the Village Voice

Issue No 8, Volume 25 Lanchester, August 2025



Summer Solstice at the Community Orchard *Story page 10*



Lanchester Hiking Group now wardens of Saints Way.

(Above) Story page 9

What lies behind this door?

(Right) Story page 5



Familiar faces at the Miners' Gala

Matthew Hill (below) and Laura Pidcock (above) at the Miners' Gala. Story page 4





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All Saints' Catholic Church

A mass for the sick in the church

It was a very busy weekend at the church on Saturday 12th July at 12 noon. There were invitations to all the sick to come along to church, where a lovely mass was held for the sick. Father Charles, Father Venantius and Deacon Peter officiated. Many of the sick attended along with family members and friends. During the mass all parishioners were anointed with Holy Oil by Father Charles and Father Venantius. Everyone who could, then joined each other in the Parish Centre for a light bite, tea and coffee. It was such a lovely atmosphere. Many of the parishioners had not seen each other for years, so many old friendships were re-awakened and enjoyed.

A summer concert from the movies

We were entertained on Sunday 13th July by Consett Brass. It was a wonderful evening's entertainment, "A Summer Concert: Music from the Movies". Marc Jackson, the conductor, told us some jokes making us all laugh, introduced the different music to be played and tested our knowledge of the movies the music was from. There were over ninety, plus the band, in attendance, so quite a full church which was so lovely. Then everyone was invited to have tea, coffee and snacks in the Parish Centre. Once again, a lovely atmosphere prevailed. We have agreed with Consett Brass Band to visit us again in December for a Christmas Concert.

Lestrine Kelly







Scenes from the Parish Centre



Consett Band conducted by Marc Jackson

Lanchester Choral Society – looking to the future and seeking new members.

Do you enjoy singing? Did you watch The Choir and TV and think "I could do that"? Have you ever thought about joining a choir? Why not challenge yourself to take the opportunity? Singing is a happy thing – it's good for the body, it's good for the soul and it's good for mental health.

Lanchester Choral Society was established more than 50 years ago in 1972. Its long-term musical director, David Hughes, conducted his last concert with us in May this year and is now having a well-earned rest. Over the years the choir has given many performances in the village, as well as taking part in Christmas festivities and raising money for local causes.

The choir is fortunate enough to have Greg Pullen as its new conductor. Greg has had a long musical career including being a professional cellist and music teacher. He already has two choirs in the local area and brings with him a great enthusiasm for a diverse range of music.

We are now looking for new members to join us in September. All ages are welcome; there is no audition and reading music is not essential. Our next concert will be at Christmas so lots of carols and Christmas songs. The choir meets in Croft View Hall on Friday evening from 7:15 to 8:45. Our new term starts on 12th September. If you enjoy singing why not come along and join the choir! If you would like more information, please call Lynn 07872442310 or Sue on 07725482008. We would love to hear from you.

Squirrels have invaded Annfield Plain!

(They are small - and wear red - but are even cuter than the furry ones!)

We've opened our first ever Drey for 4-6 year olds
2nd Annfield Plain is a thriving Scout group, and our new Squirrels complement our existing mixed sections for both girls and boys in Beavers (6-8 years), Cubs (8-10 years), Scouts (10-14 years) and Derwentside Explorers (14-18 years). We have filled all our places for September 2025 but there is a short waiting list if you have little ones approaching 4 who may be interested.

However, the groups are entirely volunteer-led and so none of this good stuff happens without our incredible adult volunteers.

Could YOU be a Maker of Adventures, an Activity Guru, a Director of Fun, a Self-Esteem Raiser, and generally a role model for young people?
If you're looking for a rewarding way to give back, develop new skills, make new connections and have a great time with our amazing young people – volunteering with the Scouts could be the perfect opportunity. Whether you want to be hands on planning and delivering activities, part of the support team helping with vital admin., as Group Treasurer, Trustee or with fundraising, or you have a particular skill or knowledge you can share with a group as a one-off session – your support can change young lives, while enriching your own.





Why join the Scouts?
Scouting isn't just about knots and campfires – it's about helping young people gain confidence, resilience and life skills. From outdoor adventures to community projects, **Scouts empowers young people to learn, grow and thrive**. It opens a myriad of opportunities, from building an open fire and then cooking on it and visiting the local fire station to learn about fire safety, to rock climbing for the first time, navigating cross-country, rifle shooting – or even driving the Scout speedboat!

No experience? No problem!
You don't need to be a survival expert or a youth worker to volunteer. Whether you're a great organiser, a creative thinker or someone who just enjoys working with young people, there's a role for you. Training and support is provided every step of the way. So, what's in it for you?



- **Feel great** – knowing you're making a difference and potentially changing lives.
- **Make lifelong friendships** – meet like-minded people and join a friendly and supportive team.
- **Contribute and develop skills** – share your knowledge and learn from others.
- **Boost your CV** – great for career development and experience for anyone looking to undertake teacher training, social work, or fostering and adoption.
- **New experiences and memories** – being part of an inspiring international movement, all working to achieve the best outcomes for our local young people.
- **Flexible and rewarding** – every contribution counts, whether you help run sessions or just offer occasional support.

N.B. Toasted marshmallow-eating is purely optional!

Together we help to inspire and prepare young people with skills for life – will you join us?
If you'd like to know more about volunteering with one of our sections, contact marie.wisson@derwentsidescouts.org.uk.
We take safeguarding very seriously and depending on your role, there may be some simple online training and a DBS check involved.

Marie Wisson
Beaver Scout Team Leader and Trustee
2nd Annfield Plain Scouts

Lanchester Social Club

We have changes happening with our club at present. We do have more committee members now, so we will be making some changes of which we will keep all members informed.

We have an 80's day and night for adults on Sunday 24th August which is bank holiday weekend. The doors will open at 12 noon until 12 midnight and a live singer will be on from 2, then karaoke and disco in the evening. During the day there will be fun games, raffle and prizes for the best fancy dress (fancy dress optional). There will be promotions on certain drinks. Check out our Facebook page to see what is happening. Please come along and support your local social club. We rely on your custom immensely.

Lanchester Club committee

Durham Miners' Gala

On Saturday 12th July, thousands flooded the sunny streets of Durham to show solidarity and support the 139th annual Durham Miners' Gala.

The roads were packed with colourful blocks and banners from not just across Durham but the country - from Glasgow to Kent - commemorating the industrial history of the North East, as well as calling for those in attendance to rally behind marginalised people around the world. A wide range of groups, including the National Education Union, County Durham Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Durham Pride, were also invited to march in the sunshine, with some mixed reviews from onlookers.

A select group of political figures took to the balcony of the County Hotel with County Durham mayor Gary Hutchinson and Independent MP for Islington Jeremy Corbyn among those who addressed the massive crowd.
After the blocks had made their way through the city to the music of brass bands, the crowds gathered at the Durham Racecourse for the Big Meeting. Speeches began shortly after, featuring Durham Miners Association secretary Alan Mardghum, Unite the Union general secretary Sharon Graham, and Palestinian ambassador Hasam Zomlot, who praised Durham and its "wonderful" people for their hospitality.

Newly elected Reform Councillors were not invited to speak, with Mardghum publicly stating that Reform UK would never be platformed or invited to give speeches, and challenging Councillor Darren Grimes, labelling him a "keyboard warrior," and arguing against Grimes' criticism of the Gala as being infiltrated by "loony lefties."

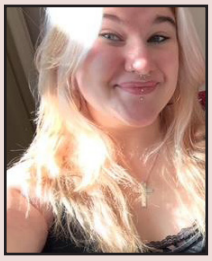
The evening before the Gala, former MP for North West Durham (now North Durham) Laura Pidcock spoke at a public meeting organised by the County Durham Palestine Solidarity Campaign at the Elvet Methodist Church, alongside Corbyn and Zomlot. After reminiscing about her time as a Lanchester resident, Pidcock emphasised to the Village Voice how much the Durham Miners' Gala relied on solidarity between the working class and other oppressed groups:

"Working class people have things in common across borders, and interests across borders. It's clear the activists of the region and those who regularly attend Durham Miners' Gala are sending a strong signal of support" Pidcock said, before sharing her thoughts on Saturday's events. She added:"The rest of the Gala is so important, we have a Labour Government which is making sweeping cuts after fourteen years of austerity. I am sure the message from Durham Miners' Gala will be that the people will not stand for it."
Not all in attendance supported the emphasis on Palestine, however, with one attendee, preferring to remain anonymous, slamming the PSC's involvement:

"I've been coming here for forty years. It's got nothing to do with us, it's not right that they're here" she said, with other onlookers echoing her sentiment and booing the demonstrators showing support for Palestine, and others leaving as the Palestine block made their way to the racecourse.

Despite the split reception given to certain demonstrators, the 139th Durham Miners' Gala remained a mostly joyous and united occasion, and despite not having official Lanchester representation, many residents found their way there as part of other blocks. Lanchester local Matthew Hill was delighted to perform with the Ferryhill Town Band, describing it as "unreal."

Kenzie Harrison



About the writer. Kenzie Harrison (left) is a multimedia journalism student at the University of Salford and a proud Lanchester resident who writes for the Village Voice in her spare time. Kenzie specialises in covering local politics, community events, and especially enjoys photojournalism.

These pictures and those on the cover were taken by Kenzie



Lanchester's Newest Shop is Fuelled by Heart, Hope, and Hidden Treasures

A Burnhope woman has recently opened a charming shop in Lanchester, specialising in unique trinkets, antiques, and vintage decorations.



What appears at first glance as an unassuming shop on Station Road opens into a visual delight - shelves are packed with distinctive ornaments and ceramics, gorgeous artwork lines the walls, and there is even a corner dedicated to spirituality, with crystals and tarot cards, meaning there truly is something for everyone in Lanchester's newest hidden gem.

Sue Spencer, originally from Consett, now living in Burnhope, has been in the business of selling and upcycling antiques for years, following a long career as a nurse. Sue is optimistic about her newest venture, a true passion project in the heart of Lanchester, but Sue's story goes far beyond furniture and antiques.



"This isn't my first venture," Sue explained,

"I started a few years ago but had to take a break after my cancer came back. It's still in my lungs, but I didn't want to just sit at home being poorly. I wanted to do something that fit around treatment and brought me joy."

Those Who Wander has been open for five weeks and is already a hit - when the Village Voice went to welcome Lanchester's newest shop, we found many impressed locals thrilled with the diverse range of products offered inside.

Spencer sources her eclectic range of stock from a variety of markets, antique stores and car boot sales. A lot of the products sold are restored by Sue herself, including a shipping chest, and an old telephone box which was sanded down and made into a bespoke decoration. Her creativity and passion for breathing new life into previously forgotten treasures shines throughout the store, from decoupage to delicate refurbishing.

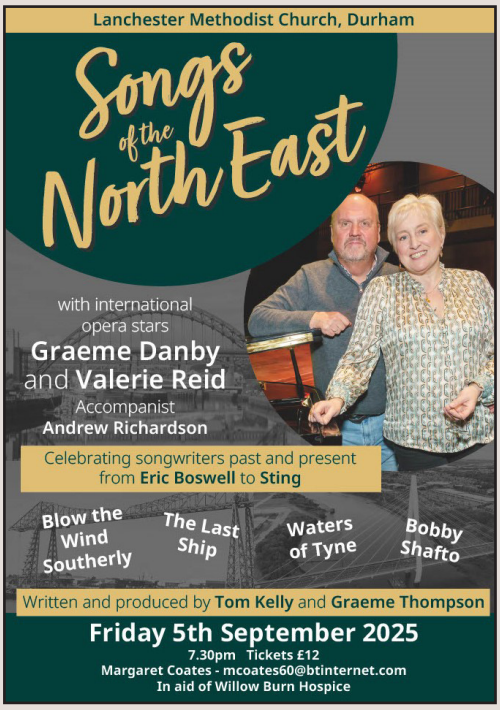


And despite her terminal diagnosis, Sue remains optimistic, grounded, and dedicated to growing her business:

"It's not something that's going to happen tomorrow," she said, before adding: "And in the meantime, this little shop gives me something meaningful to focus on."

With a welcoming atmosphere, and products that each tell their own story, Those Who Wander has the opportunity to become a beloved addition to Lanchester's thriving retail scene, and more personally, a testament to its owner's positivity and perseverance in the face of hardship.

Kenzie Harrison



Graeme Danby comes to Lanchester

Graeme Danby and his wife Valerie Reid are coming to Lanchester to perform their show "Songs of the North East". Graeme was born in Consett and is an operatic bass who has performed at several of the world's leading opera houses. This show will be different as he is performing many favourite local songs. He famously sang the Blaydon Races before Newcastle United games at St James's Park. The performance will be Lanchester Methodist Church on Friday September 5th at 7:30pm. Tickets from Margaret Coates – mcoates60@btinternet.com. It will be in aid of the Willow Burn Hospice.

Buy your tickets before they sell out!!



Lanchester looking great in the summer sunshine.

Thanks to Ged's efforts Lanchester is again looking very summery.
We understand that he is on the mend after his health scare.



From the House

I've been out and about in Lanchester and the surrounding areas recently. I attended fundraisers for Willow Burn Hospice and St John's Church in Burnhope and was happy to support such important organisations. I also got to spend time canvassing in Holmside alongside Councillor Alison Gray. Cllr Gray has been doing some great work in the area from coordinating missed bin collections to campaigning for a possible new GP surgery.

If you have read my updates before, you will know that I have been supporting local residents' objections to the Burnhope Solar Farm proposal. Lightsource BP have now submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the decision to refuse their planning application. Any submissions needed to have been sent to the Planning Inspectorate through their website quoting reference APP/X1355/W/25/3368146 by 19 August. I will be making my own submission but would encourage anyone who has concerns about the application to also make their own submission through the Planning Inspectorate by visiting https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/.

One of the things I like most about my job is the diverse causes and the number of constituents and groups I get to meet and support. This past month across the constituency, I have been able to support important groups like local cadets, GP surgeries, home builders and community centres. In Parliament, I have given my support to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the Disabled Children's Partnership. If you are involved in a local organisation and would like me to visit, please contact me on the details below.

The amount of case work I am receiving continues to rise, with 745 new cases coming into my office in June. I have been able to support Lanchester residents with everything from personal issues such as employment, to local issues around forestry and the deer population to major national policy issues.

In Westminster, there have been several significant votes, and I have spoken in a number of debates on the future role of the Post Office, defence jobs in the North East and child poverty measures.

Since the election, my office has responded to over 7,100 queries. I have helped return over £286,000 owed to constituents in taxes/benefits/utilities. My biggest priority is to serve individuals and communities across North Durham. I will always make time for constituents and want to help in any way that I can. If you need help or support, please email me on luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk or call my office on 0191 371 8834.

House of Commons

County Councillor Update



It has been a very busy few months since the election and it has been fantastic to meet so many people since then. I feel very privileged to hold this role. There have been a number of important updates that I wanted to share with you.

Campaign to get more GP appointments in Lanchester

I am a member of the Adult Health and Wellbeing Committee, and several residents contacted me after the election to express concern at the lack of available GP appointments in the village. Given the issues with bus services which make joining another practice difficult, I organised a meeting at the King's Head on 28th June. (Sorry to those of you who didn't know about the meeting and wanted to attend.) We had an excellent turn out, a good conversation and I have had several meetings with the Integrated Care Board since. Having another practice open up is very difficult because GP practices have to run as businesses, and to be cost effective thousands of patients would need to register almost immediately. However, the ICB took our comments seriously and hopefully this will lead to improved access to GP appointments in due course. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Kelly and the team at the King's Head - they kindly opened up early for us and gave us a room which was greatly appreciated.

Flood Prevention

I know that a substantial number of residents and businesses were badly affected by the flood of October 2023, and as a result of this, it is difficult to obtain insurance. I met with the flood prevention officer from the council, and we discussed what had been done since then to prevent further flooding. A larger gulley outside the bridal shop was mooted and hopefully will be fitted. I have been assured that the village is on a regular leaf cleaning and drain unblocking schedule. I have reported the blocked drain at the Church and hopefully that will be resolved soon. I will keep you posted on this issue.

Anti-Social Behaviour

A number of residents and businesses have suffered greatly from anti-social behaviour at locations around the village. Authorities have been informed and a multi-disciplinary approach has been put in place. This has taken much time, effort and resources and I would like to thank PCSO Egan, in particular, for his diligence in gathering evidence, as well as neighbours who have reported the issues. I have worked closely with the police, the PCC Victim's Champion, and Karbon Homes to bring these issues to a resolution.

I recognise that speeding vehicles on roads around the village are a cause of concern. I have been proactive and organised a number of site visits. So far;

- Speed advisors are promised for Maiden Law bank and Ornsby Hill.
- A new speed advisor is also to be installed on the entrance to the village on Durham Road.

I hope to be able to deal with all parts of the village where speeding is an issue in due course.

Several locations have been missed off the bin collection routes so please email me if this regularly happens, and I will try and sort it out.

Date for your diary - I will be holding a coffee morning at the **Methodist Church on September 6th** 10 – 12 a.m. to raise funds for the Village Bus. I have allocated some of our neighbourhood budget towards this too.

I hope in the autumn to undertake a consultation and review of parking in the village. Thank you to everyone who has emailed with concerns and issues. Please continue to do so.

It is tricky to provide timely updates by paper so if you have access to email, please get in touch with me on alison.gray2@durham.gov.uk and I can keep you up to date electronically.

Wild Notes

Sometimes it's easy to underappreciate the things you take for granted. And for all Lanchester residents, the railway line will be one of those things just accepted as part of everyday life in the village. But we truly are lucky to have access to this wonderful trail across the hills and valleys of the Lanchester area, especially considering that 10 million people in the UK have very limited access to green spaces which are proven to save the NHS £100 million each year in GP visits and prescriptions and boost physical and mental health- reducing heart disease, obesity, and depression.

Green spaces also help with reducing flooding, cutting carbon emissions, and protecting nature- including farmland species like this month's subject: the Yellowhammer (pictured right). Take a stroll along the railway line and listen out for the male's distinctive 'si-si-si-si-si bi-zuuuu' call (often described as 'a-little-bit-of-bread-and-no-cheese') or its metallic chirp ringing out from the heart of the hedgerow. Once you hear it, search for a little yellow/brown bird with a bright yellow head and underparts, a brown back streaked with black and a short, greyish bill perched on top of a bush or hedge, belting out its unmistakable tune. Witnessing this everyday spectacle is sure to brighten your day and boost your mood- highlighting the value of getting outside even if it's just for a 10-minute stroll.



But the Yellowhammer's future is far from certain. Numbers have declined by 61% between 1967 and 2020 and the bird now finds itself on the UK red list of conservation concern. A rise in intensive agriculture has led to the destruction of habitats such as thick hedgerows and a loss of food sources in field margins around crops and winter stubble now limited by autumn planting of crops. These effects have had a devastating impact on farmland wildlife, with more red listed species like corn bunting, skylark and twite also affected. Studies have found intensive agriculture to be the single biggest cause of biodiversity loss and to contribute heavily to climate change, so something needs to change.

For farmers, nature friendly farming can increase crop yields as well as biodiversity through increased pollinators and natural pest control, although increased government subsidies are required to make more extensive measures profitable. But small changes like allowing aforementioned field margins to grow and using thick, healthy hedgerows as field borders rather than fences will help massively in boosting our local biodiversity of farmland species. And for anyone who uses the railway line for exercise, dog walking or just leisure in general, the rewards will be obvious.

From our wildlife family

Yellowhammer by Ian Appleby

Ladies who lunch

It's been a good few years since we last visited The Black Horse at Beamish and we were most impressed. Like a lot of places, expansion has taken place and on the very sunny day that we were there, a lot of folks were taking advantage of the many areas available for al fresco dining. We had in house entertainment thrown in - there was a wedding taking place, everyone passing by our table, perfect for people watching - a fascinating occupation.

We eventually got down to perusing the menus - mains, specials and sandwiches. We opted for a bacon, brie and cranberry bloomer with fries; scampi and chips, mushy peas, tartare sauce and lemon; fish pie topped with cheddar mash, creamed peas and crusty bread; Thai red chicken curry, steamed jasmine rice and prawn crackers; Caesar salad with chicken and fries (which was deemed 'perfect').

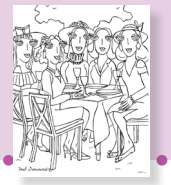
Desserts were Amaretto crème brûlée and a limoncello cake concoction that both looked and evidently tasted delicious.

All the food was most enjoyable, nicely presented and we had lovely home baked biscuits to go with the desserts.

Even though they were having a very busy day the staff were welcoming, attentive and we felt well looked after.

All in all, a very enjoyable lunchtime occasion was had by all.

The Gourmet Girls



'A sparkling achievement - good friends Alan and Margaret Gill, Eric and Marjorie Skipsey and Rosemary and Brian Naylor all recently celebrated their diamond wedding anniversaries'





Poppy's walks

Good day readers and for this month's walk I joined the intrepid group of Monday regulars. Each Monday at 1pm a group leaves from Lanchester village green on a 90 minute walk. My female human nearly always joins them but will not take me, claiming I am a liability. I am not sure what that means but when the male human is able to go as well he does take me along.

As you know, I am Poppy, a Patterdale Terrier now all-too-quickly approaching the age of ten who enjoys sharing with you the walks I go on. On one Monday in July we set off with the group but turned back after just a few minutes when a torrential downpour broke out. Most of the walkers continued but not myself or my male human who beat a hasty retreat to the King's Head.

The following Monday we enjoyed better conditions and set off with around 15 other humans and a cream-coloured spaniel who seemed quite affable. The walk was led by a calm, authoritative figure called Paul, and he led us from the village green and along the bypass then around to the left alongside the EP School. We crossed the road and walked through Fenhall Park before coming out at the other end through a narrow pathway and onto the cricket field.

We walked past the pavilion and alongside the pitch before coming out at Kitswell Road. We continued walking for a short while before cutting through a gap beyond the graveyard and onto the railway path. Paul would stop frequently to check that everybody was still present and to allow stragglers to catch up. The walkers went at a brisk pace which was not too fast but limited my time for sniffing the undergrowth.

We continued along the railway path past the sign which said that Lanchester was a mile and a half back in the direction we had walked. The path eventually went to the right at a farm which I believe is called Hurbuck. By this stage we had walked around 45 minutes. We left the railway path and walked through a metal gate which required a strong tug to open it, and we all filed through onto a field.

There was no livestock in the field when we walked through it, nor in the next two fields which we traversed before turning right through another gate. Here Paul warned us to be careful because there was an electric fence on our right. Needless to say I kept well away from it, and we walked on a fairly narrow footpath through woodland surrounded by fields with sheep behind fences on both our left and our right.

When we emerged from the wood we passed through another gate onto a farmyard. I believe this is called Low Meadows. We crossed a footbridge over a stream from where I was able to get a welcome refreshing drink. After a few more yards we came to a gate with a cattle grid to the right. Paul opened the gate and we all funnelled through it before it was closed properly afterwards, like all the other gates we had been through on the walk.

We then walked along a farm track/country lane where we had to stand to one side on the verge on occasions if vehicles approached. We continued until the track widened and became Kitswell Road and we all walked along the pavement there and onto Front Street. From there the walkers tended to disperse in varying directions instead of all going back to the village green. But the walk had taken us from a 1pm start until just after 2.30 so I could not complain about being short changed, unlike the previous Monday.

Purple Haze

Below is an extract from Purple Haze – Book 5 in Skin Crawlers Series of books by Matthew James. Released on 08/08/25 for Amazon Kindle, Paperback and on Amazon Kindle Unlimited.

Skin Crawlers is just like Goosebumps for kids aged 5 and up. Ideal for a summer read! All Skin Crawlers books are standalone and can be read in any order.

Tomorrow was going to be horrible; she just knew it! The familiar sense of panic crept over her, like a shadow that swiped at her organs, refusing to let go of them in an icy grip. It made Lavender gasp, physically. She had to stop these thoughts somehow… She had to bottle them away. Or something!

Suddenly, the door to her bedroom slammed and something strange was happening as Lavender stared at her school bag. It was like her vision had become blurred, splotches of red…no purple colours danced in front of her eyes.

Was it the heat getting to her?

The room began to tremble as Lavender tried to scream out, but her eyes were stuck on her school bag.

Was it an earthquake in Sheffield? How was this happening?

Something purple was forming in front of her bag, like a mist, twirling in midair, circling around, and around hissing as Lavender cried out, screaming.

It was the same purple haze like in her dream!

The room continued to tremble, shaking violently as Lavender tried to brace herself. The purple haze was getting bigger and bigger…



Purple Haze was out 08th August – you can order via Amazon! Search Purple Haze Matthew James on Amazon to pre-order the kindle version.

If you can, please support this local and self-published author! Yours, Matthew. Please follow my Instagram for more information

Instagram.com/matthewjamesauthor

Let me know if you'd like any signed copies!

Matthew James

Lanchester Hiking Group becomes custodian of part of the Northern Saints Trails: The Way of Light from Knitsley to Esh via Lanchester 8.5m.

This trail is part of a number of such inspired by the 7th and 8th century saints from Northumberland's golden age, including St Wilfrid, St Aidan, St Cuthbert, The Venerable Bede, St Oswald, and St Hilda, taking you across the countryside from various starting points to Durham Cathedral. This trail starts at the Church of St Oswald and crosses the farmlands, woodlands, and open moorlands via Acomb, Hexham, Slaley Forest, Blanchland, Edmundbyers, Castleside, and Lanchester on the way to Durham. 49miles. As a group we look after the route, ensuring it is passable, keeping it clear of litter and generally promoting it within the locality. You can walk it in either direction with coffee shops at either Knitsley or Quebec. It is well way marked in the Durham direction and we are trying to get extra way marking in both directions.

If you would like to join Lanchester Hiking Group please contact Helen Thomas on 07712 425623 or any current member, we meet fortnightly on a Wednesday morning for a walk between 5 and 6 miles.





Hi everyone, it's Simon here.

BOURNE & CO
in partnership with nested

We've just celebrated our first year since we took over the village estate agency. If someone had given me a crystal ball on my first day and I'd have seen some of the results we've had in the future, I'm not sure I'd have believed it.

It's been a brilliant debut year. We've been inundated with support as the year has gone on and you don't have to look too far to spot another duck board with SOLD written on it around the village.

Lauren and I are so proud. I am looking forward to my summer break where I will spend some vital time with family recharging the batteries of what will hopefully be an equally busy Q3.

If you're looking to sell, please do get in touch. Our records speak for themselves. We've sold over 85% of our current stock and we have a huge list of people looking for property in Lanchester.



Enjoy the rest of your summer and once again, sincere thanks to everyone who has helped make this first year truly quacking!

Simon Bourne
Bourne & Co – The agency that gives a duck.

01207 529 900 - info@bournenco.com

Lanchester Local History Society

On Friday 4th July we met to hear from Tony Patterson all about Patterson Pottery. Tony discovered his connection to this nineteenth century Gateshead earthenware manufacturer, employing up to 150 at peak production. The business had various names over time: Fordy and Co, Fordy and Patterson and latterly Patterson and Co.

In the early 1800s his great grandfather Thomas had been the earthenware manufacturer in Sheriff Hill Gateshead. The products were household "best" crockery that would have been sold door to door or in stores like the Co-op in individual items so the collection could be built up over time. However, as Tony had found this out by exploring his family tree he discovered a whole generation of Thomas' brothers and sisters who had some amazingly interesting north east historical connections.

The family lived in Carleton Terrace, Gateshead, an imposing collection of houses for clearly well to do families at the time. He was one of 12. Sister Jane married George Dove who was involved with railway engineering and cranes, Anne married Henry Lawrence a mechanical engineer involved with the Newcastle Mechanics Institute. The brothers were shipping agents, postmasters, and master mariners shipping pottery to Quebec Canada. One was even involved with exporting the products to Norway.

Tony started to look for evidence of the earthenware and started to explore the world wide web hunting for evidence and examples. He has been successful in locating items in The Shipley and Laing Galleries locally and The V and A in London and now has his own significant collection found in all the usual places, such as junk shops, antique shops, auction houses and yes, you have guessed, Ebay.

Fortunately, with a very tolerant wife, this ex-train driver with his lifetime travel pass is able to crisscross the country collecting items for this now obsessive passion. He's even found links between a bowl found in a Dutch shipwreck to Norway where there are many items on display in museums. Yes, Tony has produced a book which he managed to publish in 2021 and already has many items for a second reprint.

Marian Morrison







Police report – speeding

Readers will remember a few months back, residents near Howden Bank had been complaining of speeding vehicles and a survey was undertaken by Council traffic management.

As promised, we have tried to target this area with our speed cameras during June, although our attendance has been limited due to a high demand for foot deployments this month.

We attended on 3 occasions and during the 3 visits to the site 143 drivers triggered the speed cameras:

0 drivers fell within our Process Level (Court action)

25 drivers fell within our Conditional offer level (fine and points)



118 drivers fell within our Speed Awareness Course level

Disappointingly the site has shown an average of 48 triggers per visit with each visit lasting for 1 hour.

I will continue to periodically put this on my speed camera monthly deployment list for attention going forward.

Paul Egan *30494*

PCSO Neighbourhood policing

Celebrating the Summer Solstice in the Community Orchard!

Usually, we celebrate the Summer Solstice in a shower of rain, but not this year. The sun shone for the whole event. We sang songs with wonderful accompaniment, provided by an Orchard member and his friends, and listened to poems about the solstice. Another member had prepared a quiz testing our knowledge about the sun.

In Scandinavia, it's traditional to weave bracken crowns, so many of us added them to our sunhats. The shared lunch was amazing, and we managed to get the tents down just before the rain!

If you would like to become an Orchard member, then please visit our website www.lanchesterorchard.org for more information or come along to one of our work sessions to find our more. Everyone's welcome.
Eleanor Johnson, Lanchester Community Orchard



Friends of Longovicium

The group have been working hard preparing for our FREE drop in open evening on September 25 in the Main Hall Lanchester Community Centre.
The group has been funding geophysical surveys and researching the fort for more than twenty years and this is an opportunity for the village to see displays of what we have discovered about the fort and its civilian settlement. A series of display panels will show the findings of all our geophysics surveys along with digital reconstructions and animations of the fort and its civilian settlement.
Visitors will be able to handle some genuine Roman pottery, try on replica Roman helmets and feel the weight of replica Roman swords and shields, ideal to grab yourself a selfie. We also hope to have a Roman re-enactor dressed in full costume.
The event is 6.00pm until 9.00pm. Drop in for a few minutes or the whole evening, whatever length of time you like, we will be delighted to showcase our findings to as many people as possible. Light refreshments will be available.
From 7.30pm we will have a short talk about metal detecting, followed by a very interesting and engaging talk titled the "Roman NHS" revealing how amazingly advanced Roman medicine and health care really was.
Information on the Friends and our work may be obtained from Mrs. M Williams, tel: 01207 520063 or from Rodney Hawkins email at hawkins_15@sky. com. Our website provides details of our work and investigations to date, see www.longoviciumcouk.wordpress.com. You can also find us on Facebook.
Our meetings are on the fourth Thursday of the month from 7.30pm at Lanchester Community Centre. New members are always welcome.

Darin Smith

Friends of Longovicium Fundraiser

Tucked beside a lay-by on Cadger Bank is probably the finest example of an unexcavated Roman fort in England. For most people it looks like a lumpy field with grass-covered stones. But nearly two millennia ago, the fort at Longovicium was home to the fiercest soldiers in the Roman Empire.
Longovicium was founded in AD 140 as an outpost to assist with infantry operations and serve as a resupply point along Dere Street, which functioned as the Roman equivalent of the modern A1M. Over a thousand troops and cavalry were garrisoned at Longovicium including the 20th Legion Valeria Victrix. Founded by Emperor Augustus, the Legio XX had a terrifying reputation throughout the Roman Empire as battle hardened soldiers who mercilessly defeated all enemies of Rome, including Boudicca. The US Army's 173rd Airborne Division's Legion Company is named after Legio XX; they chose this name for the paratroopers' ability to fight fiercely behind enemy lines.
Now that I've done a quick history of the fort, why the fundraiser? The information sign for Longovicium was destroyed last September. The sign was accidentally hit by a car in the lay-by. A new sign is £2,500. The Friends of Longovicium have launched a *Go Fund Me* https://gofund.me/f4e16f93 to create a new sign, with solar lights and cameras to make it more visible. The goal is to raise funds by September 25th to coincide with a Friends of Longovicium Open Evening from 6pm-9pm at Lanchester Community Centre.





You might think *"Isn't Longovicium just another outpost near Hadrian's Wall?"* Simply put, no. Longovicium was a home to thousands of people. A nearby civilian settlement, known as a vicus, was located adjacent to the area. Archeological surveys, funded by the Friends of Longovicium, have uncovered homes, taverns, cobblers, blacksmiths, stone masons, a bath house, aqueduct, two reservoirs and farms. This is where the local Brigantes tribe lived and worked – the early Lanchester villagers! Volunteers like Darin Smith have created intricate CGI renderings of the fort and the surrounding settlement. These effectively document the scale and extent of the fort, offering a comprehensive digital record of daily life within a substantial Roman settlement. You can find more information on Facebook at Friends of Longovicium.
It may seem odd that I'm writing about a fundraiser over 6,000 miles from my home in California. I was raised in Lanchester and as a teenager was obsessed with all things Roman, especially the 20th Legion, and Hadrian's Wall. I was fascinated by Longovicium. I followed my passion studying Classics at Cambridge University and onto graduate school in the United States specializing in military history.
That's why today I want to help raise awareness and funds for the new sign. In places like the United States, where anything older than a century is considered historic, the thought of two millennia of Roman heritage resting quietly beneath a field is unimaginable. The new sign ensures that this remarkable site receives the recognition and protection it deserves. Longovicium is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and protected by law from excavation of any type and sits on private land. Please consider donating to the new sign at the new Go Fund Me , launched by Friends of Longovicium. Dedicated volunteers have put their heart and soul into raising awareness, education and funding archaeological surveys to uncover the history of this Lanchester gem. And maybe the ghost legionnaires who march the Dere Street will see the new sign and know that not all roads lead to Rome, but to Longovicium.

Victoria Cloutier
Now of California and previously of Lanchester



WI News

At our meeting on Monday 7 July 35 members were welcomed (that included 3 new members who joined that night).

Marie gave details of upcoming events then we listened to our speaker for the evening, George Nairn, who told us about the history of postcards. He told us of the evolution of the postcard from the first one in 1870, how they were used for arranging meetings, advertising businesses and giving information about local events and history. It was very interesting and informative. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Come and join us, it will be lovely to see you.

One of our upcoming events is our Fashion Show on Saturday 6 September at Lanchester Social Club 2-4pm. Tickets are £5 which includes light refreshments. Part of the proceeds of this event are being donated to Willow Burn and St Cuthbert's Hospices. There will be a raffle too with some great prizes!

Please get your tickets from Lanchester Red Cross Shop; Willow Burn Boutique Charity Shop, Lanchester or contact lanchesterwi@talktalk.net or message us via Facebook (Lanchester WI).

We look forward to seeing you.

Marie Murphy



Update on Lanchester Medical Centre

Following an inspection by the CQC on 31 July, LMC's registered provider has been temporarily suspended from providing medical services at the practice/to LMC registered patients.
The practice remains open and in full operation with registered patients able to book appointments to see a GP and/ or nurse practitioner.
With immediate effect Dr Kalra has subcontracted the running of the practice to South Durham Health CIC GP Federation.
The immediate focus is on prioritising continuity of patient care and supporting practice staff who remain in place as a team, supplemented by additional GP resource from South Durham Health and extended hours from Dr Oliver.
The Patient Participation Group were pleased to meet with representatives of South Durham Health and all parties have committed to work together to the improvement of patient experience, safety and continuity of care.

Sue Graham

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Lanchester Medical Centre Patient Participation Group

Technology and our health systems- help!

As health services become increasingly technologically enabled, providers of health and social care are grappling with the challenge of ensuring digital inclusion for the community they serve, and we the public are grappling to understand how to use this technology.

Digital awareness isn't a fixed state. A person's ability to participate with digital services is variable. For some, ordering a repeat prescription from a smartphone on the bus to work offers convenience and control. For others, a brief chat with a pharmacist or neighbour while picking up medication might be the only social interaction someone has. Sometimes the value of these social interactions outweighs the more efficient, isolated digital process. Others do not have a mobile phone or a computer.

If everyone's needs and abilities are different, how do we find a system that is inclusive and not exclusive?

There is never going to be one right answer, but important elements should include:

Ensuring – there are well-designed digital and non-digital options. There will always be a cohort of people unable to engage with technology.

Supporting people – to use technologies in a way that they understand. As already stated, people's ability differs, there is no "one size fits all".

Building trust – within the community to strengthen the belief that digital services are safe and can help.

Community feedback – regular identified ways to receive feedback that will inform continuous improvement that fits the needs of all the users within individual communities.

There is no escape, we are living in what is referred to as, among other names, "the digital age"; services are being reshaped by technology, and it is deeply embedded in many aspects of life, work, entertainment and healthcare.

In the middle of all these advances of being paper light and paper free, that to write manually is not merely to jot down words, but to engage in a dynamic cognitive process and carries so much more meaning than an email, a text or Facebook.

Ref: NHS Providers, Beyond data-why community engagement must be central to digital inclusion May 2025

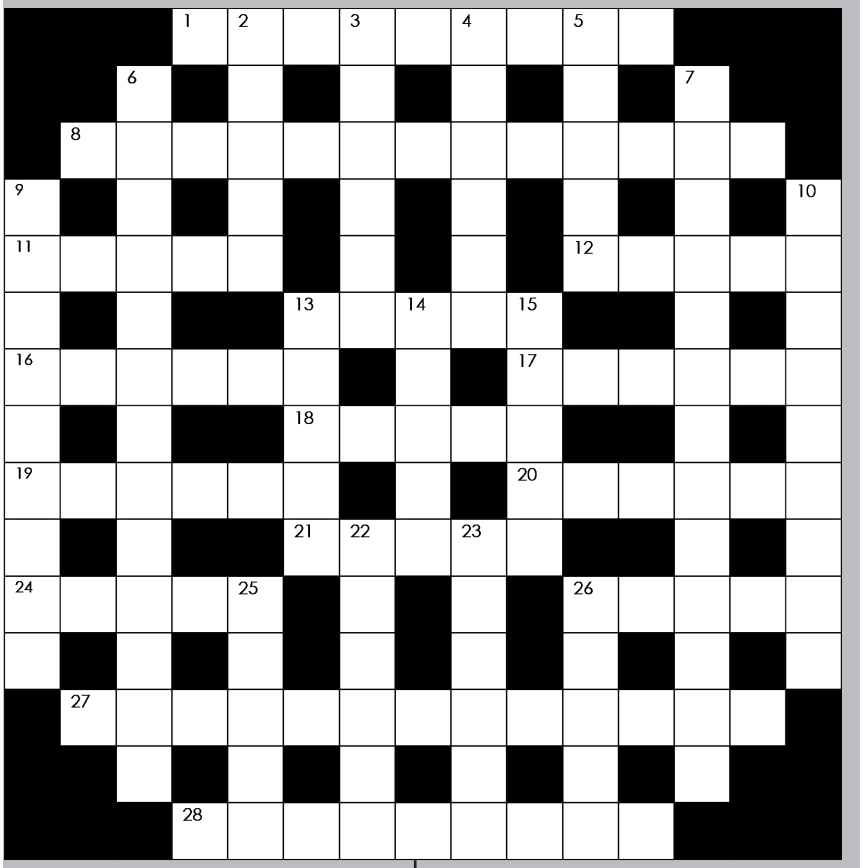
Raffle Raises over £500

A massive thank you to Ravello's, The Kings Head & Westlands Dental Practice who provided raffle prizes for our recent Patient Participation Group Summer Draw.
The sum of £540.50 was raised in total to be divided equally between Willowburn and the Lanchester Medical Centre Patient Participation Group.
We are indebted to all who bought and sold tickets and contributed bottles which added to the main prizes available.
Great to see the community come together in support.
Susan Graham, Chair: Lanchester Medical Centre, Patient Participation Group.



l-r Anita Petty, Rita Berry, Viv Watson, Marion Morrison, Jennifer Guy, Sue Graham, Jane Warren

CLUES CROSSWORD 210



Across

1. Make appear, as if by magic (7,2)
8. Quotation mark (8,5)
11. Storage place for buses or trains (5)
12. Bird's claw (5)
13. Apple product (5)
16. The 'Great Italian Tenor' (6)
17. 12.5% (6)
18. Lion King character (5)
19. "Close friends get to call him T.C…" (3,3)
20. Pour water on (6)
21. Performs a tune (5)
24. Shade of green (5)
26. Furniture item (5)
27. Most up to date technology or ideas (5,2,3,3)
28. Poetry that doesn't rhyme (4,5)

Down

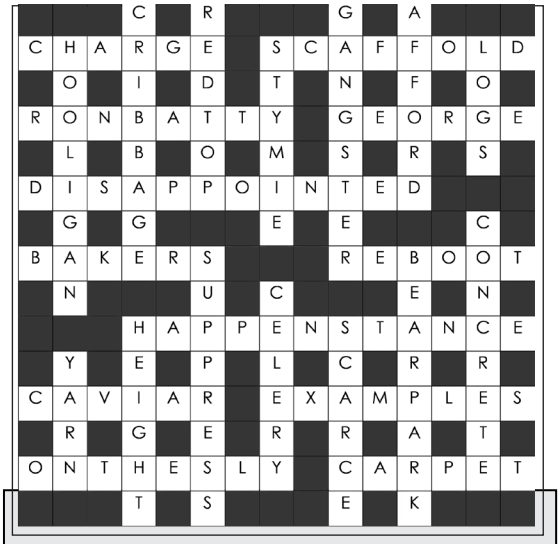
2. Deliberate and unconcealed (5)
3. Water scooter (3,3)
4. Mysterious question (6)
5. Wartime submarine (1-4)
6. Unsuitable (13)
7. Tributary of the River Browney (9,4)
9. Cautioned about the process of learning (9)
10. Spellbound (9)
13. Prices (5)
14. Evil spirit (5)
15. Studies (5)
22. Apple product (6)
23. Moderate and kind (6)
25. Go in (5)
26. Years of adolescence (5)

Name:_____

Address: _____

_____

Please send your completed entries for the £10 prize draw by **Tuesday 2nd September 2025** to the Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0HY



Solution Crossword 209

There were 17 entries of which 16 were correct.

The winner drawn from the hat was Martin Rutter

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Kirsty and Chris raise money for Motor Neurone Disease

Kirsty and Chris's dad, Steve Walker, died from Motor Neurone Disease (MND) in April 2021. He lived in Lee Hill Court where his wife Lynda still lives. They both decided to raise money for the MND Association in memory of Steve.These are their stories.

Kirsty's Story

Sadly, in April 2021 my dad died (four months after being diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease). It was because of him that I love running so much and therefore I have decided this year I'll run the Great North Run to raise funds for the 'My Name's Doddie Foundation'. Their vision is simple: A World Free of MND. A vision which I definitely agree with as I'd love for a cure to be found for MND so that no family has to go through the suffering that we as a family did. I'd love it if you could sponsor me to run this race in memory of my dad.

https://ajbellgreatnorthrun2025.enthuse.com/pf/kirsty-robinson

Kirsty Robinson



Kirsty with her dad Steve





Above Chris in Tanzania
Left Kirsty running

Traverse Tanzania for MND Association

In June I finished the hardest yet most rewarding physical challenge I've ever undertaken. I ran from (and halfway up and down) Mount Kilimanjaro to Lake Natron over 5 epic days, a total of 143.5 miles. Essentially 5 back-to-back ultra trail marathons (having never done one previously!). Daily stats are below if you're interested.

Each day varied from elevation gain, heat exposure, serious dust, unbelievably technical trails, thorn bushes, local Masai tribe encouragement and wildlife encounters. It's a running adventure I'll remember forever and feel so incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to do.

All of this was in memory of my dad, who passed away in 2021, whilst fundraising for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association. The money raised kept me going to the finish. But more so were the memories of growing up running with my dad and I'll always be thankful that he shared his love of running with me. It's become a huge part of my life and shaped a lot of who I am – something I know my dad would be hugely proud of.

A huge THANK YOU to anyone who has already donated - it really means so much. I managed to reach my £5k fundraising goal, something I am incredibly proud and grateful for.

You can still donate here - https://www.justgiving.com/page/chris-mnd-tanzania...

Day 1 32.34miles - 6h28 - 7,152ft elevation gain
Day 2 28.10miles - 4h36 - 558ft elevation gain
Day 3 27.25miles - 4h37 - 1,549ft elevation gain
Day 4 29.32miles - 5h07 - 1,755ft elevation gain
Day 5 26.50miles - 4h24 - 2,146ft elevation gain
TOTAL 143.51miles - 25h14 - 13,160ft elevation gain

Chris Walker

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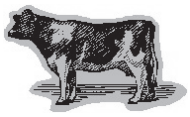
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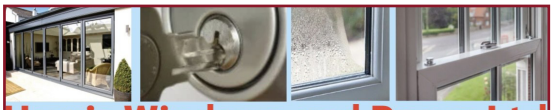
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Wildlife Group
The next meeting is on Tuesday 9th September at 7.30pm in Lanchester Community Centre. Join Lanchester Wildlife Group to hear Lorraine Gibson tell us about her experience bird ringing in Norway. Lorraine's talk will be illustrated so expect some wonderful scenery as well as photographs of dowdy winter migrants to the UK dressed up in their breeding finery. All are welcome. Free admission.

Flower Club
There will be no meeting in August. Our next meeting will be Wednesday 24th September 1.30 pm in Lanchester Community Centre. The well-known Val Guest will be our demonstrator. The theme will be "Autumn Odysseys". All are welcome, all arrangements will be raffled. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served. Everyone welcome, £5 entrance for non-members.
Meetings for the rest of the year:
Wednesday 22nd October - Social Afternoon.
Saturday 22nd November - Christmas Open Afternoon, 2 pm, Lanchester Community Centre main hall. Demonstrator Linda Fraser, "Fantastically Festive". Ticket price to be agreed.

WI
The next meeting is on Monday 1st September, 7pm, Lanchester Community Centre.
Fashion Show – Saturday 6th September, tickets £5 from Red Cross Shop and Willow Burn Boutique charity shop or contact 07922 004397 or email lanchesterwi@talktalk.net

City Theatre
The City Theatre, Durham, presents 'Alys Always' a psychological drama adapted by Lucinda Coxon, from the novel by Harriet Lane. Sept 21 to Sept 27. Frances works on a Sunday newspaper, but nobody takes much notice of her. After arriving at the scene of a fatal road accident her life starts to change. Contains strong language.

Tickets £9.50 (concessions £8.50 sun/ mon/ Tues) from Durham Gala box office. 03000266600 or www.durhamcitytheatre.co.uk and follow the link for tickets. Performances Sun 2.30, Mon to Fri 7.30, Sat 2.30.

Paradiso Social Club
NOTE: there is no film in August but we'll be back in September.
14th September: BILLY LIAR
We start our new season with a 1960s New Wave Classic comedy romance, Billy Liar. Starring Tom Courtney, Julie Christie, Wilfred Pickles, Mona Washbourne. "this excellent film directed by the late John Schlesinger (is) beautifully shot in B & W. Very evocative and imaginative". Going nowhere fast, Billy Fisher, an incorrigible fantasizer, dreams incessantly of escaping his drab existence and humdrum routine work as an undertakers' clerk in Yorkshire. Seeking refuge from his working-class family and not one but two demanding fiancees in the imaginary country called Ambrosia, more and more, Billy finds himself cut off from reality, picturing himself as its ruler and hero. Lanchester Community Centre, 7pm refreshments and raffle. Film starts at 7.30pm. Members: £4, Non-members: £5. Annual membership: £5

Musical Memories - we're here all summer
Join us for music, refreshments and fun activities.
2pm-3.30pm on the 3rd September - an Abba special.
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

Library
Library Book Club
On Monday September 22nd at 2.30 to 3.30pm, the group will be discussing "The Fraud" by Zadie Smith. 'Inspired by a celebrated court case, combines deft writing and strenuous construction in a tale of literary London and the horrors of slavery.' (The Guardian). I think this book will generate a lot of discussion.
Thursday Book Club
On Thursday September 18th from 4.00-5.00pm, the group will be discussing "Homecoming" by Bernhard Schlink. 'It is a story of fathers and sons, men and women, war and peace. It reveals the humanity that survives the trauma of war and the ongoing possibility for redemption' (Goodreads). I would like to read this, would you? If you would like to join this group, pop into the library and speak to the librarians.
Pins and Needles will meet up on September 4th from 10-11.30am. Bring along your wool, thread, needles and patterns and share your makes and get advice too. Do you like knitting, crocheting? Everyone is welcome, enjoy.
Scrabble Group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.30 pm. Do you enjoy this word game and want to get on the Triple Word Square? Come along and enjoy the company.
Rummikub Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 1.30 to 3.30pm. A great strategic but simple game with tiles that are always changing. It is a very enjoyable game.
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.
Book Loan Reminders. Did you know that you can ask Crystal, our librarian, to put a reminder on your library ticket when your books are due? It is very useful, getting an email reminder. Ask at the library.

Local History
We will be meeting as usual in the community centre on Friday 1st August to hear Richard Annis talking about "Sustaining your Heritage". On Friday 5th September it's the AGM, but that will be a swift affair followed by Paul Hetherington and "Oath, Arms and Anarchy: The 1663 Plot that shook England", locally known as the Muggleswick or Derwentdale plot. Then staying in the west of the patch our 3rd October meeting will be George Nairn with his "Postcards on A68 CarterBar to Darlington". Don't forget 6.45 for 7.00 start negotiating the security door system. All welcome and do come along and join us.

Patient Participation Group
Lanchester Medical Centre, Patient Participation Group will be meeting on Wednesday the 3rd September at 10:00 - 12:00 in the surgery meeting room. Everyone who is registered with the Medical Centre is welcome to attend.

Lunch Club (Cuppa and Company)
The next meeting of the lunch held at Lynwood House will be 9th September, 12 pm start, all welcome.

Acappella Choir
(singing without musical accompaniment)
This is held in the Chapter House of All Saints church every Monday between 10.30 and 12. New members are always welcome. No previous choir experience necessary. We sing a wide variety of songs, lead by Sheila Trow, and are open to both men and women.

Methodist Church Coffee Mornings
Coffee mornings are held every Saturday at the Methodist Church between 10 and 12. If you would like to organise a coffee morning for your organisation, please contact Judith Brown on 521898.

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 or call

03000 262539.

Playgroup
Every Friday at 9:30 at Croft View Halls. Find us on Facebook, 'Lanchester's new playgroup'.

The Lanchester Community Orchard Work Sessions
We meet regularly to maintain and care for the orchard. Come and join us to find out more and help look after the trees. There are jobs for all ages and we always stop for coffee! New members are always welcome. For all our work session dates please visit the What's On page of our website lanchesterorchard.org

Lanchester Hiking Group
Meets at 10am on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. 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).

Monday Art Group
We are a small friendly group who enjoy painting and drawing, and come together to learn, and give each other support in making art. We meet each Monday in the Community Centre from 10.00am to 12pm with an occasional demonstration by visiting artists or our own members. New members are most welcome. Contact tojimrafferty@yahoo.com if you would like further information.

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

Lanchester Partnership Friends of Longovicium
For our September 25th meeting we are holding a FREE drop in open evening with information displays about the fort, our work and what has been discovered. You can handle some genuine Roman pottery, try on a replica Roman helmet and feel the weight of a replica Roman sword. Event open 6.00pm until 9.00pm. Drop in for whatever length of time you like. Light refreshments will be available. From 7.30pm we will have a short talk about metal detecting, followed by a very interesting and engaging talk titled the Roman NHS revealing how amazingly advanced Roman medicine and health care really was.

Scottish Dance
Scottish dancing takes place every Friday 7.30 to 9.30 in the community centre and complete beginners are very welcome, contact Elizabeth Grayson on 0191 384 4836 for more information.

Lanchester Art Group
Annual Exhibition will this year be held on Sat/Sun October 18-19th at the Community Centre. Doors open 10 am until 5pm both days and admission is £1 (children free). Over 250 original pictures to view with many for sale, scrummy refreshments also available.

Sewing Group
Every Wednesday, 1-3pm at Lanchester Community Centre. We are a small friendly group with space to grow into. We enjoy sewing, knitting, crochet, embroudery and cross stitch - as well as having a cuppa and a biscuit and sometimes cake! There is chatting and a laugh. Starting Wednesday 10th September. We do have to pay for room hire after 10th September. For more information ring Elaine 01207 520063. No reply, please leave your name and number and Elaine will get back to you. Looking forward to meeting you and for you to join us.

Community Centre News

Here is your latest news from your Community Centre, there is a lot going on!
What's coming:
Saturday 6th September 1pm to 3pm - Fun Dog Show, join us after the summer holidays for doggy fun. Register before the event for £2.50 or on the day £4. Registration forms from Lilydale Pet Shop, Lanchester Country Basket or the community centre. Five classes to enter, be quick as numbers are limited in each class. Classes are Puppy, Waggiest Tail, Best Young Handler, Veteran Dog, and Precious Pooch.
What's new:
FITNESS 4U.
Our gym has new Kettle Bells from 6-20kg and a new cross trainer. The gym is open 7 days a week.
We run inductions for new members about every 2 weeks. It costs £19.50 a month to join and there is no fixed contract. Each member receives a door fob to access the gym while the building is secure.
News from Recent Events:

- We held a great craft 'De-Stash' sale in June and raised £410 for the community centre.
- We held a summer raffle and raised £91. Thank you to everyone who entered the raffle and a BIG thank you to the businesses in the village that supported us:
    - The Kings Head
    - Golden Valley
    - Indian Chef
    - ASDA Stanley
    - Gallery Coffee Shop

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, 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/ or scan the QR code for our website.
Marie Murphy

Lanchester Flower Club

Member of the National Association of Flower Arrangers Society

Our meeting was held on the 25th June in Lanchester Community Centre. It was a different meeting to our usual demonstration. Normally we would have our June Summer Outing but alas many members are not as mobile, so we decided to have a social event with a buffet lunch. A big thank you to Jan Vasey who entertained us with a “Call My Bluff” quiz. So much laughter and a jolly afternoon was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

There will be no meeting in August. Our next meeting will be Wednesday 24th September 1.30 pm in Lanchester Community Centre. The well-known Val Guest will be our demonstrator. The theme will be “Autumn Odysseys”. All are welcome, all arrangements will be raffled. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served. Everyone welcome, £5 entrance for non-members.

Lestrine Kelly

Cricket Round Up

Despite a poor run of results, the first remain in contention to get promotion to the Premier Division. This has to be the closest season the League has seen. At Tynedale, the side made 275-4 before declaring, unfortunately giving the home side enough overs to chase the target down. Reuben Do Toit scored his second century making 112 with good support from Kieran Gohery 63 and John Meadows with 60. The following week with multiple absentees, they lost at home to Seaham Harbour, Josh Renton taking 4-22 and top scoring with 36. They then did the double over Newcastle City who were league leaders on the day. Lanchester scored 181 with John Meadows top scoring with 77, then bowled their opponents out for 157, Callum Barnes taking 5-29.

The seconds had a good win over Burnmoor, a heavy defeat with Seaham Harbour, had a winning draw with Newcastle City and thrashed Willington. Against Burnmoor, Jack Slane took 4 wickets, and Nathan Somersall led the team home with an unbeaten 46. Chasing 260 against Newcastle, they ended up 3 runs short, with John McGilvray ending 93 not out, Nathan Somersall having made 43. Then against Willington, Jack Slane scored his maiden century, blasting 140 off 107 balls, with 3 sixes and 19 fours. The margin of victory was 182 runs as all eight bowlers took wickets.

The thirds lost to Seaham Harbour, beat Shotley Bridge and lost at Castle Eden. Against the Harbour, Ibs Khan and Michael Oxley made 48 and 47 respectively. Against Shotley, Charlie McPhail claimed an unbeaten 101 with Josh Cottom making 54. Joe Malone took 3-19. At Castle Eden, we saw the return of David Selby to his home club, and he made 48.

Junior Section

The only under 19s fixture saw them lose by 7 runs at Willington and like the previous loss, had they bowled fewer wides they would have been in with a great chance of winning and were short of two of their best players.

The under 17s lost by 3 runs at Burnopfield despite 55 by James Leary and 40 from Riley Sayer. They then easily beat Leadgate in the League Cup Semi Final, winning by 7 wickets after bowling the opposition out for 70. Joe Malone had the fabulous figures of 4 overs, 2 maidens, 4 runs, 4 wickets. They will face Lintz in the Final.

The 15s trounced Lintz by 9 wickets but then lost by 31 runs at Consett before being rained off against Whickham. Riley Sayer took 3-4 and Nathan Watson 3-22 against Lintz with Riley also making an unbeaten 42. At Consett, Alfie Armstrong took 2-17 and made an unbeaten 31 in a disappointing team performance.

At the ninth attempt, the under 13s, most of whom are 12, won their first league game beating Burnopfield, having lost heavily to Annfield Plain and by 5 wickets to Blaydon. In their victory, Will Somerville retired on 30 as did Charlie Gray who was making his debut, Ollie Wainwright also chipped in with an unbeaten 20. Will also claimed two wickets in the heartening win.

We have 2 under 11 teams who play in the same division. The all boys team has won five games and sits second, while the all girls team have won 2 and sit fourth. The under 9s continue to do well winning five of their seven matches, though their matches are classed as friendlies so they don’t have a league position (but it would be second!).

Off the Field

The club has joined a national competition which is sponsored by Toyota, and you could win one of the 54 amazing prizes, with all the tickets you buy, the money goes straight to our club. You will see posters round the village, and you can use the QR code to enter. Alternatively go to toyotagoodforcricket.co.uk, put in ‘Lanchester’ and ‘Support us’ and the club will get your money. It is an easy way to help the club, but the prizes are brilliant. The poster doesn’t do them justice. There are three cars up for grabs, a load of cricket related prizes but stacks of gift vouchers each worth more than £200 up to £500. The competition closes on 30th September. We would appreciate your support but don’t do it for us, do it for yourselves too!

Back in 1998, Lanchester had two New Zealanders playing for them, Scott Styris and Mike Hayman. Scott was in his second year and would go on to play for his country the following year, embarking on an illustrious career, making him the most famous player we have had at the club. During that 1998 season, the pair performed very well, no more so than in the July, when Scott scored an unbeaten 132 against Swalwell but then Mike became only the second and last player at the club to take all ten wickets. They had not een each other since 1998, until 12th July. Mike had been at the club for a second year, coaching the junior section and Scott found himself at a loose end from his cricket punditry and came back to visit. The two got on like a house on fire and attracted several older faces back to the club to come and have a chat, a splendid day for all.

Andrew McConnell



Photograph Mike Hayman (in green) and Scott Styris (in black)

Lanchester Parish Council

Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held in Lynwood House on Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 7.00pm

Minutes –Ordinary Meeting 10th June – approved
Police Reports
Members were updated on the recent PACT report for June
Bus Shelter
Members were updated on the recent incidents at some of the bus shelters in the Village
Bike Track
Members were informed that children are continuously digging up the bike track. Councillors suggested setting up a workshop and involving the schools to potentially improve the bike track
Durham County Councillor
County Cllr A Gray provided an update on the areas she has recently been working on –

- Visit to the allotments
- Consultations in the area regarding parking restrictions
- Request for a new sign at Hornsby/Oakwood and the Lanchester Village sign on Durham Road
- Request for the 'slow' signs at Hollinside be repainted
- Requests from residents for more Vape recycling bins. These must be in a community building and there is one in the library
- Walkabout with Brian Weatherall from Durham County Council; he has agreed that a bigger gully in the Queens car park would be beneficial

Lanchester Solar Planet Walk
Councillors received an update on the project – Clerk to contact DCC procurement, the contractors and send information to Cllr Smith
Beacon Event – VJ Day 80
Councillors were updated on the details of the event
Cricket Club
Councillors discussed the situation at the Cricket Club
DCC Consultations
Councillors were informed of two consultations for two new Rights of Way – Clerk to write a letter of support
County Durham Plan
Members were given information on the new County Durham Plan. Clerk to keep the Council informed of all updates and progress
Christmas Light Switch On
Councillors approved the quote for the annual work to the Christmas Lights
Weeding around the Village
Cllr Gray had noticed some areas around the Village that needed attention. The areas that were discussed were County Highways responsibility and they had actually carried out some work by the time the meeting was held
Newsletter
Councillors approved the Newsletter for August
Financial report – approved
Accounts for Payment – approved
Chairperson's Announcements
A request was received from Burnhope Partnership asking for permission to place two Heritage Trail plaques within the boundary of Lanchester Parish - approved

Meetings are every second Tuesday of the month, the next two meetings will be held on 9th September and 14th October

Thursday Club

We have today been on our summer outing to Richmond in North Yorkshire and then to Mainsgill farm outlet.

We were lucky to experience good weather, not too hot but dry and warm. Everyone managed to find something to eat and drink and some made purchases (fancy that!).

Sometimes it is difficult to find places that suit our abilities, but this turned out to be a successful trip despite worrying about the hills in Richmond.

Our driver from Weardale coaches, Jason, was very helpful and we thanked him for his careful driving, choosing safe routes and being cheerful.

Jan Vasey





Lanchester Endowed Parochial School

It is hard to believe another academic year has come to a close and we have said an emotional goodbye to 59 Year 6 children. We grow so attached to the children in our care and go through so many highs and lows with them, that they really do feel like part of your extended family by the time they leave. It is always so good to see how they have flourished in so many ways. However, they had a wonderful end to their time with us, enjoying a week in Northern Ireland and a BBQ and social evening in school. They are more than ready for their next exciting step in their little lives!

230 of our Key Stage 2 children put on two performances of 'Yanomamo' in Consett Empire Theatre in the penultimate week of term. This followed some work with the whole school about life in the rainforests and the impact the destruction of the rainforests is having on so many animals and people. Their two performances were phenomenal with solos from four children who were sloths and jaguars as well as some beautiful group singing. Narrators very eloquently shared facts and information about life in the rainforest whilst images and videos were displayed. The children performed to two packed theatres and sang so confidently and enthusiastically. It really was so heart-warming to hear and see them and left staff and parents alike feeling so very proud of them all.

We were also thrilled to inform our school community that once more, we have been successful in our application for funding from The Turing Scheme. We have been awarded £50,000 to take children to Delhi, Dubai, Istanbul and Shanghai next academic year. We were delighted that we have, once again, been successful with this bid as it is becoming increasingly competitive and we know of a number of other local schools who were unsuccessful with their bids. It looks to be another exciting year for many of our pupils and staff.

Let's hope the weather is kind to us over the summer holidays and our children and staff enjoy a relaxing break. Teachers are like solar panels – they need the summer break to re-charge their batteries! See you all in September!

Jane Davis
Head Teacher



One of the perfances of Yanomamo' in Consett Empire Theatre

St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College

Activities Week
In the last week of this academic year, students at St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College took part in our eagerly anticipated Activities Week, a highlight of the school calendar and a celebration of community, creativity and fun.
The week kicked off with a touch of magic, as a professional magician dazzled students with mind-bending tricks and interactive illusions. This was just the beginning of a packed schedule that included high-energy gameshows, competitive sporting activities and calming mindfulness sessions to help students recharge. Students engaged brilliantly with the activities and have truly done themselves proud with their enthusiasm and gusto.
One of the standout events of the week was our charity cycle to Austin, Texas; a collaborative effort across year groups using exercise bikes to "travel" the 4,600+ miles from Lanchester across the Atlantic. The event raised funds that will help to subsidise activities during the next academic year, ensuring that all students can continue to access a rich and varied programme across the year. The generosity and dedication shown by our students, staff and wider community was truly inspiring.
Throughout the week, staff were incredibly impressed by students' conduct and participation. Whether cheering on classmates, trying something new, or simply offering a helping hand, our students showed the best of St Bede's spirit at every turn. Their behaviour was a credit to the school, and we are immensely proud of the way they embraced each opportunity.
As the week drew to a close, there was already a sense of anticipation in the air for what next year might bring. With such a successful and joyful week behind us, we can't wait to begin planning for 2026. A huge thank you to all students and staff who made this year's Activities Week so special, roll on next year!

Lanchester All Saints' Catholic Primary School

At the end of summer term, we proudly said goodbye to our twenty three Year Six pupils who left us to begin their secondary school education. Our pupils are ready for the upcoming opportunities and experiences that their secondary school will bring; we are extremely proud of the progress they have made.

Our main job at All Saints' is shared with the families each September at our introduction event: to raise young people who know about their own gifts and talents and understand they can be positive agents of change in the world. This cohort of pupils have certainly done that. Since September 2018, they have been kind, enthusiastic, hardworking and engaged. They have achieved exceptionally well in their SATs and have inspired their buddies, in our Early Years, to be hardworking and kind too. They have been experts in following our mission statement, 'Aspire not to have more but to be more'.

Amongst school celebrations like jubilee and water day or the school fair, their residential, their leavers' trip to the cinema and bowling, sports' day, writing their year book or for their transition events, they managed to squeeze in practices for their leavers' assembly and leavers' Mass including a liturgical dance to our Irish blessing, "May the Road Rise to Meet You".

In the last week, our Year Six pupils took time to celebrate each other's best moments throughout their time here and gave awards to their peers. Their strengths, memories and personal quirks were celebrated with the whole community. We are thankful for our nurturing school family where we know each child intimately. At All Saints', we often think that our significantly experienced staff and smaller class sizes are what some pay thousands of pounds for within private education, yet we provide this education for free here. With an inclusive, nurturing family and excellent academic results (100% of pupils achieving expected standard in phonics in Year One, 78% of pupils in Year Four achieving full marks in their times tables check – with an average score of 24.5 out of 25, and 87% of pupils achieving maths, reading and 95% of Year Six pupils achieving at least expected standard in grammar), why wouldn't you consider sending your child to All Saints'? For individual visits, please request a visit via: asl@asl.bwcet.com or by calling 01207 520435 or come along to our Nursery and Reception open day on Saturday 20th September, 10.30am – 12 noon. In the meantime, have a wonderful summer holiday!

Frances Stephenson
Head Teacher



World Challenge
Also, in the last week of term, a small group of students and staff travelled to Vietnam to take part in World Challenge. Not only were these students able to immerse themselves in Vietnamese culture and experience the trip of a lifetime, but they also contributed to the development of the local area by helping to clear an area for a playground to be built. We are immensely proud of their contribution, well done!
Catherine Hammill
Head Teacher





Lanchester Bowling Club - A Topsy Turvy Season

Normally at the beginning of the season the bowling greens are heavy to play on necessitating a lot of power to get a bowl anywhere near a jack even three quarters of the way up a rink. This year, however, the dry, warm spring meant that they played like artificial indoor rinks - fast and with a lot of bend - a condition normally more associated with August than May.

As the dry weather continued into June, the rinks became harder, the grass more threadbare and bowling was physically easier than usual.

Sadly, that didn't mean that getting results became easy. Although there were some notable wins, stringing them together became difficult. As with all team games, bowls needs consistent squads with players adapting to and learning the skills required for their position. Unfortunately, a string of illnesses, medical problems (mainly to our more experienced players) and holidays meant that teams had to frequently be altered from week to week, with players having to play in positions that they were lacking experience in.

This constant changing of personnel has been reflected in our league results which make embarrassing reading. As of writing, Lanchester are bottom of the Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening leagues. A sad state of affairs.

In the South West Durham league our A team, which worked hard for promotion last season, are second bottom of division one and staring relegation in the face. An eight nil drubbing on a damp, sand covered pitch by Cockton Hill all but put paid to the B team's chances of promotion from division two.

Although both A and B teams got through the first round of the cup, both were knocked out in the second round; the B team did, however, get the chance to play on the lush grass of Houghton Dairy Lane where the Durham County team play their home games.

By the midpoint of the season with a change in weather, the pitches became heavier and rain caused matches to be called off or abandoned mid-game. Heavier rinks made it more difficult for some of the inexperienced bowlers who struggled with bowling to long jacks.

Whilst our results are not what we wanted or even anticipated, there have been some positives. The main one being that we are still attracting new bowlers and have been able to introduce them to match play. At the end of July alone three brand new bowlers were given the chance to play in league games. This can only bode well for the future.

In "The Horse and His Boy", C. S. Lewis wrote: "When things go wrong, you'll find they usually go on getting worse for some time: but when things once start going right they often go on getting better and better." As our new bowlers continue to gain experience, let's hope that this is the case.

Bob Cuthbertson



Lanchester vs Dipton July 2025

Lanchester vs Dipton July 2025

Tennis News

The summer tennis season continues with lots of great play on our grass courts, as well as plenty of opportunities for social events too.

An annual tradition at the tennis club is the very popular "sausage sizzle", this well attended event is held to celebrate the success of all those taking part in the clubs weekly coaching programme for children, and adults. Once again Sally Laverick took to the barbecue, ably assisted by members of the club's social committee, ensuring that delicious sizzling sausages in buns, and hot drinks were provided for all. Many thanks to our coaches Adam Parker and Dennis Laycock for their enthusiastic coaching throughout the season. Coaching continues through the summer, any enquiries regarding coaching, please contact the club on lanchestertennis@gmail.com.

During July the club also held the annual friendly tournament for players of all abilities, there was plenty of great tennis, lots of laughter and a tasty tea to follow!

Many thanks to Adam Plumpton (men's captain) for his organisational skills, and congratulations to Michelle Ridley, and David Raw the overall winners.

The fair weather was interrupted by a weekend of heavy rain on the 19th July, the day we were hoping to hold our Strawberry Tea and Tennis event, rather disappointing but for once the weather forecasters were correct, and attendees could be informed well in advance!

League matches continue with a very competitive match for the Mixed Doubles Vets against Hexham, a draw in sets 4 - 4 but Hexham narrowly clinching the win with 36 games to Lanchester's 32.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook or check out our website: www.lanchesterlawntennisclub.co.uk.

Barbara Ridley







Photos. Top Adam Plumpton, Middle l-r David Raw, Adam Plumpton and Michelle Ridley. Bottom Sausage Sizzle

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