all. paid off.

ALL SAINTS CAROLS



All Saints primary school celebrated Christmas with a traditional carol concert with carols and readings

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BRAES OF DERWENT BOXING DAY HUNT

Large crowds gathered at the Queens Head for the traditional Boxing Day Hunt. Riders and spectators enjoyed mulled wine and bacon sandwiches provided by the Queens Head before the start.

The Master of the Hunt addressed his followers with a succinct speech thanking the Queens Head for their hospitality and asking members to support the establishment. Once again he outlined the importance of the meeting and robustly spoke about continuing the efforts to repeal the Hunting Act. With that out of the way the horses and hounds set off. One rider unluckily fell off his horse on the sharp turn right out of the Queens car park, as the horse slipped, but fortunately he did not seem to be injured.



A rider trying to control the horse in order to re-mount after the fall. The picture shows the consternation of some of the on-lookers.

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BUSES TO NEWCASTLE

A service of two buses an hour now runs from Lanchester to Newcastle. This was announced at the January meeting of the Partnership and came as a surprise to many, although it has been running since October. The buses are alternately X30 and X31. They are no longer called express buses (they never were), but 'Swift', and take an

hour and six minutes for the journey. The first one from Lanchester is 6.45am Monday to Friday, and 7.30am on Saturday, and the last bus back is 6.20pm Monday to Friday and 6.15 on Saturdays. The programmes are on the internet under Go North East. Click on the bus number to see the timetable.

THE X-MAS FACTOR



*Children from the EP School performing the Nativity -
The X-mas Factor*

This was certainly a big difference! About 130 children from the EP School took part in this large scale production, to a capacity audience. It was, of course, a very topical theme with the 'X Factor' finishing a few days ago.

Several of the cast had to pretend to have the 'X' Factor within the play, and one of two were

bordering on it themselves, in their live performances. The music and singing was lively and the costumes colourful.

What mainly came over was the enjoyment and humour, excellently portrayed in this fine extravaganza. The children were word perfect and the narrators, aided by microphones, were loud and clear.

The Play/Musical was very well supported by a Powerpoint presentation on screen behind the cast, along with background music and lighting effects, all achieved by a very talented 'Crew'. At the end of the performance the children sang enthusiastically to their audience with signing, concluding with 'Wish you a Merry Christmas'.

BOYS BRIGADE CHRISTMAS FLOAT

The Boys Brigade began their one hundred and twenty five years celebration with a Community Service Project. On

four nights before Christmas they toured the village with a sleigh, made by Eric Hepplewhite, on Ron Dixon's lorry,

complete with Santa and helpers, for 125 minutes each night, singing carols, playing music and giving out lollipops to children.



Santa on the Boys Brigade float illuminated and mounted on its lorry ready for one of its four journeys around the Village.

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LANCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 13TH JAN 2009

Police Report for December

Rowdy Nuisance 4, Vehicle Nuisance 2, Theft 2, Burglary 2, Vehicle Crime 1, Criminal Damage 1. There were several road traffic collisions; the Police ask for drivers to be vigilant with regard to black ice and winter road conditions.

A sighting of a vehicle, which was suspected of being used by a wanted burglar, led to his later arrest and his associate making himself available to police; enquiries are continuing.

PCSO Gray asked for Members' concerns. The main problem raised was inconsiderate, dangerous and illegal parking in the village. The police are going to be stricter in future with these drivers.

Extra bollards are to be erected in front of the hairdressers' as well as bike racks. The County Engineer is to take a traffic count at the crossing on Station Road. The speed sign on Durham Road is to be realigned.

Correspondence:

There were several letters from Durham County Council.

Water on Cadger Bank - the gullies had been jetted and the problem solved.

Countdown markers and relocation of speed visor sign on Durham Road. Countdown markers are not used in the County and the moving of the speed visor is in negotiation.

Exit from Park House on to Station Road - no mirrors are to be provided as it is considered that the give-way signs and the slow

traffic in the area make them unnecessary.

A letter including a consultation document regarding School A d m i s s i o n Arrangements was shown to Members.

Pedestrian Crossings - traffic counts will be made on Cadger Bank and Front Street.

LINK Newsletter - Volume 1. Cllr Burton explained the importance of the work of LINK in the Community.

Greencroft Play Area. A Solicitor is to prepare the documents (paid for by Greencroft) to transfer the appropriate piece of land from the Parish Council to them.

Kitswell Road Play Area:

Progress Report. Work began on 12th January and is expected to continue for approximately 8 weeks,

from 8 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday. Letters have been sent to residents in the immediate vicinity. A Construction, Design and Management Co-ordinator has to be appointed as work exceeds more than 500 hours; Southern Green are seeing to this. The work will be inspected by Members and children will test the track in mid-February.

Trees to be planted round the edge of the track have been delivered and signs have been ordered.

Gritting Requirements:

On checking the Parish Council's Third Party Liability insurance, gritting is not recommended as employees of the Council could not grit.

The County Council is willing to provide grit bins but the Parish would have to provide the salt. If no action is taken, then the Parish Council is not liable, but if action is taken and some accident occurs through incorrect action, then the Council is liable.

The Highways Authority can be requested to provide bins and grit in streets where needed. Residents should do this through a Parish Councillor.

Press/Publicity File

The Lead Officer showed Members a file of press cuttings and publicity received relating to Lanchester and the Parish Council. This is necessary for the Parish Council's application to be a Quality Parish Council.

Newsletter

The Lead Officer showed Members the draft February issue and asked for their comments at or before the next Meeting.

Financial Information and Accounts for Payment. These were considered and approved.

Chairperson's Announcements. A copy of posters regarding meetings relating to the proposed Academies in Stanley and Conssett were distributed to Members. These posters can be seen in various places in the Village.

Date of Next Meeting.

Tues, 10th Feb. at 7.15 in the Conference Room, Park House, Lanchester.

PLANNING MEETINGS - DEC AND JAN

Planning applications considered at the 15th December meeting-

i. Tree works and felling of 27 trees at The Deanery, Lanchester. Members raised concern over the large number of trees. RESOLVED - Clerk writes to the District Council stating that The Deanery is a listed building. Members requested that the District Council's arboriculturist meets with the applicant to offer advice. Members also request that a replacement of like for like is enforced on any trees felled.

ii Crown reduction, pruning and reshaping of two sycamores and two ash trees at 39 Humberhill Drive. RESOLVED - That the Clerk writes to the County Council requesting that the arboriculturist from the District Council assesses the trees.

iii Erection of two storey front extension at Larkrise, Woodlands Hall, Knitsley. RESOLVED - that the Clerk writes to the District Council asking if the proposed development falls within the allowed size and scale.

iv Erection of single storey rear extension at 8 Elmfield, Lanchester. RESOLVED

that no objection be raised. **Decisions of Derwentside District Council**

i. Proposed repositioning of stable block, change of approved four live/work units to four dwellings and the change of one workshop to a double garage at Middle Newbiggen Farm. Planning permission granted subject to conditions.

ii. Kitswell Park Development - Parish Council project. DDC have informed the Parish Council that due to their omission to present the police report at the Planning Meeting on 4th December, the planning application for this project would be heard again on 8th January.

Planning Applications considered at the 6th January meeting:

i. Crown lifting of one lime and three poplar trees, reduce crown of one lime tree and felling of two lime trees at Lanchester RC School, Kitswell Road.

A letter received from Lanchester Partnership raised concerns over the application. Resolved: that the Clerk writes to the District Council stating that there was

concern about sufficient grounds for felling and that no objection would be raised to 'necessary' removal of trees as long as replacement trees are planted on the site.

ii Proposed erection of one dwelling at 24 Humberhill Drive, Lanchester.

A letter received from Lanchester Partnership raised concerns over the application and Christine Leverspoke under the public participation policy and raised concern over the style and fit of the proposals.

RESOLVED. That the Clerk writes to the District Council setting out the following objections: concern over the very tight fit on the site and the building to plot ratio; the proposed plans are out of keeping and inconsistent with nearby properties; the proposed 'sedum' roof will look out of place; the new dwelling would have no private amenity space. The planners' attention be drawn to the Village Design Statement where it refers to choice of materials and details of roofs.

iii Proposed erection of single storey rear extension at 18 Broad Oak Drive, Lanchester. RESOLVED - That no

objection be raised to the application.

iv. Proposed conversion of barn and former labourer's cottage to three holiday lets at Burn Hill Farm, Waskerley. RESOLVED - That no objection be raised but that planners' attention be drawn to the Village Design Statement guidelines and recommendations with regards to material, adaptations to old building and tourist development.

v. Proposed erection of kitchen extension, conservatory and double garage at Burn Hill Farm, Waskerley. RESOLVED - That the Clerk writes to the District Council stating concern at the excessive size of the garage/workshop in relation to the rest of the building and concern at the size of the extension on a residential development. Planners' attention to be drawn to the Village Design statement with regard to recommended materials and 'Buildings in the Countryside' which states 'Adaptation to be done with care, sensitivity and respect for the old buildings'.

PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Working with Young People

This was a very well-attended meeting, with 10 girls, 11 boys and 8 adults (including 2 guests). Mr Dave Norcott, the Contractor's Director for the bike track and play equipment project, and Simon Green, the Parish Council's Project Manager, talked about constructing it. Mr Norcott told our young people that half-way through the work (in February) they would be invited to look around, "test ride" the bike track and ask for any changes that they might consider necessary. They will also be asked to help with the tree planting.

Youth Club

The Youth Club is open again, so if you know any children of secondary school age who might find it fun please tell them that it is from 7.30pm until 9.00pm on Mondays in Croft View Hall. No-one responded to our appeal in last month's 'Village Voice' for help with supervision.

Village Bus

We asked last month if you wanted us to make any changes. There was only one suggestion - to take the route along West Drive - we have made that change.

Friends of the Fort

Last summer the Friends asked everyone please to help compile a catalogue of all the finds made at the fort. As a result they were shown a superb collection of Roman stones including a small altar, relief carvings of Hercules and Silvanus, and a curious stone, worn naturally by water into bumps and hollows which had been enhanced to look like a face and two wrought-iron stone-working tools.

If you, or someone you know, has a piece of pottery, metal or glass from the fort which may be Roman, please let the Friends of the Fort know and it will be properly recorded.

The Village Voice Page 9

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STAINED GLASS WINDOW INSTALLED AT EP SCHOOL

This wonderful new window has now been fitted in the corridor which used to be the old Junior Offices situated alongside the Junior Hall. This amazing piece of work was undertaken by Marilyn O'Keefe, who lives in the village and runs The Glass and Art Gallery in Consett. It is a joint project, funded both by the school and the Parish Church.

Jane Davis, Head Teacher of Lanchester EP Primary School commissioned Marilyn to work with some of the pupils from school,

in order to create a special prayer area where the children could go for some quiet time and to pray. Marilyn spent a day in the school, with a group of talented children who sketched, drew and painted many of their ideas which they wanted to be included in the window design. These were then taken away by Marilyn who drew upon the most popular ones and created a magnificent design.

The window is in six sections and depicts the following:

The Rainbow: peace, happiness, optimism

The Circle: the world

Hands: God, holding the whole world with love

The Cross: a cross and compass in one, extending to all corners of the world

The Heart: love to the world

Boy A Girl: taken from the children's drawing, in their style

Books: the love of learning

Sun Rays: life, positive attitude, happiness

Water: life, the river at the bottom of the school field.



The beautiful stained glass window at the EP School

This window is certainly worth looking at! The school intends to hold a

Community Day, when all will be welcome to see the work of art for themselves!

A HARD DAY'S NIGHT IN LANCHESTER

It's certainly wasn't a *Silent Night* in Lanchester on Monday 22nd December when *came all ye faithful* Beatles fans to the Community Centre for an evening devoted to the music of The Fab 4. These Beatles, the youngest professional Beatles

tribute band, stopped off to make a special Christmas appearance in Lanchester, home of their leader, Adam Hastings. Just before 7.30pm Adam and his colleagues, Alex Dee, Richard Petch and Ali Mac donned their costumes and transformed into their

alter egos, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr respectively.

The band took the audience on an evocative journey through the early years of the Beatles music including hits like *Hard Day's Night*, *She Loves You*, *Can't Buy Me Love*, *Help...* in fact, just about every popular Beatles tune you can remember. Before the concert Adam said, "We hope the audience will lose themselves in the music and forget it's not the original Beatles they're listening to. We've spent hours painstakingly reproducing every chord, note, vocal nuance and

mannerism of John, Paul, George and Ringo. We don't just sing the songs, we become The Beatles for the evening. Even our banter in between numbers stays in character. We look like and sound just like the real thing." And it certainly did. Adam, who also leads his own jazz quartet, has been all over the world in recent months, including Russia, Spain, and Ireland and has found the welcome and response in each venue to be equally rapturous and enthusiastic. He added: "It doesn't matter where you go, the Beatles are a legend and everyone,

young and old loves the music."

These Beatles have a prestigious concert date in May next year. On the 5th they are performing with the 33 piece Customs House Concert Orchestra at the Customs House theatre in South Shields where they will reproduce the full orchestral renditions of numbers from the Sgt. Pepper, Abbey Road and other later Beatles Albums.

The audience in Lanchester loved it. So much so that the boys are arranging a second visit in the spring. Watch out for the date and don't miss it.

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These Beatles - a Tribute Group

"REDUCED HANDEL" PROVIDES ENHANCED ENJOYMENT



The Reduced Handel Company (l to r front) Rebecca Lancelot, Emily Brown, Kathryn Crowder, Mary Tyers, Jason Walsh, Andrew Fowler, James Morgan, Michael Hickman, (l to r rear) Jonathan Stokoe, Nicholas Lawrence, Eileen Evans, Gregory Pullen, Ian Brunt

As 8.00 pm on Wednesday 17th December approached, the atmosphere in a packed Lanchester Methodist Chapel was expectant. Andrew Fowler and his guests were to perform Handel's *Messiah* in aid of Mel and Sue Somersall's *Appeal for the Mercy Ships' Mission*.

On other occasions, Andrew and guests had sung in the chapel, and audiences had been extremely appreciative of the excellent singing. "The Reduced Handel Company", appropriately renamed for the occasion, were to present an appropriate offering for Christmas time: "The *Messiah*", but with just eight singers and five musicians. This would contrast with the 400+ performers involved in the 1785 Anniversary performance, but would reveal the detail and colour of Handel's choral and orchestral writing. It had all begun some ten days previously. A discussion of African need was followed by an offer of musical fund-raising to a Christmas theme. The necessary players were available. Tickets and programmes were swiftly printed, an evening rehearsal sung and all services offered "gratis" in support of the Appeal. The *Messiah* would be performed by a

choir of eight singers. *Sopranos* Rebecca Lancelot and Emily Browne, *Contraltos* Kathryn Crowder and Mary Tyers, *Tenors* Jason Walsh and Andrew Fowler (also Musical Director) and *Basses* James Morgan and Michael Hickman would sing the choral and solo parts. A string quartet of *violins* (Jonathan Stokoe and Nicholas Lawrence), *viola* (Eileen Evans) and *cellist* Gregory Pullen, supported by Ian Brunt on *harpsichord*, would provide the music.

The prospect of this production had clearly struck a chord with the residents of Lanchester and surroundings. The Chapel was packed, with not a seat spare, as the musicians and singers took their places at the front to welcoming applause.

From then on, between the opening instrumental *Sinfonia* until the short interval, the audience listened, in mesmerised and appreciative silence, as the fine detail of the piece was revealed in the delicate interplay between the orchestra and the singers and between the solo and the choral work. The final note of "O Thou That Tellest Glad Tidings to Zion" faded to an silence before the delighted audience burst into loud and prolonged applause

as the performers took a well-deserved break.

The re-appearance of the performers provoked a further outburst of applause before the audience settled into a respectful and anticipatory silence, to be mesmerised again by the beauty of the music and the talent of the artists. "Airs", "Recitatives", "Choruses" and orchestral pieces followed on in a delightful sequence of musical excellence, telling the Christmas Story, until, all too soon, "The Hallelujah Chorus", followed by the "Amen", heralded the end of the performance.

For a moment, the auditorium remained mesmerised, the music still delighting, and then it exploded into deafening applause. Time and again the artists acknowledged the applause. After the artists finally managed to take their leave, the applause continued, demanding that the performers return to receive further accolades. There can be no doubt that the performance had been an outstanding musical success.

It proved also outstandingly successful in raising £1,800 for the Mercy Ships Appeal.

Stop Press: Mel and Andrew are hoping to present Parts 2 and 3 soon. Watch this space!

SILVERLEAF COUNSELLING

A new therapeutic counselling service has been launched in Lanchester. Silverleaf Counselling provides a comfortable and supportive atmosphere and utilises talking and creative therapy for adults and young people, and play therapy for children.

Principal Liane Collins said "We're all urged to look after our hearts but we rarely take the opportunity to look after our minds. Imagine a time given, just to you, where someone will truly listen, non-judgementally, with empathy and understanding. We aim to help, through grounded psychological perspectives, to explore solutions, examine choices, develop purpose and bravely take the chance to make changes". Visit her web-site on www.silverleafcounselling.co.uk or call 0844 209 0565 to find out more.



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A REALLY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS TREAT

On Saturday 13th December a group of us set off on a journey of nostalgia, travelling back in time and style to the 1920's; we were spending a day on board one of the romantic Venice Simplon Orient Express trains. The journey had been planned and booked way back in March so we were really looking forward to it. We had chosen to go on the Christmas outing to Chatsworth in the Peak District. Then of course we had the tantalising task of choosing the outfits. When it actually came down to it, the weather chose for us - the day arrived and fortunately we weren't snowed in, just rained on, but that was hardly going to dampen our spirits. We travelled in the Glamis carriage of the

luxurious Northern Belle along with a few other folk from Lanchester - Jennifer, June, Shirley and Anne plus Sandra and Peter Taylor. The carriages are sumptuously appointed plus they were decorated for Christmas. We were greeted with a bellini and shortly afterwards enjoyed a lovely 2-course brunch.

On arriving at Chesterfield station, we boarded coaches to take us on to Chatsworth passing on the way that devastatingly wicked-looking crooked spire, like something straight out of a Grimm's fairytale. We journeyed through the beautiful countryside of the Peak District National Park and finally arrived at Chatsworth which was decked out in all its

splendour. It seemed as if the world and his mother had descended on Chatsworth and we had arranged to meet up with Rhoda and Sonia. Thank heavens for mobile phones.

After a visit to Chatsworth's well-stocked farm shop it was back onboard our coach for the return journey to the train. Once on board we were this time greeted with a glass of champagne, closely followed by a superb four course evening meal with wine, coffee and mince pies.

All too soon we were in Durham, a magical day over, back to the realities of 2008. But, we have the memories, the photos and the mementos of a good day shared with friends. Marjorie, Eileen, Liz and Olive



Liz, Eileen, Marjorie and Olive starting the day in style with their bellinis

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AMIGOS CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year, just to make sure that we were all fit for anything, the festivities began with exercises with Sylvia - a really good way to warm up, particularly after consuming sherry and mince pies. We continued with some seasonal festive spirit from Geoff Hockaday which had us highly amused.

Next came a visit from Santa with presents and a hug for all. He hoped we would all have a really good Christmas - and after a hug from Santa, Mary Moralee said she definitely would!

We were now in the mood for some party games and Jill Gladstone took over with balloons and pass the parcel.

Finally we sang carols and the Rev. Gavin Hume called in to wish us well and give us a timely reminder of the true message of Christmas.

Throughout the morning we had welcoming Christmas tunes, jingle bells to herald Santa, an accompaniment to our carols, music for pass the parcel and everything in between, all thanks to Pam

Bygate - a real treasure. 11.15 soon came round, and it was time to get ready and make our way down to the Kings Head for our Christmas meal - a super venue right in the heart of our village, providing a grand setting for our party. Once again we enjoyed a lovely meal with wonderful service and we thank them for their hospitality.

Amigos has enjoyed a really good 2008 - we look forward to 2009 for another year of friendship and fun together.

Olive Simpkins



Doris Robinson enjoying sitting on Santa's knee

CHILDMINDING GROUP PARTY



Lancaster Childminding Group held their Christmas party in the playgroup room. The children, childminders and grandparents enjoyed making a beautiful banner wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. They played games and enjoyed pulling their gifts from a giant Christmas stocking.

PARISH CHURCH CHRISTMAS LUNCH

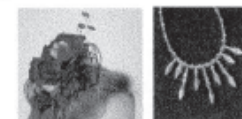
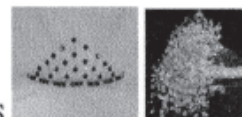


A hundred parishioners of All Saints RC church enjoyed an Italian Christmas lunch at Valentino's on 14th December

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CONCERT FOR GOA

A concert held in All Saints Parish Centre on Saturday 20th December raised the sum of £651. Donations are promised from Lions and Traidcraft, as well as Barclay's Bank

The musicians, who donated their services, included Michael Kelly, Chris Kelly, David and Chris Conlin, James McDermott and master of ceremonies Colm Doyle.

By running the raffle Lisa Simmonds and Lynn Whitfield earned matched funding from their

employers, Barclay's Bank. The event supports the work of Fathers Alex and Caetano in Goa. Both priests

have visited All Saints as guests of Canon Spence, and several visits by parishioners to Goa have been organised.



The musicians raising funds for Goa

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EP CAROL SERVICE

Every seat was taken and it was standing at the back of the Parish Church for this annual service, led by the Children of Year 5 at the EP School. The lovely singing of carols was interspersed with readings pertaining to the Nativity, which was performed in a more traditional style, completely in keeping with the surroundings.

More readings, carols and a different version of

'Away in a Manger' performed beautifully by the school choir followed. Readings continued with an explanation of the symbolism of the Christingle followed by a precision slow march three times around the Church by Year 3 children holding their Christingles. The atmosphere was calm, relaxed and peaceful.

Canon Peter Waterhouse, who had

previously thanked children for their prayers during his recent illness, gave a short, simple address which was meaningful to the children, before the final carol, 'O Come all Ye Faithful'. Head Teacher, Jane Davis, thanked everyone for their support and offered seasonal greetings. A retiring collection was donated to the Down's Syndrome Association.



Children from Year 3 at the EP School carefully carrying their Christingles

CAROLS AND HOT CHOCOLATE

There was a very good turnout of children, parents and others on the Village Green, for what has now become a traditional venue for the EP School to sing carols at Christmas. The atmosphere was extremely happy and it was over all too soon before heading back to the school hall for hot chocolate. This was prepared and served by the staff and eagerly consumed by the singers.



Cold, thirsty lads eagerly drink their hot chocolate

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CRABS AND CRAYFISH



Matt Bentley takes a close look at a Mitten Crab

Lanchester Wildlife Group were delighted to welcome Matt Bentley, Professor of Marine Biology at Newcastle University, to their January meeting. His subject was the arrival in England of two undesirable aliens.

Among species which have arrived here and outstayed their welcome are grey squirrels, which carry a virus harmless to themselves but harmful to the native red squirrel, and the Himalayan Balsam and rhododendron, both of which spread like wildfire and can smother native plants.

The American signal crayfish were brought here

for breeding in captivity about 1970, but escaped and are found throughout Southern England. They are much bigger than our native crayfish, who can not compete, and they also carry a disease which attacks native crayfish. They burrow into river banks, causing erosion, and are a nuisance to anglers by eating fish eggs. Getting rid of them by trapping is effective in removing the larger crayfish, but their young continue to breed and the trapping campaign must be prolonged to have any effect.

The Chinese mitten crab, so called for the woolly 'mittens' on its front

claws, probably arrived in ships' water ballast about 1935, and is well established in the Thames but has reached the Tyne. It lives in river water but mates in sea water, then migrates upstream. It is a voracious predator, eats fish-eggs and like the crayfish burrows into river banks. It can also walk up to 1000 metres on land.

There have been proposals to create a mitten crab 'fishery' in the Thames, as they are a popular food in the Far East and sell at \$30 a kilo, but they are known to harbour a parasite dangerous to humans.

Professor Bentley illustrated his talk with excellent illustrations.

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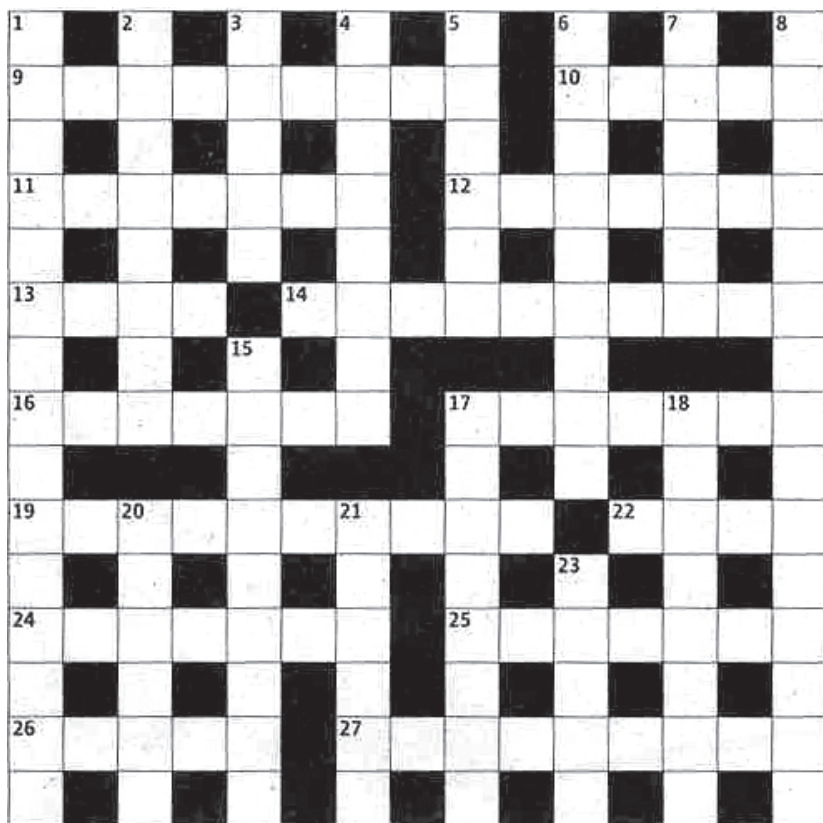
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CROSSWORD 33



ACROSS

- 9,11. Heavenly cover-up (7,2,3,4) 3. Point to down at heel track (5)
 10. Loyal tanks cover allied conference venue (5) 4. Writers circumscribe nine hills (8)
 11. See 9 5. Remove from brief facetious behaviour (6)
 12. Postal service (7) 6. Study of water resources (9)
 13. Quarrel (4) 7. Cat-walk A-line show covers basic material (6)
 14. Fundamental (10) 8. Dirty regal hobby is rip-off (8,7)
 16. Put out to test the water (7) 15. Returning, I dupe with rate covering reject (9)
 17. Tempting for colour (7) 17. Good Samaritan was no such thing (6-2)
 19. Fan (10) 18. Smear led to gemstones (8)
 22. Vote to stop (4) 20. Wobble (6)
 24. Ill-natured (7) 21. With the pawnbroker (2,4)
 25. Youngster we blame (3,4) 23. Five in rising reef excitement (5)
 26. Incompetent (5)
 27. Akela (3,6)

DOWN

1. I drop shaft speed to very low point (6,2,7)
 2. Sounds like incomer consumed to annoy (8)

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD 32

ACROSS

5. feisty
 6. cavity
 9. active
 10. militant
 11. flat
 12. disjointed
 13. crystal ball
 18. hobby-horse
 21. barb
 22. crossbow
 23. garter
 24. dreary
 25. flaunt

DOWN

1. sinister
 2. attend
 3. nail-bomb
 4. Milton
 5. fickle
 7. yonder
 8. amuse a crowd
 14. Schubert
 15. laburnum
 16. torrid
 17. ardent
 19. bushel
 20. Engels

CROSSWORD 32

There were just 12 entries in our competition last month. The winner in the draw was Suzanne Ward of Humberhill Drive who will receive the £10 prize. Test your skill on John Wilson's latest challenge.

Name _____
 Address _____

Please send your entries (by deadline date on back page) to The Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0JQ.

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SUDOKU

There is just one simple rule in Sudoku. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box. See next month for answers.

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

CAROLS AT WILLOW BURN

December 12th was a lovely day at Willow Burn Hospice for both patients and staff, as children from All Saints Primary School arrived with Head Teacher, Mrs Karen McKenna, to sing carols. After some enthusiastic, melodious

singing, the children enjoyed juice and biscuits while happily circulating among the residents and staff, chatting away informally.

One patient was so overwhelmed by the politeness, friendliness

and behaviour of the children that £1 was given to each child by that person.

Everyone at Willow Burn would like to thank Mrs McKenna and the children for such a memorable, seasonal visit.



The lovely carol singers from All Saints Primary School who entertained patients and staff at Willow Burn Hospice

LIBRARY CHRISTMAS CRAFTS



A Christmas craft session in the library was a great success, to such an extent that the production of angels, snowmen and smiley reindeer had to be divided between two workshops supervised by friendly librarians and mums. As can be seen, the results were excellent.

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ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S SUDOKU

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

The Village Calendar

The Village Calendar is situated in the Community Centre on the board just outside the entrance to the Dining Room.

During the last year several events were arranged on the same date and this has brought disappointment to many people. An entry on the Village Calendar will help to avoid this situation. A major event showing date, organisation and venue is all that is required.

Country Market

Pies, pastries, cakes, eggs, vegetables, jams and crafts are available in the Community Centre on Saturday 7th February, starting 10 am. You could have a cup of tea and a scone as well.

Short Walks

The Short Circuits RA group have a 4-mile walk on 7th February starting at the Travellers' Rest pub south of Slaley (NY 959586), starting at 10.30 am, and a 5.5 mile walk from Monkseat Metro Station (NZ347721) on 21st February, same time.

Lanchester History Society

The Lindisfarne Gospels is kept in the British Library in London where it is seen by visitors from all over the world. However, a copy of the gospels, weighing some 28lbs, is held in Durham Cathedral Treasury. This copy will be on display in the Community Centre when Miss Anne Heywood, Chapter Steward at Durham Cathedral, will give a talk on the history of the Gospels on Friday 6th February, commencing at the usual time of 7.30 pm. Time will be made available for questions and viewing of the Gospels.

W I

The February meeting will be held on Monday 2nd February in the small hall of the Community Centre at 7 pm. Visitors are welcome, admission £1. The speaker will be Margaret Walters with a Photographic Psalmody. In the busy world we live in today this will be a peaceful interlude of music and photos. The competition is a flower card.

Lanchester Social Club Entertainment

Saturday 7th February
Noel Curtis, Fabulous Vocalist
Saturday 14th February
Lee Mathews, Terrific Vocalist
Saturday 21st February
Karaoke
Saturday 28th February
Maggie Wright, Knockout Vocalist

Wildlife Group

The group meets in the small hall of the Community Centre on Tuesday February 10th to hear a talk on hedgerows, a valuable special habitat for wildlife, by Jane Young, starting at 7.30 pm.

Mothers' Union

The next meeting is on Wednesday 11th February at 7.30 pm in the Chapter House when Stephen Burt will give a talk about Rudyard Kipling.

Sunday Bridge

Sunday Bridge sessions in the Community Centre in support of Centre funds resume on February 22nd, starting at 2 pm. The entrance fee is £3.

WHAT'S ON?

Love Letters

The above play, written by A R Gurney, will be enacted at Lanchester Community Centre on Sunday 22nd February, starting at 7.30 pm, and starring Colin Baker and Louise Jameson. A licensed bar is available. Tickets priced £14, concessions £9, are available from the Community Centre, phone 521275.

Badminton Open Invitation

We are a small group of players who meet at Croft View every Monday. If you are a Badminton Player who would like to join us, you will be very welcome. Please come to the Top Hall, Croft View at 10.00 am.

MP Surgery

Our Member of Parliament, Hilary Armstrong, will be holding her surgery, where constituents can air their concerns, at St Patrick's, Victoria Road, Consett on Saturday February 7th, starting at 11 am.

Film Club

On Sunday, 15th February, the film 'The Counterfeiters' will be screened at the Community Centre at 7.30 pm. Everyone welcome, admission £2 members, £3.50 non-members. Described as an intense war time drama based on the true story of concentration camp Jews who escaped the gas chambers by forging millions of pounds and US dollars for the Nazi Project 'Operation Bernhard' - the biggest counterfeiting scam ever, designed to undermine the allied economies and fill the Nazi war-chest. This is an extraordinary film on many levels for its human drama and the contradictions and complexities it raises, in exploring the depth of moral compromise in moving detail.

Flower Club

The club meets at 2 pm on Wednesday 25th February for the annual general meeting followed by a talk entitled "Get Me To The Church On Time" by Rita Braithwaite of Cotherstone.

Friends of Longovicium

The group which studies our Roman Fort will meet on Thursday 26th February in the Community Centre, starting at 7.30 pm.

Church Notices (not in Lanchester)

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hospitality.

Faith supper Sunday at 5.00 pm - prayer and medication to follow.

Next Thursday there will be auditions for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Songs 'n' Stuff Presents

LOVE LETTERS

by A.R. GURNEY

STARRING

LOUISE JAMESON **COLIN BAKER**

DIRECTED BY
DAVID WARWICK

Lanchester Community Centre
Sunday Feb 22nd at 7.30pm

Songs 'n' Stuff Presents

"Chamber Pot"

Saturday February 7th at 7.30pm
at Lanchester Community Centre

The String Quartet of the
Customs House Concert Orchestra
presents an evening of
chamber music for all tastes...
from Bach to the Beatles!



Love Letters: £14, concessions £9

Chamber Pot £10, concessions £7

Licensed bar available.

Tickets available from Lanchester Community Centre 01207 521275 or Songs 'n' Stuff: 07853 386379

COMING SHORTLY

2009 Litter-Pick

The Partnership, with the support of the Parish Council, is arranging the annual litter-pick to take place on Saturday 28th March. It will be much the same as in previous years, with an 'HQ' tent on the green from which you will be able to get bin-bags, high-visibility jackets and litter-pickers.

Please make a note of the date and come along and join in.

If anyone would like to organise an associated activity, for example a local litter-pick around where they live or a school poster competition, please will they ring Jill Gladstone on 528 114.

Churches Together - Lenten Lunches

This year Lenten Lunches will be held at Lanchester Methodist Church every Tuesday throughout March. It will be a new course for Lent 2009 based on the work of John Young called 'Faith, Hope and Love'. The dates are March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 22nd, 31st - time, 12.00 - 1.00 pm. Soup and drinks will be provided. Please bring a contribution for lunch. All are welcome.

2009 Lions' Carnival

This will take place on Saturday 20th June. Please keep the date free.

The Magic of Hollywood

Lanchester and District Choral and Amateur Operatic Society will present 'The Magic of Hollywood' on 11th, 12th and 13th March at 7.15 pm in St. Bede's RC School, together with the Karen Stewart Dance and Performing Arts Academy. The producer and musical director is David Hughes.

Tickets are £7.50 for adults and £4.50 for children. Make a note in your diary now.

Planning ahead?

Please try to avoid published dates above. Let us know about any future events. Ring 520559.

WI NEWS



Jennifer and Ann wearing fascinators

Our first meeting of the year was held on 5th January in the small hall of the Community Centre. President Jennifer Macdonald welcomed along with existing members 3 visitors and 3 new members.

The speakers were Jennifer Macdonald and Ann Carr who talked about their visit to Denman WI College where they learnt how to make fascinators. As well as giving a very entertaining talk they also wore each of the fascinators they had created as they talked

about them, describing how they were made and the different techniques used. Barbara Sproat then gave a vote of thanks. There was no competition this month but members had been asked to wear a head ornament. Pat Cotrell won the prize in the funniest section with her reindeer ear muffs and Margery Raper the prize for the prettiest with a fascinator she had made herself. The winner of the raffle was Angela Velleman. The evening ended with ginger wine, shortbread and members buying from a sales table.

NEW YEAR CEILIDH



Lanchester Wildlife Group again organised an excellent ceilidh at the Community Centre on New Year's Eve with music by Angels of the North and Friends. Our picture shows Rosemary Chessum and friends enjoying the dancing. Thanks to Derek Reeve for the photo.

LADIES WHO LUNCH

Thursday December 4th - the day it really snowed - we were booked into the Duke of Wellington at Riding Mill for our Christmas meal. To begin with it did seem that we wouldn't make it - getting cars to the main road was the major hurdle. Sadly we were a depleted group but we

did make it, going the long way round via the Metro Centre, the roads were virtually clear by midday. The Wellington was beautifully decked out for Christmas and made us most welcome. We sampled a crayfish and a pate starter, main course was pheasant, salmon or turkey and for

pud we had chocolate torte and a meringue with seasonal berries followed by coffee - a lovely meal. We decided to play safe and go home the long way via the Metro Centre - after all it was a 20% off everything day at M&S and how could we miss that.

The Gourmet Girls

WEDNESDAY BRIDGE



Bridge enthusiasts thanked the organiser of their duplicate bridge club, Peter Curnow, with a small gift during the final evening of 2008, and enjoyed light refreshments. The club is held on Wednesday evenings in All Saints Parish Centre.

THURSDAY CLUB

The Thursday Club had a really happy start to 2009. Luscious nibbles, drink, and agreeable company - a very enjoyable evening. We now look forward to

another good year of meetings and outings, particularly our planned birthday party in March when we're off out for the day with lunch at Langley Castle.

LIONS' TRAVELLING GROTTO



On a cold Sunday afternoon in December, Lions Tony Corry and Tommy Robinson escorted Santa Claus through some of the villages in the surrounding area. This tradition has gone on for many years and the people and children of: Hollinside; Satley; Cornsay Village; Cornsay Colliery; Hamsteels; and Wilks Hill, look forward to this fun visit, which makes a great start to Christmas for them. The whole journey takes about 2-3 hours and is well worth making the effort. Approximately 40 or so children were seen by Santa and each received free sweets/chocolates. Lots of the mothers received a bonus cuddle from the man in red, himself! The Lions Club would like to thank Lanchester Motor Services for the loan of the transit van which was very much appreciated.

A paternal looking Santa is left holding the baby while the siblings look on. Photo taken at Cornsay Colliery.

LIONS' PUB CRAWL

Despite depleted numbers these days the Lions still managed to organise their annual Pub Crawl. Three hearty members and Santa Claus felt forced to take up the opportunity of visiting all the watering holes in the village on the Friday before Christmas. How committed they must be! And what a good time they had! Thanks to the generosity of the public

who frequented the Kings Head, the Queens Head, the Black Bull and the Social Club, an excellent total of £193.32 was raised for the Welfare Fund. The Lions would like to thank the landlords of those establishments for allowing them to collect, the patrons who tolerated their presence, and willingly put money in the collection boxes.



A lovely cuddle for Santa from Lisa Parry (left), and Rachel Simpson, who were having a quiet drink in the Kings when Santa pounced on them

CAROLS FROM ST BEDE'S



Pupils from Year 7 and the Sixth Form at St Bede's Catholic School, with music teacher, Mr Robinson, left, sing some lovely carols and seasonal songs in aid of Willow Burn Hospice

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NEXT DEADLINE

Please send any **articles** for the next edition of the Village Voice by Tuesday 17th February. The deadline for **adverts** is 15th February.

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