the Village Voice

Issue No 5, Volume 25 Lanchester, May 2025



Easter-time in Lanchester













Above: Easter day activities, see page 3

Left: Pace Egg, see page 7

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VE Day Celebration at the Community Café

On May 4th, Lanchester Community Cafe kicked off the VE Day 80 celebrations with an amazing indoor street party which included street food, live entertainment and family entertainment, stalls including tombola, bottle tombola, cake stall and raffle. We even had the amazing street organ brought along by Stuart. The fantastic Carrie Steele performed her Wartime Show early in the afternoon, then returned with a Best Of British Show. She really got the crowd going with a good old fashioned sing along. The whole day was a massive success.
This was another not for profit event to bring families in the village together to mark this momentous occasion.
We felt it was important to instil into our younger generation the importance of celebrating and remembering those who gave so much. All proceeds were gratefully received by Help for Heroes.

We loved putting it all together and the turnout was fantastic, thank you to Lanchester Community Centre for allowing us to put on the event at their centre, Stuart for bringing his street organ, Tesco, Asda and a few small businesses for their donations. Thank you to the businesses who allowed us to put posters up. Thank you to everyone who came along. You all made the day very special.
Our biggest thanks are to the volunteers who gave their time and effort for this amazing cause. Thank you to (in no particular order) Charlie, Janet, Sally, Chris, Sheila, Kay, Brandy, Emma, Margaret, and Stuart.

Michael Martin





Left: "The stalls"
Right: "Carrie Steele sings her Wartime Show."

Lanchester resident recalls her late husband's wartime exploits

As Lanchester commemorated VE Day, the Village Voice talked to a resident whose late husband's war time exploits are still commemorated in a village in northern France.
Les Boyes spent his 21st birthday on his first ever bombing mission over occupied France. After almost two years training in Canada the North Easterner was a flight lieutenant and bomb aimer on a Lancaster bomber. He and his six comrades took off from an airfield in Lancashire shortly before midnight on June 6, 1944. On June 7 Les became 21.
His family still have the diary Les kept of his wartime exploits, and his widow Marjory Boyes from Lanchester kindly shared the details with the Village Voice. (Marjory was 100 last year and featured in the Village Voice October 2024)
Leslie Campbell Boyes, known to his family as Les, joined the RAF at 18 as soon as he was old enough. "They sent him off to Canada for training almost immediately," said Marjory. The cold certainly took him by surprise and when he arrived in Canada, he was very much underdressed. It was the first time he had been out of England."
After training Les became part of the Lancaster crew but after only eight bombing raids his plane was shot down over Northern France on June 29, 1944, just over three weeks after Les's 21st birthday. "Les parachuted to the ground but three of the seven-man crew perished. One of them died when the parachute caught the fuselage of the stricken plane," said Marjory.
In the village of Troisvaux in the Pas de Calais district of France close to where the Lancaster crashed, the crew are still commemorated, and Les's family were invited to an event last year to mark the 80th anniversary of the crash. Whilst they were unable to attend, they are grateful that the Lancaster crew have not been forgotten.
The three members who perished are buried in the village graveyard and the local website reports that three of the four others, including Les, were taken prisoner. But one escaped capture by spending the remainder of the war in a convent disguised as a nun!
On landing Les was helped by a local French family who loaned him some farm clothes to wear over his uniform and also a cow to walk to a nearby barn to shelter. But despite their help his efforts to make it back to England were quickly foiled when he was captured.
He was transferred to the prisoner of war camp Stalag Luft 3, scene of the Great Escape of 1944 which featured in the 1963 film of the same name. He found conditions there tolerable mainly thanks to Red Cross parcels. There was even a sort of bartering system where British, American and other allied prisoners would swap the contents of their parcels.
Conditions would soon get much worse for Les and the other prisoners as in the harsh winter of January 1945 they were forced to evacuate the camp and march westwards as the Red Army advanced from the east.
"Les said the boots would literally stick to his feet. The prisoners pushed a wooden raft with supplies. It was a horrendous winter and if they were lucky they would find a barn to bed down with only their coats as blankets. Then they were piled into cattle trucks, standing room only, and were transported 36 hours without water," explained Marjory, a sprightly 100.
In March of 1945 the prisoners were liberated by the Americans and Les was soon able to return home where Marjory, his young sweetheart, was waiting. After the war Les attended night school and enjoyed a successful career in the pharmaceutical industry, moving around the country and eventually settling in the Lake District.
When Les died in 2006 Marjory moved to Lanchester where she has lived happily close to her family.
But as the village celebrated the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day this May she offered to share an account of her late husband's wartime heroics with the Village Voice, exploits that are still remembered in a village in France.

Neil McKay

Below: Les, his widow Marjory and his medal.







VE Day 80th Anniversary Celebrations in Lanchester and Burnhope

Some of the shops in Lanchester had VE day decorations and there were flags flying in Lanchester to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) when fighting came to an end in Europe but, of course, fighting carried on in the Far East until August 15th 1945 when the Japanese surrendered – the day known as VJ day.
There was a service on the Green on May 8th in the afternoon. It was well attended with pupils from all the schools in Lanchester attending and participating as well as the general public. The service was led by the Revd Lesley Sutherland and the chairs of both Lanchester and Burnhope Parish Councils, Keith Harrison and Derek Coates respectively, welcomed everybody to the event. There were readings, prayers, hymns and reflections. Individual pupils from the schools participated with some of the readings.
Mark Draper played the Last Post and Reveille. Eric Hepplewhite was flag bearer, lowering the flag during the Last Post and raising it during the Reveille.
The service ended with a blessing and the singing of the National Anthem.
Later in the day there was a service and lighting of the Beacon at Burnhope. There was cake served by the Lanchester BB lads (see article) with a very welcome cup of tea or coffee as it was freezing. Two of the BB lads were also flag bearers.
Lanchester Band played music before the start of the service and for I Vow to Thee My Country.
The service was led by Rev Lesley Sutherland with welcomes from the two parish council chairs.
There were readings, prayers and the piper played after the beacon was lit. Again, the service ended with the National Anthem.

Keith Brown



Right: VE day chip cone



Above: Beacon lit with the mast and the moon in the background



Above: Eric Hepplewhite, Flag Bearer and Mark Draper who played the Last Post and Reveille



Above: l-r Revd Lesley Sutherland, Derek Coates (Chair of Burnhope Parish Council) and Keith Harrison (Chair of Lanchester Parish Council)



Above: School children, staff and general public at the service on the Green

Below: Lanchester Band at the Beacon Service



Easter in Lanchester

The Easter trail was a new initiative launched by a number of businesses in Lanchester and was held on Easter Sunday. It proved to be a great success.
The King's Head hosted and ran a duck race, bonnet parade, and family quiz. The idea of the Bonnet Parade came from Sarah at the Ice Cream Shop. There were over 100 at the duck race and about 70 for the family quiz.
Grandpa's Fish Bar sold battered cream eggs and cones of chips. The Spar had a colouring competition and raffle.
Crinnions hosted an egg hunt, meet and greet Easter Bunny, and a disco. The day finished off at Lanchester social club with a karaoke.
Following this great success, the businesses hope to make this event a yearly tradition.
It was a fantastic day and great for the local economy. The organisers estimate that they raised approximately £600 for Willow Burn.
The photos show what a great day it was – credit to the organisers for the idea and making it happen.







More photos on the front cover

King and Queen visit Durham Cathedral to distribute Maundy Money

Royal Maundy is a religious service in the Church of England held on Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday. At the service, the British monarch or a royal official ceremonially distributes small silver coins, known as "Maundy money", as symbolic alms to elderly recipients. Recipients were once chosen for their poverty and were entitled to remain as Maundy recipients for life; today new recipients are chosen every year for service to their churches or communities, on the recommendation of clergymen of various Christian denominations. Generally, recipients live in the diocese where the service is held. (Wikipedia). There were four people in the Parishes of Lanchester of Burnhope who were involved – two as recipients. These are their stories.

Revd Lesley Sutherland

Maundy Thursday 2025 was an auspicious day for Lanchester and Burnhope, and particularly in the life of our Anglican churches. As Area Dean of Lanchester Deanery I had the honour of taking part in the Maundy Money procession in the Cathedral after being consulted as to nominations for recipients of the Maundy money to be distributed by the King. Eric Hepplewhite and Doreen Park had been chosen to receive for their considerable services to our communities; and Marc Cliff, a member of our congregation and working as part of the Cathedral security team, had a particularly important job looking after some of the historic items used in the service itself.

Clergy met and robed early on the day in the famous Chapter House (otherwise known as one of the sets for the Harry Potter movies), and then waited patiently to process into the cathedral to be seated in the choir. Views of the Royal party were somewhat limited, but we were compensated by being surrounded by the two choirs of the Cathedral and the Chapel Royal, who made the most glorious music. We also had a ringside view of the 6 Beefeaters (including the first woman to be appointed) who carried the trays upon which the Maundy money sat. They were splendid figures up close, and absolutely expressionless- although I did try to raise a smile from the Yeoman Warder in front of me.

The service was quite wonderful in its pageantry, and all too soon over; but what a privilege it was to take a very small part in such a historic occasion.

Rev'd Lesley Sutherland, Vicar All Saints and St John Burnhope, Area Dean Lanchester Deanery

Doreen Park

The day had arrived. My daughter and I rose early, we dressed and made our way to Howlands Farm Park and Ride. After our tickets and ID were checked, we were subject to a cursory search. Then we were driven by shuttle bus to Durham Cathedral. Cadets of the Air Training Corps escorted us into the Learning Centre where we had tea or coffee. We were then escorted into the Cathedral where I got my name badge and then shown to our seats. The service began after ceremonial parades. After the first reading, King Charles then proceeded to the south transept. He stopped at every one of us individually and put two purses into our hands. He then held both our hands in both of his hands and thanked us for all our time and work in our church and community. After the second reading, the King went to the north transept and gave everyone their purses, speaking, once again, to everyone.

The service then continued. Bishop Sarah gave the blessing at the end. We all remained seated until The King and Queen and all in the processions processed out. We then went to our awaiting shuttle buses. It was a fantastic occasion and one that I will never forget. I only wish we had been allowed to take photographs as it was a spectacle to see.

Doreen Park, Reader with PTO, St John Burnhope

Eric Hepplewhite *(written by his wife Sylvia)*

On 30 January Eric received a letter he was most surprised to receive – it was from Buckingham Palace informing him he had been nominated to receive Maundy Money from the King at Durham Cathedral and asking if he would like to take up the offer! After he'd re-checked the envelope and re-read the letter – which incidentally was dated the day of his birthday – he sat quite dumbfounded before gathering his thoughts to reply.

So, on 19 April we were up bright and early (too early as it happens!) to make our way to the Cathedral for 8.30 a.m. Having left early to make sure we got a parking place – we had the pick of the car park – and to miss any traffic queues – there were none – we arrived at the road leading up to the Cathedral at 7.40 a.m. There were already about 100 or so people queuing to get onto Palace Green, including some protestors, but we were directed further up the road to the queue for ticket holders – we were first in the queue.

At 8.30a.m. we were directed to the Castle where there was a reception for Recipients. At 9.30 a.m. we were escorted to the Cathedral and handed over to someone who gave Eric a badge which signified he was the Recipient and who escorted us to our allocated seats. The Recipients were seated on the outside aisle seats as the King walked up the aisles to present the money.

The timing of the ceremony was immaculate; various processions took place prior to the King's arrival, then at precisely 11 a.m. the fanfare sounded, and we all stood for the King's procession.

The Maundy Money was presented in two parts with those in the south part of the Cathedral receiving theirs first. There was then a bible reading and then those in the north part received theirs. After the service the King did a short walk about and, as stated, at precisely 1 p.m. he was in the car and left.

A once in a lifetime experience as it is 60 years since the Maundy Money was last distributed in Durham so, apart from the very young ones, if it takes as long to have a re-visit then most of us will not be around to see it.

We were so lucky to have such an amazing experience and Eric is so greatly honoured to have been nominated.

Many thanks to his nominator and also to the many people who have helped him in his numerous "crazy ideas" over the years such as the poppies, crocuses and more, as well as the Boys' Brigade leaders over the past 30 years, all of whom no doubt helped put him in this most enviable position.

Sylvia Hepplewhite

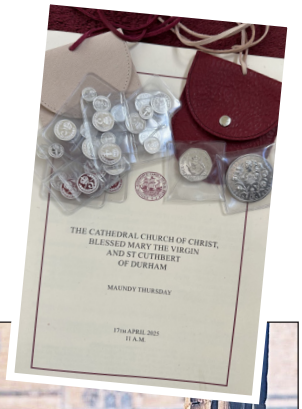
Marc Cliff

On Thursday, 17th April 2025, I spent most of the day on duty in Durham Cathedral, quietly keeping watch over a set of gilded silver plates. That might not seem particularly spiritual at first glance, but it was one of the most powerful days I've experienced.

These weren't just any plates; they're part of the Crown Jewels, used exclusively for the Royal Maundy service. They had arrived under tight security from the Tower of London the day before, and I had the responsibility of watching over them until the King and Queen arrived, and after they'd left, too. My post was between the Quire and the High Altar. The plates had been laid out with care, resting at the foot of a large, bare wooden cross. There was no figure on it, no decoration, just the cross, simple and honest.

The plates are silver, but gilded, and when the light caught them, they shimmered with a subdued brilliance. One of them dates from the reign of Charles II and has been used since the 17th century. That piece alone has witnessed over three centuries of royal ceremony. And now, it was placed humbly beneath the symbol of Christ's sacrifice. There was a weight to that, not just in history, but in meaning.

King and Queen visit Durham Cathedral to distribute Maundy Money



It was humbling to stand there. These plates, often associated with prestige and ceremony, now lay quietly at the foot of the cross. It felt like a reversal of everything the world usually tells us about honour and power. I couldn't help thinking of Paul's words in Philippians: Christ, who "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." That same quiet inversion was happening here: the tools of earthly majesty resting beneath the sign of divine surrender.

As the morning unfolded, people arrived quietly and took their seats. There was no rush, just calm anticipation. That space, between the plates and the cross, remained undisturbed. I stayed there, silent and watchful, holding that space in the middle of it all.

From where I stood, the alignment was striking. The plates formed a line leading up to the cross, each carrying its tradition and meaning, and there I was, standing between them, simply keeping watch. Not as a symbol or a statement, just present. Quietly part of something much bigger than myself.

That positioning of the Crown Jewels laid at the foot of the cross kept drawing my attention. It framed the whole Royal Maundy tradition within the Gospel story. These plates would soon carry Maundy purses, tokens of the King's service to others. But before they played their part in the ceremony, they rested beneath the cross, and that image alone said more than words could.

In that quiet moment, it became its own kind of liturgy. No announcements, no movement, just stillness. It brought to mind Mary of Bethany, sitting at Jesus' feet. Before action, there was presence. Before honour, humility. Everything starts from that place of surrender. I wasn't part of the pageantry, nor was I robed or in the spotlight. I was just there in my black porter's uniform, my pass on a lanyard around my neck, doing my bit. Not many people noticed, and that felt right. It reminded me that some forms of service aren't meant to be noticed; they're just meant to be done.

I'd been on my feet for hours by then, and they were aching, but somehow, even that discomfort felt like part of the picture. It brought to mind the kind of service Jesus modelled: unassuming, costly, and full of meaning. The Maundy story in John's Gospel was never meant to be comfortable. When Jesus knelt to wash the disciples' feet, Peter resisted. He didn't know what to do with love that was so practical, humbling, and undeserved. But Jesus didn't back away. He simply showed them: this is the way. Not status, but love expressed in the ordinary. That's the shape of Christian leadership.



The King and Queen brought genuine warmth and dignity, and it was a joyous occasion for Durham, but the people being honoured that day were the real centre. Their quiet, faithful service over so many years is what gave the day its meaning, and it was good to see that recognised. Those who received the Maundy purses had served in ways that are often hidden. The volunteers who simply get on with things, week after week. They reminded me of the kinds of people Jesus always seemed to notice. Not those chasing attention, but those who choose love in small, steady ways. The type of lives that don't shout, but shine.



Even after the service ended and the King and Queen had gone, I remained on duty, watching over the plates. The space was quieter now. People were beginning to leave, and the music had stopped. But the plates remained where they were, at the foot of the cross. And I was still there watching over them. There was something in that. It wasn't a grand moment or something dramatic. It was just the sense that sometimes, service is about staying. Noticing. Holding the space after the moment has passed. I thought of those who kept watch with Jesus when others fled, like the women at the cross, or Joseph of Arimathea quietly asking for the body. Acts of service not caught up in noise but rooted in faithfulness. Sometimes the most Christlike thing we can do is simply not walk away.

I wasn't centre stage, but I was there keeping company with a scene that spoke deeply into my understanding of faith, leadership, and service. That day reminded me that service isn't always dramatic. Sometimes it's about staying when others go. About offering presence that no one asks for but still matters. Faithfully. At the foot of the cross. Just like those who had been honoured that day. Their lives, shaped by quiet acts of love, rarely make a sound—but they change everything.

Marc Cliff



Top: Doreen Park
Middle: Eric Hepplewhite
Right: Procession into the cathedral - see if you can spot Revd Lesley on the left of the picture.
Above: The programme and the Maundy Money

Letter from Doug Oliver, former councillor

I write to thank the people of Lanchester - and those in Burnhope, Muggleswick, Waskerley, Castleside, Maiden Law and Holmside - for the opportunity to work with you, and hopefully help at least some of you, in the previous four years as your former County Councillor.

I hope I did my best to manage people's expectations in 2021, when I said knocking doors in the village that like Oscar Wilde I was "no longer young enough to know everything", and that to do the job well, it was necessary to listen to and learn from local people. It's for this reason that I've always sought to keep up regular contact by way of my own regular hand-delivered newsletters, Facebook updates and Village Voice articles.

To that end it has been great to work with a range of people including Jane Davis at the EP School, the Police and Council regarding parking difficulties in the village, George Walton and other residents in Valley Grove on Durham Road safety, people like Eric Hepplewhite and Paul Jackson on the village floods, countless discussions with David Friesner from the Parish Council on various planning matters.

It's been great to learn more about the many vital clubs in the village, so thanks also to the Table Tennis, Bowls, Cricket, Flower Arranging Club to name a few, along with Mike Gladstone for the meetings with Go North East Buses. Meanwhile thanks to Alison and Glenda at the Community Centre for all their encouragement.



Another person I've worked with in the past has been Alison Gray - particularly on trying to bring extra traffic wardens to the village - and I know her commitment to the village is sincere and local knowledge second to none and I wish her well, and I've offered to help pass over casework and better understand some things I will still be hoping to achieve in Lanchester, Burnhope and the surrounding area.

If anyone has any questions about anything or needs to get in touch, please feel free to do so and I'll still be involved in some things through my role as a School Governor, you can email me on douglas.h.oliver@gmail.com. I remain happy to help if I can and wish everyone well.

Doug Oliver

Above: Doug Oliver (left) with Alison Gray

Lanchester and Burnhope Election Results

The results of the Durham County Council elections on May 1st are as follows:

Alison Gray (Labour) 755 (35.8%)

Doug Oliver (Conservative) 710 (33.7%)

Stephen Harrison (Reform UK) 563 (26.7%)

Jeanette Williams (Liberal Democrats) 79 (3.7%)

So, Alison Gray was elected as councillor for Lanchester and Burnhope ward.

As everyone will have no doubt heard from the news, the County Council is now run by Reform UK.

Volunteers needed to join the Village Voice editorial team

We need:

- **People with design or desk top publishing experience**
- **Reporters/writers**
- **Photographers**
- **Editors to help gather in the reports/ photos and format them for publication.**

Please email:
lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk.

County Councillor Update

I was absolutely delighted and honoured to be elected on May 1st to be the County Councillor for Lanchester and Burnhope. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who voted for me, and I will do my very best to represent and serve the whole community.

The council's induction process began on May 8th and I have now received my email address and phone number which appear at the end of the article. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the candidates – Stephen Harrison, Doug Oliver and Jeanette Williams for a very civil campaign. I particularly want to thank Doug for his friendship and integrity. The contest was closely fought, and Doug and I remain friends and will meet for a handover shortly.



At the time of writing, I am very much looking forward to the celebrations for the 80th anniversary of VE Day. This is a very poignant time - many families suffered great loss. My grandfather fought in the Burma campaign and didn't return home from war until the Spring of 1946. Tragically, he lost two younger brothers who were rear gunners on Lancaster bombers, and I cannot imagine what my great grandparents went through. We are so lucky to have had peace in Europe since then and it is something to be treasured.

Best wishes,

Alison Gray, County Councillor for Lanchester and Burnhope.
email address: Alison.Gray2@durham.gov.uk
Tel: 07469 105096

Pace (Paste) Egg Easter Monday

The tradition of dyeing and boiling eggs and the bouling them down the Pace (Paste) Egg bank continued this year. Last year it was very wet and squelchy but this year, after a dry start to the year, it was dry underfoot.

Materials were foraged to provide the colour for the eggs which when boiled were bouled down the hill.

Right: Bouling down the hill
More photos on the front cover



Thursday Club

Mr Steven Palmer knows an awful lot about bees! He has been making honey in Dipton for about 15 years. He says it is mostly a hobby as he is not on a commercial scale of production.

He does have 17 hives now. He stressed the importance of bees in the ecological system as they are the main pollinators for crops and flowers and fruit trees.

The colour of honey denotes the origin of the foraging. For example heather honey can be darker in colour than honey made from oilseed rape crops.

It surprised the ladies to find out the number of eggs which are laid by the queen in her hive. Up to 2000 in one day! And there could be up to 60,000 bees in one box.

The honey produced will last a very long time and has wonderful healing properties.

It always makes you feel a bit better when you have honey in a hot toddy to soothe a sore throat. If your honey should crystallise then warm it in the microwave for a minute or two.

Many of us purchased some of the produce and it is good!

Jan Vasey

William Hedley, late of Burnhopeside Hall

With the 200th anniversary of the Stockton to Darlington passenger railway to be commemorated this year, perhaps the following will be of interest especially to residents of Lanchester who may or may not be aware that one of the early steam engineers, William Hedley, lived in the village at Burnhopeside Hall. (There is a full article on William Hedley on page 13 of May 15th Village Voice).

The Stockton to Darlington railway is famous for being the first steam locomotive to haul a passenger train on a public railway, opening on the 27th of September 1825 and hauled by George Stephenson's Locomotion No 1. However, several fully functioning locomotives predate this.

Richard Trevithick's Penydarren locomotive, named after the Penydarren Ironworks in Wales where it was built, was the first steam engine to run on rails in 1804. It operated on a tramway in South Wales and demonstrated the potential of steam power. Trevithick's Catch Me Who Can (1808) was designed as part of a demonstration for public entertainment on a circular track in London.

The Salamanca was the first commercially successful steam locomotive. It was built in 1812 by Mathew Murray to haul coal on the Middleton Colliery between Middleton Colliery and Leeds. It was named after the Battle of Salamanca when forces under the Duke of Wellington defeated the French during the Peninsular War.

Puffing Billy (1813-1814) is the oldest surviving steam locomotive. It was designed by William Hedley of Lanchester and built for Christopher Blackett, the owner of Wylam Colliery, to haul coal from Wylam to the docks at Lemington in Northumberland. Puffing Billy can be seen at the Science Museum in London. Hedley and Timothy Hackworth built another locomotive known as the Wylam Dilly in 1815. This is the second oldest surviving locomotive in the world and can be found at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Both these engines worked until 1862 and a replica of the Wylam Dilly can be seen working in Beamish Museum.



George Stephenson was appointed as engine-wright at Killingworth Colliery in 1812 and improved the haulage of coal from the mine using fixed engines. His first locomotive, Blücher, was produced in 1814, being the first locomotive to use flanged wheels, keeping the locomotive on the track.

Killingworth Billy, Stephenson's second locomotive, was the first to be built to Stephenson Gauge, now called Standard Gauge (4ft 8½ inches) and is now on display at Stephenson Steam Railway in North Shields.

After the Stockton Darlington and Locomotive No 1, George Stephenson and son Robert designed the engine for the Rainhill Trials in Liverpool, 1829. Rocket, which ran at speeds of 30mph, won the trials which was the start of the Liverpool Manchester Railway.

It can be seen what a large part the North East and Lanchester played in the development of rail transport so the celebrations this year should prove popular to visitors expected from all around the world, providing some welcome income into the area.

Mike Stoddart

Above: William Hedley



Poppy's walks

Good day readers and this summer walk is in and around our lovely village of Lanchester. As you will know by now, I am Poppy, a Patterdale Terrier who enjoys sharing with you the walks I lead my Humans on.

This one, as normal, starts on the Village Green from where we walk along Station Road then turn right along the railway path past the station house.

We then veer left passing a doggy bin before going onto Brook View then walking along Broadoak Drive before reaching Newbiggen Lane where we turn left. We walk along the lane where I am kept on my lead where the footpath runs out. After around ten minutes we get to the hamlet of Newbiggen where there is a metal gate on the right and a public footpath sign. The gate requires a measure of strength to open and lock securely again by pushing in the metal bolt but once the Human has made sure it is locked behind us we can run across the fields.

Note, this walk is not as easy in the winter when the area around the metal gate can be very muddy and churned up. Nor is it advisable if cows are grazing in the field. But since the fields were happily both mud and cattle free, we were able to proceed across three fields heading downhill with glorious views in front of us. I can be let off my lead to run around and explore the scents in the fields.

We all-too-soon reach a stile which takes us back onto the railway path. By heading right we are going back in the direction of Lanchester, so we follow the path until we reach Lizard Cottage then we cut down onto Kitswell Road not far from the cemetery. We walk along Kitswell Road and then turn left into the cricket field. I am sure I have mentioned before that the male Human likes to plonk himself on a bench beside the cricket field, usually with a glass of something, and watch the baffling proceedings in the field.

If he buys me a packet of cheese and onion crisps, I can be persuaded to sit quietly beside him for a limited period. But if there is no game on we walk the boundary to the bottom of the field then behind the practice nets until we find a footpath between houses. This leads us into and through Fenhall Park.

On leaving Fenhall Park opposite the EP school we turn left and then right along the by-pass. There I usually have a dip in the stream if it is a warm day, like quite a few have been lately. We then go back to the village green and home from there.

The walk usually takes around 90 minutes - unless there is a cricket game on of course- and I would thoroughly recommend the route.

Lanchester Flower Club

Member of the National Association of Flower Arrangers Society

Our meeting held on the 23rd April in Lanchester Community Centre was a little different. Our demonstrator was Marion Hinchley, who showed us how to use midelino sticks in different ways to make our own flower vase arrangement. We all participated using midelino sticks, flowers and foliage. There was lots of laughter, some mistakes but the end result we can honestly say from all of the ladies was very acceptable. We then enjoyed our usual raffle followed by tea/coffee and chatter.

Our next demonstration in Lanchester Community Centre main hall at 1.30 pm on Wednesday 28th May by Wendy Smith, her theme will be “Rings and Things”. Everyone is welcome to come and join us for a lovely relaxing afternoon, always finishing with tea/coffee and friendship.

The June meeting on the 25th in Lanchester Community Centre at 1.30pm in the main hall will be a social afternoon, with a quiz, game of bingo and maybe snacks. Everyone is welcome.

Dates for the diary Wednesday 23rd July demonstration by Susan Hall “Memories of Vietnam”. No meeting in August. Wednesday 24th September demonstrator by Val Guest “Autumn Odysseys”. All in Lanchester Community Centre main hall at 1.30p.m.

Lestrine Kelly



Right: Marion Hinchley with some of the arrangements

Lanchester Vintage Tractor Club

Every year the club fundraises for charity alongside its tractor runs. The club support Willow Burn and the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAs).

In the April edition we reported that they had presented Willow Burn with a cheque for £617.

At their May meeting the club presented £617 to GNAAS.



Above: Tony Suddes, Vice Chairman, presented the cheque to Sheonagh Jones, GNAAS

Local History Society

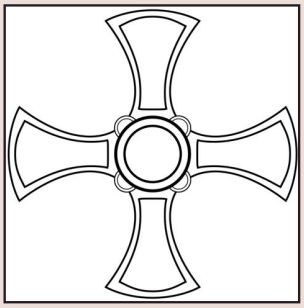
We met in April to hear Anthony Atkinson tell us all about Clementine Churchill. She is well known mostly for her marriage to Winston however she had a challenging childhood and was from the dysfunctional divorced aristocratic Hozier family. In her early teens her mother moved to France and things improved although her education was at various residential establishments as her mother was focussing her time on Clemmie's elder sister Kitty who was ill with typhoid.

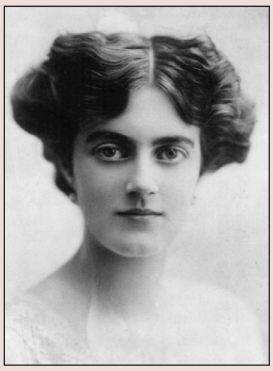
She married Winston in 1908, 4 years after they first met; he liked her for her intelligence and great character. She was awarded a CBE for her efforts in WW1. She then put her energies into campaigning for Winston in the 1922 general election. She enjoyed travel and on her frequent trips had dalliances with various gentlemen. She still focussed on supporting Winston with his political career with speech writing and keeping the family name in a positive way in public. They had 5 children and 56 years of marriage and after many decorations and awards she became a life peer on his death, taking up her seat in the House of Lords as a very active crossbencher. The sad theme to her life was considerable mental health issues for Winston, herself and many family members. Anthony managed to blend all the aspects of her life into a compelling talk.

On Friday 2nd May Dave Shotten came back to treat us to a lively talk about "Who stole the Treasures of St Cuthbert?". Broadly speaking the Treasures are the wealth and relics of Durham Cathedral. So, he started by reminding us that the generally wealthy cathedral did have a period of extreme poverty in the Middle Ages, so his question was 'Why?'

The money and artefacts of value started to collect in the days when the monks were carrying St Cuthbert's bones around looking for a place to set up a permanent resting place. Pilgrimages to pray where his bones were located brought in riches and great wealth; most notably this happened during his period in Chester le Street, but another move meant the bones and riches had to set off again. Over time they settled in Durham and this permanent location led to more pilgrims bearing wealth, building up the treasury of the Cathedral. Sadly, some of the Bishops and Deans dipped their hands into the coffers and when Henry VIII messed with Rome the place was in extreme poverty. During this time his Banner was attributed with helping the winning side and Symeon claimed Cuthbert defined the identity of the peoples of the north. However, when things calmed into the new arrangements, Cuthbert's Banner was wanted by those going into battle as a symbol of "Don't mess with Cuthbert" and to have access commanded a considerable price, thus rebuilding the wealth of the treasury. In some cases, the contribution was land and estates contributing to the amazing land ownership of The Dene and Chapter.

Marian Morrison





Right: Clementine Churchill and the cross of St Bede.

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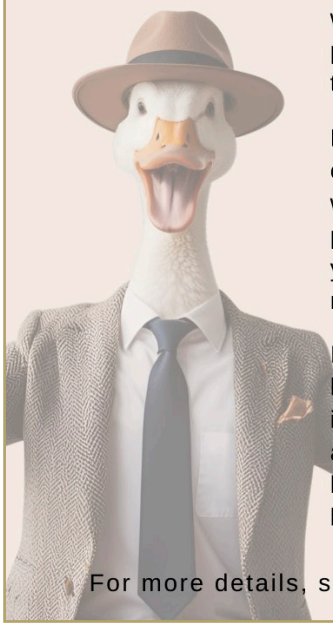
It's been a brilliant month here at Bourne & Co! We've overseen four properties onto the market which we sold (stc) within 24 hours. I'm delighted to have been able to help those vendors line up the ducks for their next moves!



We're on the lookout for rentals this month. We have lots of great tenants who we'd love to help so if you have a property you're looking to let, do get in touch with us soon.



Elsewhere, we're looking for a new custodian of 2 Station Cottage, a wonderful, historical Lanchester property with so much potential. If you're a gardener, you won't want to miss this brilliant home.



If it's space you're looking for, we have a superb 1.25 acres with an incredible barn conversion with annexe and outline planning permission for a holiday let. This needs to be seen to be appreciated, so book a viewing!

For more details, see bournenco.com or contact Simon Bourne info@bournenco.com 01207 529 900

Boys' Brigade Report

Returning after the Easter break, we were able to tell the lads how well they had done in their relative competitions. Junior Section: International Games had competition from Ghana, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, Thailand, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England. There were 259 entries, and our team had a magnificent result, finishing 12th. The best we have ever achieved. Well done boys excellent result. Could our Company section do as well on the top team? Well not quite, our A team finished 21st, our B team finished 88th and our C team finished 114th out of a total of 268 entries. Still excellent results and they should all be extremely proud of their achievements.

We spoke at length about VE Day and what it stood for and took on a challenge set by headquarters to make an edible Union Jack. You could use anything: fruit, vegetables or sweets etc. as long as it was edible. We chose a sponge cake which we cut into quarters. Junior section decorated one quarter and Company section were split into three teams to each decorate one of the other quarters and then we reassembled the cake. We used a mixture of sweets, red laces, tang belts, red liquorice, with icing sugar, glazed cherries and blueberries etc. The result was excellent and whilst they ate one quarter, the other three quarters were given out the next night at the lighting of the beacon at Burnhope picnic area where we served tea and coffee courtesy of Lanchester and Burnhope Parish Council.

Answers for the dingbats in the last issue are: Joseph's Coat of Many Colours, The Last Supper, Jacob's Ladder, Holy Spirit, Ten Commandments, Sermon on the Mount, The Lost Sheep, Daily Bread, Parting of the Red Sea, Tower of Babel, No(A)h, Three Wise Men.

Eric Hepplewhite





Photos: Cake, cake making, cake tasting!



Friend Request Fright Excerpt

Friend Request Fright is my current WIP – book 5 of my series called Skin Crawlers. Each book is an individual story similar to Goosebumps. Drusilla starts at a new school and gets a friend request from an account on social media named Echo. Below is from chapter 7:

Drusilla didn't like not knowing who was behind the profile. She typed a message to Ruby but it looked like she had gone offline? Weird.

How can I trust you if I don't know who you are? – Drusilla Holloway.

I will look out for you. In many ways – Echo.

I'm already in trouble as it is! I am in detention because of what you did! – Drusilla Holloway.

Let me take care of the detention email then… There you go. Your mother will never know you got a detention! All sorted. – Echo.

What? How? She will get an email from the school for her to sign and confirm, won't she? – Drusilla Holloway.

I have been able to stop the email from getting to your mother's account before she reads it. I have signed it on her behalf and sent it back to your school already. – Echo.

How?! Are you some sort of hacker? Is that how you got the photos of the Roses? – Drusilla Holloway.

Let's just say I am very good when it comes to computers. You can trust me. How has your time been at Westfield? – Echo.

It made Drusilla feel uneasy. If, whoever it was behind the Facelink profile, was telling the truth and they were able to somehow hack into things and have managed to stop the email about her detention going to her mum, surely that was a good thing? Even if how they did it was questionable… Just, how did they know so much about her and her life?

It's been eventful. How do you know so much about me? – Drusilla Holloway.

As I mentioned, I am a friend. I want to help you. Is there anything else I can help you with? – Echo.

Drusilla wasn't sure what to say. She decided that she would keep Echo as a friend for now and see what happens. If they weren't telling the truth and her mum gets an email about the detention, then Drusilla will know not to trust Echo.

But then something occurred to Drusilla. What about if Echo knew something of the young boy who went missing? Ethan?

Matthew James' work can be found on Amazon. Search Matthew James books – such as Monstrous Mobiles Book 1 in Skin Crawlers.

Friend Request Fright is due to be released at the end of May 2025.



Lanchester Parish Council

Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held in Lynwood House on Tuesday 8th April 2025 at 7.05pm

Minutes – Ordinary Meeting 11th March – approved
Access to Lanchester Allotments – Members considered a request from a resident to have access to the allotments to carry out repairs to their premises – permission granted
Police Reports – March report received
Correspondence
County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) – annual membership fee –that the membership is renewed
Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – annual membership fee – that the membership is renewed
Planning applications – As we are in a 'pre-election period' Councillors voted as to whether we should be discussing any planning applications. It was decided that we discuss the planning applications but don't make comment until after the 'pre-election period'
Developing 33 pitches and access road for holiday units DM/25/00531/FPA
Agricultural land improvements utilising imported soil materials DM/21/02616/WAS
Installation and operation of a ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar energy generation system (solar farm), electrical substation and associated infrastructure
DM/22/01769/FPA – information received
Grants / Donations – The following donations were approved £300 to the Parish Church Clock, £100 to Lanchester Boys Brigade and £250 to Lanchester Community Centre
Tanfield Lea Banner Group – Members considered a request from Tanfield Lea Banner Group to use the banner in their annual banner exhibition – permission granted
Greencroft Forest – Members received an update on the development – information received
Hanging Baskets – Members considered and agreed the price received for the provision of hanging baskets of £264.00 plus the cost of watering
Financial report – approved.
Accounts for Payment – approved.

A Troubadour Journey: Lindisfarne to Durham

In June 2025 Gareth Davies-Jones will be walking (with a guitar!) from Lindisfarne via St Oswald's Way and The Way of Light Northern Saints Trail - arriving in Durham on the eve of Midsummer. During the walk he is performing a series of intimate acoustic concerts at atmospheric venues with songs from across his career and particularly those relating to the North East - for example "Lindisfarne" about Eadfrith and the writing of the Lindisfarne Gospels and Heavenfield - written about St Oswald's Church on Hadrian's Wall.
His final concert along the route this year sees Gareth arrive in Lanchester from Edmundbyers on journey day 9, Thursday June 19th, to play at All Saints' CofE Parish church. Gareth will be joined by Durham based singer-songwriter Sam Slatcher (who happens to be warden for The Way of Light trail section running into Durham) and also by singer-songwriter Bronwen Davies-Jones. He'll also be joined by David Pott - architect of the Northern Saints Trails who will share a little about a new initiative called Walks4Life. Refreshments will be available in the venue from 6.30pm. The music will start at 7.00pm.



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The fort welcomes archaeology students.

Saturday 10th May was a gloriously sunny day and Rodney Hawkins of the Friends of Longovicium met seven archaeological students from Durham University at the fort. They had cycled from Durham!

Following a brief introduction to the fort together with the attached civilian settlement (vicus) and Dere Street, Rodney was able to take the students onto the fort. This is private land with no public access, but we had the approval and help of the landowner, Mr. Nick Greenwell.

Nick's help was needed to control the small herd of cattle that were on the fort and which were very inquisitive. Who were these people on their field and what were they doing?

There is very little to see of the fort and nothing to see of the vicus, but because of the number of geophysical surveys that have been done in the Scheduled Area, Rodney was able to point out where various parts lay. Besides controlling the cattle Nick Greenwell passed on to the students some of his extensive knowledge of the site and its history, for which the students were very thankful. The weather remained unusually good, and we had a good walk around. Our thanks go to Nick Greenwell for his permission to visit and for looking after us whilst there.

Rodney Hawkins, Friends of Longovicium



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Durham County Council

Left: Nick Greenwell keeping the herd away!
Below: Rodney (in the hat) talking to students



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Lanchester Medical Centre: Patient Participation Group

Lanchester Medical Centre

National Health Service: new 10-year plan expected

Historically there's been no shortage of NHS 10-year plans in past years and Lanchester Medical Centre (LMC) has always been at the forefront in adopting new innovations to improve patient care. The past "three big" developments in NHS strategy focused on 1) moving healthcare from analogue to digital, 2) more hospital treatments within the community, 3) focusing on prevention as opposed to reactive care. All aimed at improving NHS efficiency, reducing strain on hospitals, and empowering individuals to maintain and improve their health outcomes.

Lanchester Medical Centre (LMC) response to the "big three"

1. Analogue to Digital:

LMC is using the latest technology to improve healthcare delivery. The phone service has been updated to include waiting times and call back function, E consultation and pre-bookable appointments.

2. Hospital to Community:

LMC has extended their inhouse services to include joint injection and minor surgery. They also have access to First Contact Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Adult and Children Mental Health Services and Women's Health Hub. They work in partnership with our local pharmacy, who provide a range of services for minor ailments. These extended services provide effective care quickly and reduce the need for doctor appointments and hospital visits.

Pharmacy Services
Coughs & colds
Sore throats
Tummy trouble
Aches & pains
Medicine advice

3. Sickness to Prevention:

LMC delivers proactive measures to prevent illness and promote well-being. Prevention campaigns such as Cervical screening, COVID-19, Flu, Shingles, Pneumococcal and childhood immunisation programmes.

It had been perceived that the "big three" would reduce waiting times, and make the NHS more sustainable for the future, unfortunately that has not been the case.

The pressure is now on for the NHS to develop a credible reform plan. It will need to address the huge challenges of changing health care needs and capitalise on the opportunities ahead, including those stemming from new technologies.

The government has pledged to 'reimagine' the NHS via this 10-year plan. Whatever the plan holds LMC will respond with its usual enthusiasm and commitment to giving its patients the best care possible.

Ref: The Health Foundation
https://docresponse.com › blog › current-issues-in-health..

STOP PRESS

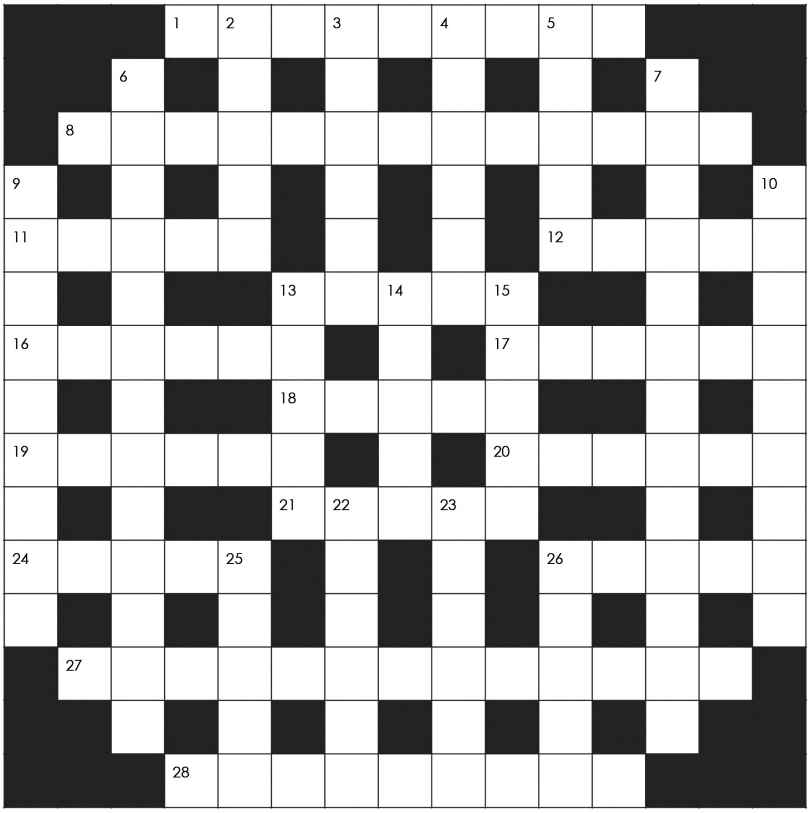
A big thank you Dr Walker

We are all very sad to say goodbye to Dr Jonathon Walker as he leaves Lanchester Medical Centre on 28th May. Over the last two years as a locum GP, Dr Walker has cared for patients with compassion and understanding and we thank him for his strong commitment and dedication to the patients and practice.

On behalf of Lanchester Medical Centre Patient Participation Group we wish Dr Walker every success as he looks for new opportunities and we offer our gratitude for the outstanding level of care he has provided.

Susan Graham: Chair: Lanchester Medical Centre PPG

CLUES CROSSWORD 208



Across

1. Type of car (9)
8. Scottish Country Dance (9,4)
11. Spirit or character of a group (5)
12. Provide or award financial help (5)
13. Evidence of facts (5)
16. Electricity generator (6)
17. Enrages (6)
18. Five letter word or a four letter one (5)
19. Rebound (6)
20. Seed of the horse chestnut tree (6)
21. Dullard (5)
24. Take advantage or make use of (5)
26. Waterway (5)
27. Locally born 'Get Carter' actor (4,9)
28. They hang around with crooks in the countryside

Down

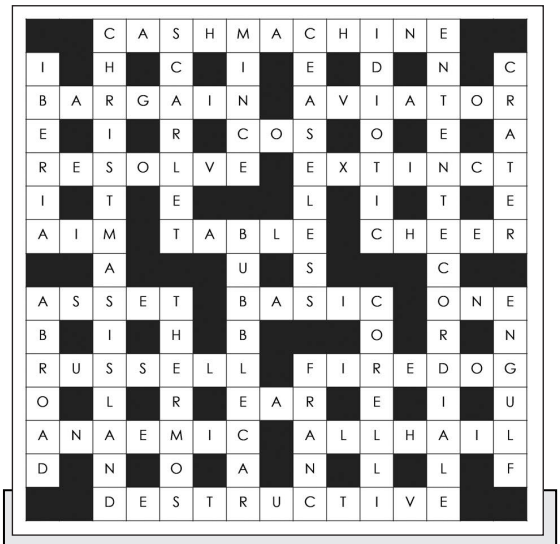
2. Cricket prize (5)
3. Type of sugar (6)
4. Woody grass used as a building material (6)
5. Cut into slices (5)
6. Bringing shame or disgrace (13)
7. Simple method of charting a ship's position (4,9)
9. Cuddly toy (5,4)
10. Jammed Cylinder (5,4)
13. Sat for photograph (5)
14. Sea (5)
15. Type of light comedy (5)
22. Remove paper from present (6)
23. Defoe's castaway (6)
25. Midday meal (5)
26. Made better (5)

Name:_____

Address: _____

_____

Please send your completed entries for the £10 prize draw by
Friday 20th June 2025 to the Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0HY



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Solution Crossword 207
There were 27 entries of which 23 were correct. The winner, pulled from the hat, is J Dixon.

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Lanchester Scottish Dance Group



Lanchester Scottish dance group is looking for new members (anyone from complete beginner to more experienced dancer most welcome). We have been dancing for over 50 years and our sessions run from 7:30pm to 9:30pm on Friday evenings in the small hall at Lanchester community centre.

We have a light-hearted approach to dancing, and no one needs to be worried about being asked to dance because, as each dance is announced, everyone simply gets up and stands, for example, in two lines (the men's and ladies' sides in a longways set). We walk through all the dances and anyone who hasn't danced before will get all the help they need. A recent newcomer to the group writes: "I am definitely a novice at Scottish country dancing but I really enjoy the Lanchester classes. It is a small friendly group with mostly experienced dancers who are happy to help beginners like myself. There is music, dancing and a great atmosphere - a lot of fun (mistakes patiently corrected!)".

For more information contact Elizabeth Grayson on (0191) 3844836 or email: e.j.grayson@durham.ac.uk

Friends of Longovicium (Lanchester Roman Fort)

Part of the Lanchester Partnership

Thanks to the landowner's permission the group has recently produced some drone footage of the fort from angles you may not have seen before. The link can be found on our Facebook page (best viewed with sound on for commentary).

Our meetings are on the fourth Thursday of the month from 7.30pm at Lanchester Community Centre.

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.

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 - Friends of Longovicium.



Above: CGI reconstruction of Lanchester Roman Fort and settlement, created by the Friends of Longovicium based on geophysical surveys of the fort.

Spring fair success: over £3,000 raised for Willow Burn Hospice thanks to incredible community support

The team at Willow Burn Hospice is thrilled to announce that this year's Nurses' Spring Fair was a resounding success, raising an impressive £3,097.35.

Special recognition goes to the dedicated staff and volunteers whose hard work and enthusiasm brought the fair to life. Guests to the fair were treated to cuddles from bunnies thanks to Kelly at Little Barn of Calm, delicious ice creams from Kevin and Will at Iced Dreams and trays of scones and cakes from the Willows Café. Appreciation also goes to Paul Snowdon for providing beautiful outdoor plants and Nurse Shirley Cramond for her stunning sock bouquets.



It was a perfect opportunity for our supporters to meet our newest recruit, Will O'Burn and everyone had a wonderful time enjoying the May sunshine. A heartfelt thank you all who volunteered and attended, donated raffle prizes, gifts, handmade items and more – your kindness has made an incredible difference to the hospice, funding 24 hours in the Helen McArdle In-Patient Wing.

Memories in Bloom with Willow Burn Hospice

Celebrate and remember your loved ones in a meaningful way by sponsoring a flower in memory of someone special. In return for a minimum donation of £10 per flower, we will plant a beautiful poppy in the Willow Burn Gardens, accompanied by a small wooden plaque with their name. The flowers will be on display in the path leading down to Memory Lane from Monday 21 July, when you will be welcome to visit any time to remember your loved one and reflect on the happy times you shared with them.

To ensure the flower(s) are not damaged by the frost when winter comes, we will carefully package up your flower and store safely to share next summer.

If you would like further information about Memories in Bloom for 2025, please do not hesitate to contact Ali on: 01207 529 224 or email: aenglish@willowburnhospice.org.uk

Dedications must be received by Monday 23 June.

Rachel Quince
Willow Burn



Right: Memories in Bloom
Above: Will O'Burn with supporters

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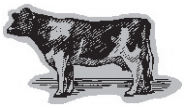
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NEXT DEADLINE

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

FRIDAY 20th June 2025

email: lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk

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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.

Willow Burn:
Advance Care Planning Workshops at Willow Burn Hospice
11 June 2025 and 13 August 2025, 2pm - 3.30pm
Willow Burn Hospice Advance Care Planning is a voluntary process where someone thinks about and makes plans for their future health, social care and wider wishes. Join the team at Willow Burn for one of their Advance Care Planning Workshops and they will provide you with a care plan template and help you to document a written statement that sets out wishes, preferences and values about your care. The team will guide you through understanding and creating your own plan. Whether for yourself or a loved one, this workshop is open to everyone. To find out more or register your interest, call us on: 01207 529 224/ rquince@willowburnhospice.org.uk

Paradiso Social Club
Sunday 8th June 2025: OPERATION MINCEMEAT
During WWII, two intelligence officers use a corpse and false papers to outwit German troops. Starring Colin Firth, Matthew MacFadyen, Kelly Macdonald, Penelope Wilton, and Mark Gatiss.
Lanchester Community Centre, 7pm refreshments and raffle. Film starts at 7.30pm. Members: £4, Non-members: £5. Annual membership: £5
NOTE: there are no films in July and August but we'll be back on 14th September.

Lanchester Library
Library Book Club
On Monday June 23rd at 2.30 to 3.30pm, the group will be discussing "The Fault in our Stars" by John Green. This book gets 4 plus stars, it is a Goodreads Choice Award and Winner for Readers' Favourite Young Adult Fiction, 'I fell in love the way you fall asleep: slowly, then all at once'.
On Monday July 28th at 2.30 to 3.30pm, the group will be discussing "Heft" by Liz Moore. This book gets 5 star reviews. 'Heft is about loneliness, the traumas of addiction and the delicate ties that bind' (A Goodreads reviewer). Will the group have divided opinions? You never know what topic will emerge in our discussions!
Thursday Book Club
On Thursday June 19th from 4.00-5.00pm, this group will be discussing "What July Knew" by Emily Koch. July will discover the truth about her background in a family mystery, a gripping and compelling novel.
On Thursday July 17th from 4.00-5.00pm, the group will be reviewing "The Paris Apartment" by Lucy Foley, a gripping murder mystery. 'Twisty and mysterious and surprising' (a reviewer on Amazon). Will you be gripped? A real page turner! Enjoy.
If you would like to join this group, pop into the library and speak to the Librarians.
Pins and Needles will meet up on June 5th and July 3rd 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.
New Children's activities
Story Time every Tuesday 2pm to 2.30pm.
Lego Club every Saturday 10am to 11am.

Lanchester 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. Just turn up before 1pm and introduce yourself to a leader. 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 every second Wednesday. 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.

Wildlife group
The next meeting will be Plants/Botany by Steve Gater, Tuesday June 10th 7:30 pm. Please be prompt due to the security system. On Tuesday July 8th a field trip is being arranged. Please contact Elaine (01207 520063) for 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.

Social Club
7th June PAUL VINCENT
14th June JENNI DANIELS
21st June KEV CHRISTIE
28th June KAT MURRAY

WI
The June meeting is on Monday 2nd June at 7.00pm in the Community Centre. The speaker for the evening is Jennie McVicar, the Cookie Fairy, showing us how to decorate the cookies. If you fancy having a go it is £3.00 to attend as a visitor.
The July meeting for Lanchester WI is on

Monday 7th July at 7.00 pm in the Community Centre, speaker for the evening is George Nairn with his talk "History of Picture Postcards". Visitors are always welcome to join us, if you would like further information please contact us at lanchesterwi@taktalk.net.
We are holding another fashion show after the very successful event last year. It will be on Saturday 6th September in Lanchester Social Club, tickets £5.00 to include refreshments. Look out for further information nearer the time.

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.

All Saints Catholic Church concert
Sunday 13th July 2025, 6pm, with Consett and Lanchester Brass Band. All are welcome; free entrance with donation collection at the end. Please also join us for tea and coffee in the Parish Centre after the event.

Local History
We will be meeting on Friday 6th June to hear Graham Soult deliver his "Details and Detours: Architecture and Landscapes" talk. He is our own regional retail expert so move aside Mary Portas.
Then on Friday 4th July Tony Patterson will be talking on "Patterson Pottery Gateshead", a business he explored when researching his family history in the area. Please remember to arrive in good time to negotiate the security entry system as we start promptly at 7.00. Everyone is welcome, so please come and join us.

Cricket Club
The Buskers will be playing in the cricket club on Friday 20th June from 6:30 pm.

Musical Memories
Join us for music, refreshments and fun activities.
4th June and 2nd July 2025, 2pm, Lynwood House, Durham Road, Lanchester.
Musical Memories is a fun, friendly and stimulating music group using the ability of music to improve your brain activity, wellbeing and mood. We welcome people living with conditions that affect memory. For further information email lanchesterdfc@gmail.com

Thursday Club
The next meeting will be on June 19th in the Community Centre at 1.30pm. We will be hearing a talk about the ice cream cafe and the history of the business, hopefully with samples and strawberries.
Our outing will be on 17th July, leaving the village at 10am to go to Richmond and then Mainsgill Farm before returning to Lanchester at 5pm.

Flower Club
On Wednesday 23rd July there will be a demonstration by Susan Hall, "Memories of Vietnam". No meeting in August. On Wednesday 24th September the demonstrator will be Val Guest, "Autumn Odysseys". All in Lanchester Community Centre main hall at 1.30pm.

Lunch Club (Cuppa and Company)
The next two meetings of the lunch club held at Lynwood House will be Tuesday 10th June and Tuesday 8th July, 12pm start, all welcome.

Community Centre News

Here is your latest news from your Community Centre
What's coming:
• Craft de-stash Fayre on Saturday 21st June 12 noon to 3pm. Come along and grab your crafting and sewing bargains. Stalls, raffles and refreshments. All in aid of supporting the community centre.
What's new:
• Remedial work completed in the front porch to deal with the internal flooding when it rains. This was funded by our previous Councillors Doug Oliver and Mike McGoun.
• A new baby and toddler group will be starting in September on a Friday morning – ARTventurers.
• We are holding a summer raffle, £1 a ticket. Call in to enter, we have some great prizes from our local eateries.
Help and support us:
• We are looking for a few volunteers to keep our little garden tidy. Anyone interested call into reception
• Our Easter 'Count the Eggs' competition raised £80. Our winners received lots of chocolate which was very kindly donated by Stanley ASDA.
• Are you aware that the Community Centre is a self-funded charity? Here is an idea of one of the easiest ways you can help:

Sign up to easyfundraising.org.uk. Have a look at the website, by either logging in https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/lanchestercc or scan the QR code shown.
This is a website and an app, which will donate money to the Centre when you shop. The site has over 8,000 partners, (with businesses such as eBay, Amazon, M&S, etc). All you do is register, select the Community Centre as your nominated charity, then shop as you usually would. Shopping this way through the website or app does not cost you any extra at all, but it does help us enormously!

The office is staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-1.15pm. On Tuesday and Thursdays, it's 9am-3pm. If you have any enquiries about any of the activities or clubs available or you want to know more about hiring our brilliant venue, please get in touch on 01207 521275 or drop in and have a chat it will be good to meet you!
To keep up to date with what's going on check out our Information Point; follow us on Facebook 'Lanchester Community Centre' or check out our website - https://lanchestercc.co.uk/ or scan the QR code for our website.
Marie Murphy

Jeff Wingfield 1962-2025



At Easter, Lanchester Cricket Club sadly mourned the loss of longstanding member, Jeffrey Wingfield. Following a long series of illness and injury, with extensive time in hospital, Jeff spent his final weeks in the care of Willow Burn hospice. Despite his illness, Jeff showed his fighting qualities right to the end, being able to celebrate his ruby wedding anniversary to his much loved and devoted wife, Joy.

Jeff came to the club in 1998, bringing his son Darren to play cricket and reconnected with lifelong friend, John Bell, the club's committed groundsman. Jeff and Joy both became involved in the club and Jeff took up the role of secretary in 2003, a position he held until 2009 where he switched to being club treasurer.

As Darren progressed in his playing career, Jeff and Joy continued to contribute by making the teas for their home games. Times were tough at the club and Jeff kept a tight grip on limited funds with a well-used withering look and 'Why?' when discussing spends. Although those who knew him well noticed the twinkling eye.

In 2013, Darren came up with the idea of the club hosting a Beer Festival and while its on-going success brought a period of financial comfort for the club it was Jeff and Darren who had the unenviable task of managing this huge undertaking. On Beer Festival week, because it wasn't just the three days that customers saw, Jeff worked tirelessly to make sure that everything was perfect.

Jeff loved the cricket club and did everything and anything to make it work and his legacy is evident today. His commitment was such that he remained as treasurer until a few weeks before his death, happy in having seen the good times and I hope, happy in what he achieved.

Rest easy Jeff, we will take it from here and thank you.

Andrew McConnell

Cricket Round up

The first team have had a decent start, winning two of their three matches and suffering a narrow defeat in the other. They opened by beating newly promoted Newcastle City by 6 wickets, having bowled them out for 126. On debut, Jamie Dass took 4-38 and there were two wickets each for Sherwood, Gohery and Barnes. Luke McCabe with 42 and Kieran Gohery with 38 not out sealed the win.

They lost to Willington by 12 runs, bowling them out for 160 but not able to overhaul their target. Jamie Dass took 4 wickets again and Luke McCabe top scored once more with 33. They then hosted relegated Benwell Hill and saw a record breaking performance. 21 year old Reuben Du Toit had had a slow start to the season but exploded onto the scene in this match scoring a magnificent 184, a new record for an individual at the club. He broke the record of 177 first set 31 years ago by West Indian Laurie Williams and equalled in 2017 by Andy Allen. Reuben scored his hundred off 70 balls out of a score of 139. His final tally contained 4 sixes and 24 fours. Benwell Hill fell apart in reply and were hurried out for just 66, a winning margin of 199 runs! Kieran Gohery took 4-22 and Callum Barnes 3-5.

The seconds have also won two of the three matches, losing their opening game to Newcastle City and beating Willington and Shotley Bridge. They ended with a fantastic win at Shotley Bridge, chasing down 284 for the loss of 5 wickets. Glen Harrison scored a maiden century as he made an unbeaten 133 to see the side home. He had great support from Jack Slane who made 70 and Charlie McPhail with 48.

Junior Section

Junior cricket has a bit of a shake up as Under 18s have been finished and instead Under 19s and Under 17s will be played. It needed to change but has taken a long time. There was one final under 18 game to play as the Cup Final from last year was held over. Unfortunately, Burnopfield were too strong and beat Lanchester by 33 runs. Burnopfield made 150-6 with Tom Deaville taking 3-28. Toby Somersall led the reply with 63 off 57 balls but sadly no one could support him.

In their first match at under 17s, Lanchester had a dramatic win at Blaydon, knocking off 124 with two balls to spare. Joe Malone took all four Blaydon wickets for just 13 runs. Toby Somersall scored 73 in the successful run chase. The 19s also had a winning start beating Evenwood by wickets. The team has Harvey Wright playing as his parent club Brandon don't have a team for this age group. He had a great debut making an unbeaten 50.

The first weekend of the season marked a proud moment in our club's history as we fielded our first-ever all-girls hard ball team in the mixed under-11s league. Not only is it a step forward for inclusivity in the sport, but testament to a talented group of girls who have a brilliant attitude and will I'm sure go on to inspire future generations. They lost their first two games narrowly but won against Seaham Harbour at the third attempt.

The 15s saw Leadgate concede the opening fixture, then they beat Shotley in the Cup. It would be satisfying for the lads who moved from Shotley two seasons ago, with Riley Sayer getting 46 to see the team home by 7 wickets. Next up will be Ryton.

The 13s composed of the team who were 11s last year had a harsh lesson against Consett where they were overwhelmed by their older opponents. Tim Rolfe did well on debut taking 2-11 off his 3 overs.

Andrew McConnell

Below: the first ever girls hard ball team



KoGs Village Voice May 2025

Seahouses 2025- we survived once again!

We all had an absolutely incredible weekend and have even booked to return in the early bank holiday in May 2026 (1st – 4th). We kicked off our after-hours programme with a Silent Disco on the Friday night (1 of 2 for the weekend) and partied away until midnight!

Saturday, we headed for Seahouses town and explored/ shopped before heading to our private behind the scenes tour of Seahouses RNLI Centre which was absolutely fantastic.

We headed back to the Youth Hostel after that for an afternoon filled with crafts and usual KoGs games. Saturday after hours was our 70's/80's themed silent disco.

Sunday, we left the hostel and departed for a few hours to Northumberland Zoo which both members and leaders loved before heading back for crafts (revision for our year 11's) and usual KoGs games. Our after-hours event on Sunday was a lovely relaxing movie night where we watched Disney's Ratatouille.

Monday morning was our clean-up/tidy up morning as it was unfortunately our check out day. We headed back to the town for last bits of shopping, and all had a flavour blast ice cream.

We all had an extremely fantastic time away and shared in lots of laughs, challenges and new experiences. Thank you so much to all of our members for having such a good time with us and taking on every single challenge we threw at you with outstanding attitudes. We couldn't have spent our bank holiday with a better group!

We have our usual KoGs antics happening again throughout the summer school term.

Our last date for the summer term will be Monday 14th July and we will return on Monday 8th September.

If you'd like to give KoGs a go you can find us on a Monday evening (5pm – 7.30pm) at Lanchester Methodist Church during school terms.

The cost of the sessions is £3 per person but your first week is free. (All activities and your weekly meal are included)

For more information contact Laura & Peter Cole on 07428500059 / 01207 654291 or email kidsofgod@hotmail.co.uk. We also have a Facebook page if you'd like to see more or get in touch with us that way, www.facebook.com/kidsofgodlanchester

Laura Cole















Lanchester Social Club

Now the weather is getting a lot warmer, take advantage of our beautiful garden area. You can bring your children along with you and let them play in the garden whilst you're enjoying the weather.

We have a lot of upcoming entertainment for the summer. We have an 80's day on the 24th August so come along in your 80's outfits. Prizes for the best outfit. We have a singer and a food van during the day and karaoke on the night. September 26th we have TESS TICKLE, the fantasy drag show. Keep an eye out for ticket information.

The Committee



Lanchester Endowed Parochial School



Exciting News about Nursery and 2-year olds!
We are very excited to announce that from September 2025, we will be taking 2-year-olds in our school Nursery. This is something we have wanted to do for a number of years and feel that the time is now right to expand our offer. We are looking forward to adapting some of our space both inside and outside to accommodate the needs of our youngest learners.
We will be offering both 15-hour and 30-hour places in our 2-year-old room, with children automatically moving to the main 3-4 year olds' room when they are ready.
Please download an application form from our website or see the office if you are interested or give us a call at school to find out more. Telephone: 01207 520436 or email us at: school.office@lanchesterep.net
From September, all parents will be eligible for a free Nursery place for their two year-old. To find out whether you are eligible for 15 or 30 hours please see here: https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

Key Stage 2 Musical in Consett Empire Theatre
Our Key Stage 2 pupils (240 of us!) are currently busy rehearsing for our forthcoming production which will take place in Consett Empire Theatre on Thursday 10th July. Yanomamo describes the crisis situation in the Amazon Basin, where rainforest trees are being felled for use as commercial timber, the land cleared for ranching, and thousands of peasants from Brazil's overcrowded cities arrive in search of a better life.
The Yanomami is the oldest Indian tribe living in the forest and lead a way of life in harmony with nature which, undisturbed, would survive with the forest for the next twenty thousand years and more. However, their existence is threatened by the destruction of the trees and the arrival of the incomers.
Due to the recent refurbishment of the theatre, it is three years since our last performance so will be a totally new experience for most of our children. Watch out for the photos in the next edition!

Nursery at Hall Hill Farm
Our Nursery children enjoyed a wonderful day at Hall Hill Farm this month – their first trip out of school for many! We are very grateful to all the parents, carers and grandparents who joined us too - we could not do it without them!

Year 6 Statutory Tests
It is that time of year again when our Year 6 children sit their statutory tests. We work very hard to ensure this is as stress free as possible for the children, but they know things are different and they just want to do the best they possibly can. We make sure they are well fed, providing very generous breakfasts for them every morning – in a party atmosphere! This is one way schools are judged (not our children). However, we believe there are many other ways that schools should be judged too!

Mrs Jane Davis,
Head Teacher

St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College

St. Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College Annual CAFOD Big Lent Walk



One of the very special qualities of St. Bede's Sixth Form is the community spirit. Students continuously show up to support each other, get involved, and live the ethos of our school. On April 11th, our Sixth Form students were joined by students in Year 11 to complete our annual CAFOD Big Lent Walk. We were blessed with the weather! It was a hot day for walking the 14km from school to Langley Park and back, but the atmosphere was positive, supportive and fun! Students made the most of our social time in Malton picnic area, to cool off and have some fun in the river. This is always an uplifting way to end the Spring Term, and we are proud of raising over £400 for CAFOD's work with the most vulnerable people in our world.

Catherine Hammell, Head Teacher

Lanchester All Saints' Catholic Primary School



All Saints' was visited by more inspectors in April, and we are thrilled to take up the opportunity to show off our joyful and thriving nursery & school! The report is available on our website or on Ofsted's website. Here are some of the comments made:

"All Saints' Catholic Primary School is a happy and inclusive place, where pupils thrive. The care and support provided by all staff helps pupils to become confident, resilient, young people."

"Classrooms are an oasis of calm where pupils work hard. Pupils are rightly proud of the work they produce. The school's curriculum is extremely ambitious."

"Through stories, teachers captivate pupils' interests and engage them in their learning."

"Children in the early years learn in a nurturing, well-resourced environment. Highly skilled practitioners model the language and behaviours they expect from the children."

"The school is aspirational for all its pupils."

"Pupils experience many opportunities that prepare them well for life in modern Britain."



"Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually respectful. Pupils feel safe because they know how much adults care about them. Pupils feel empowered to report any concerns they have to adults. They are confident that issues are resolved."





"Pupils are deeply respectful of difference and their own uniqueness. One pupil captured the views of many by explaining, 'Everyone is a book still being written; you can't judge them until it's finished.'"



"Leaders are tenacious and proportionate in following up pupil absences. As a result, attendance is high, and pupils are able to benefit from the positive education and care that the school provides."

"Staff morale is high: staff describe the school as a large, supportive and ambitious family."



Thinking about sending your child to our nursery or school? We are a small, happy, joyful family and would love to welcome you: Open morning Saturday 21st June for all potential starters in Nursery or Reception (9am – 10.30am) or get in touch for an individual visit!



ALL SAINTS' CATHOLIC CHURCH LANCHESTER

A lovely musical concert was enjoyed in the church on Sunday early evening on the 11th May. Our players and singers were Harps in Harmony and the Esh Community Gospel Choir. After the concert many joined us in the parish centre for tea and coffee and of course much chatter. We hope to invite the players and singers once again; they are a must to help us celebrate our centenary in 2026. The donations were shared between the church and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Lestrine Kelly



Lanchester Bowling Club - New Season, New…

"Oh to be in England/ Now that April's there." Had he been around this April, Robert Browning would certainly have been homesick for England. April. A month of renewal; a month of gentle warmth; a month of happy sun softly smiling on us and the delicate spring flowers; a month of (too few?) showers; a month where the County Council reopens the greens, and the outdoor bowling season starts again.

Before any bowls can be rolled, however, there's the annual call for volunteers to help with club maintenance. A call, as always, readily answered by members. On a warm Thursday morning eight of us (and two gaffers!) stain the backboards a rich dark oak; others had already cleaned out the pavilion guttering; the rink markings - red, white and black - are repainted; a sprung board is hammered back in place; the pavilion floor is hoovered, toilets and kitchen area cleaned.

Saturday, 12th April is the official reopening, with the initial wood being bowled by councillor Douglas Oliver who has been helpful in getting refurbishments to the club: including the new sign, the guardrail on the slope down from the pavilion and the new steps up the lower bank. Twenty plus members then take part in the competitions set up by Richard, our club secretary, or practise on the rinks, getting the rustiness out of their arms and shoulders. The whiskey on the cross rink competition is won by teenager Freddie whose grandmother quickly takes it off him! Winning a bottle of wine, the runner up is John Halsey. Robert Cuthbertson and Ron Irwin win the Easter eggs for the dinosaur game and target games respectively.

Tuesday and Thursday practice sessions during the month are well supported, with over thirty members attending on one of the days prior to the opening league matches.

The first league game is away to Consett Park on a warm Tuesday afternoon. If the match is sixteen ends, we would win all the points comfortably. Unfortunately, it is over twenty-one and we lose control of two rinks, taking only two of the eight points available. Our second match is more successful, with our Wednesday A team taking six points against Durham City in the newly revamped South West Durham League. Rule changes mean each player now bowls fifty four bowls, instead of the forty two last season.

A lightning quick green at View Lane, Stanley is the venue for our first Saturday league game. Although we narrowly lose on two rinks, the third rink wins comfortably with John Vickery having a particularly good game, so we take four points.

A loss, a win, and a draw. Good weather. Dry rinks. Not a bad way to start a season.

Bob Cuthbertson





Below: The recently completed steps up to the bowling rink
Right: Councillor Douglas Oliver bowls the first wood of the new season

Tennis News

It's been a very busy, and successful few weeks at the tennis club. Our Big Tennis Weekend took place on Saturday 10th May, and attracted over 80 visitors taking part in the many tennis related activities available to everyone. The glorious sunshine added to the positive and fun atmosphere, with families enjoying the idyllic surroundings of our beautiful grass courts.

League results

With the summer tennis season well underway, LLTC are once again entering teams into the Dunlop Northumberland & Durham League.

The first match for the Ladies Doubles team (vets) was played at home against a team from Cullercoats. There was some very competitive play, but on this occasion the team from Cullercoats marginally beat the Ladies 5 - 3. The visitors were in awe of our fabulous grass courts, and the delicious tea we provided!

The Mixed Doubles team (vets) faired a little better in their away match against our friendly rivals, Shotley & Benfieldside. A positive result for the mixed team, 6 - 2 to Lanchester.

Free coaching sessions

As promoted in last month's Village Voice, the club have provided free coaching sessions held on Friday afternoons for beginners and improvers.

We do have a few places left if any budding tennis players would like to attend the remaining sessions, register your interest by emailing: ***lanchestertennis@gmail.com***

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

Barbara Ridley













Photos: The Big Tennis weekend, in the sunshine. Coach Dennis leads the cardio tennis to music. Right: The mixed doubles enjoy the win!

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