

HILL TALK

A Village Partnership and Parish Council joint publication

May 2013
Issue 6



BEFORE AND AFTER

The first photograph of Front Street South from the junction of Church Street as it used to be. The building on the left, in partial view shows the entrance to the Miner's Welfare, it contained two full sized snooker tables and other games. Miners paid union subscriptions in this building and boys were allowed use of the facilities after their 14th birthday.

The building adjacent to the welfare was the main bus depot for the G&B public transport service. Originally Gilletts and Baker, it provided a prompt and reliable transport service to the area, buses travelled to London as well as other private hire services. Baker withdrew from the partnership after a few years and the company then ran as Gilletts Brothers, Arthur and Albert, both who lived in Quarrington Hill.



The G&B ran hourly services between Hartlepool and Durham, and Hartlepool and Bishop Auckland; it was managed for many years by Mr Gargett who lived in Coxhoe. G&B provided local employment and was renowned for their friendly personal service. In its later years the welfare building was used as a ticket office by the G&B.

Following the closure of the welfare and bus

depot the land stood disused for a number of years.

The photograph on the right shows the same site today. Bett homes have constructed twelve new properties, the majority of which are now occupied.

A very warm welcome to all the new residents.



COMMUNITY CENTRE SURVEY

Enclosed with this newsletter is a short questionnaire about the community centre, and we would appreciate you spending a few minutes completing it.

Quarrington Hill Community Association is currently working with Durham County Council to take on the asset transfer of the community centre, which we are currently managing, in order to keep the facility available for the community for well into the future. Asset transfer means that the Community Association (comprising all volunteers) will, in future, be responsible for all expenses and maintenance costs of the building following the signing of a new lease. As part of the process we need to find out what residents think of the service and facilities which we currently provide, and how likely you and members of your household are to use the community centre in the future and whether you would like to see more activities.

The community centre is a building for the community to use, and without the support of the community it cannot survive.

COUNCILLOR CHANGES FOLLOWING THE MAY ELECTIONS

Quarrington Hill Parish Councillors.

Thomas Gorman, Keith Pounder and Karen Stokes (contact details on page 7).

Our thanks to Ron Carr who retired from the Parish Council in May, and also to our other representatives who served on the previous Parish Council.

Durham County Council.

Jan Blakey,	jan.blakey@durham.gov.uk	377 1608
Mac Williams,	mac.williams@durham.gov.uk	378 3723
Maria Plews,	maria.plews@durham.gov.uk	07854225414

Our special thanks to Dennis Morgan who has retired after many years as our representative on Durham County Council, and for the work which he put in on behalf of our community during this time.

BANNER GROUP

A small banner was displayed at the 1873 Miners' Gala. On one side a thin pony was shown attempting to pull a tub, encouraged by a driver. 'Come up, Bobby, ten hours a day,' and on the other was a strong pony, with the driver exclaiming, 'Who Bobby, who Bobby, eight hours a day.'

This description of the Quarrington Hill banner was found in Norman Emery's banner book, 'Durham Banner Makers.'

Hugh, Lotte and Emma Shankland have designed the new Quarrington Hill banner from this description in the book.

The banner will be unveiled by Dennis Morgan on Friday, 28th June at 1.00pm at Cassop School, and Sedgfield School Band will play. Everyone will be most welcome.

Gala Day, 13th July. Anyone who would like the honour of carrying the banner on Gala Day should contact Clive Lawson. The banner will be blessed at the service in Durham Cathedral. Please let Clive know if you wish to attend the service in the cathedral so that transport can be arranged.

CHURCHYARD

The petition mentioned in the last edition of Hill Talk has been sent to our local Member of Parliament, Dr. Roberta Blackman- Woods, and Billy Jones is very grateful to have received a reply.

AT LAST

After many promises, which never materialised, re-surfacing of the road surface in Belle Vue has finally taken place. Residents have had to endure potholes being filled in, and then continually filled in again and again. The last time the road was re-surfaced was over 40 years ago, so hopefully residents can now look forward to life without potholes.

DOG FOULING

It is very encouraging to see that there has been a reduction in the level of dog fouling over recent weeks. A big 'thank you' to everyone who has contributed to this improvement. Let's keep up the good work.

AWARD

Congratulations to Clive Lawson on his award of the Durham County Council's Chairman's medal for the East Durham Rural Corridor's Area Action Partnership area. The award was presented to Clive in March by County Councillor Jan Blakey on behalf of the Chairman.

The citation reads:

Clive has worked on behalf of his community for many years. He has maintained the operations of Quarrington Hill community centre for over 20 years until his retirement in 2010, and over the last few years has also been a volunteer driver bringing people to and from the weekly bingo sessions. He initiated and secured the funding for the mining memorial, which is now a valued feature of the village. He was a volunteer gardener for the community centre, and such were his efforts that the centre's displays won prizes in the Durham in Bloom competition. He has worked with others in the 12 villages group of Durham City communities to secure regeneration initiatives. He has organised the 11th November remembrance event for over 20 years.

Clive is also currently working and heading a community group to secure a miners style banner for the village. The banner is expected to be displayed at the 2013 Miners Gala.

PANTO TIME

Jack and the Beanstalk is coming to Quarrington Hill community centre on Sunday, 8th December at 4.30pm. More details later.

NATURE RESERVE

Work has been undertaken with Cassop School children planting the new hedge by the bus stop in the village and also a range of nest boxes on the nature reserve. Four working parties of voluntary countryside rangers have carried out work clearing scrub on the special scientific interest site and LWS. The sheep and ponies have now been removed to allow the wild flower meadows to thrive. In April, there was a guided walk and visit from the U3A around Crowtrees Nature Reserve, and everyone enjoyed the discovery of how important the site is for the magnesium landscape grassland conversation and wildlife in general.

John Olley

Quarrington Hill Banner Group would like to invite you to
the unfurling ceremony of the new
Quarrington Hill Banner
including a concert by Sedgefield School Youth Band
to be held at Cassop School
28th June 2013 commencing at 1pm

BOLLARDS

Residents may have noticed the recent installation of bollards on the footpath to the churchyard. These have had to be installed to stop a minority of moronic drivers who were driving on the footpath to avoid the traffic calming humps. Not only is it an offence to drive on the footpath, but the vehicles were usually being driven at a speed which was in excess of the speed limit.

Because of health and safety concerns, nearby residents first raised the problem over two years ago, and a site meeting was then held between representatives of the Parish Council, the Police and Durham County Council's highways department, which eventually resulted in the current scheme.

Family Fun Day

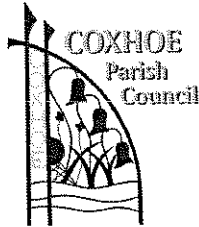
Saturday 17th August 2013, 11.00 am - 2.00 pm

Quarrington Hill Community Centre

Races (children and adults), games, bouncy castle, refreshments, tombola and tabletop sale.

Also

Fire engine and police car, (subject to availability)



Delivering Quality Services to
Coxhoe & Quarrington Hill

Summary of Coxhoe Parish Council Annual Report 2012/2013

2012-13 has been another eventful year for everyone in local and national government with us facing a more challenging economic environment than we have faced in many years. With many residents, local businesses and community groups struggling financially, we are more conscious than ever of the need to have value for money and partnership working at the forefront of our minds when we strive to meet the evolving needs of the community. Our focus once again has been to deliver your priorities by working on actions outlined in the new Parish Plan adopted by the Parish Council during the year. The new Parish Plan is a five year plan and will therefore influence the work of the Parish Council over the coming years.

My last Annual Report underlined the importance of partnership working and with this in mind we continue to develop our working relationship with Durham County Council and continue to work well with all of our other key community partners to improve Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill. We know that we cannot work in isolation and that to get things done we must work with our partners and the wider community.

The full report is available on the Parish Councils notice board and web site www.coxhoeparishcouncil.gov.uk where there is more detail under the following banner headlines:-

Sport, Leisure and Culture

Community Facilities

Highways and Transport

Environment

Improving the right to be heard – Consultations with Durham County Council

Improving Parish Council Administration and Meetings

Financial performance 2012/13

Paul Dodsworth Chair of Coxhoe Parish Council 8TH May 2013

Meet your new Parish Council

The new Parish Council met for the first time on the 8th May 2013 at the Annual Parish Meeting. Paul Dodsworth was again elected as Chair and Stuart Dunn was re-elected as Vice Chair. There are five new Parish Councillors, Kay Simpson, Wendy Lavelle and Tony Plews from Coxhoe and Karen Stokoe and Thomas Gorman from Quarrington Hill.

Contact Details for Coxhoe Parish Councillors and Parish Clerk

<i>Parish Councillors in Coxhoe</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Email</i>
Councillor Paul Dodsworth (Chair)	0191 3778914	p.dodsworth@bandk.co.uk
Councillor Stuart Dunn (Vice-Chair)	0191 3773314	stuart_dunn@hotmail.co.uk
Councillor Barbara Hepplewhite	0191 3771366	bhepp4@btinternet.com
Councillor Tony Rowe	0191 3773642	tony.rowe@live.com
Councillor Colin Thirlaway	0191 3772596	cthirlaway@btinternet.com
Councillor Kay Simpson	0191 3778826	k.simpson78@btinternet.com
Councillor Wendy Lavelle	0191 3773673	wendy-lavelle@tiscali.co.uk
Councillor Tony Plews	Can be contacted via the Parish Clerk	

Parish Councillors in Quarrington Hill

Councillor Keith Pounder	0191 3773611	keith.pounder@hotmail.co.uk
Councillor Karen Stokoe	Can be contacted via the Parish Clerk	
Councillor Thomas Gorman	0191 3770269	tommyqhill@msn.com

David Vasey (Parish Clerk)	07988 283287	clerk@coxhoeparishcouncil.gov.uk
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Parish Council meetings

Parish Council meetings are all open to the public and are now held at Coxhoe Village Hall at 7.00 pm, on the first Wednesday of the month with the exception of January 2014 when the meeting will be on the second Wednesday of the month.

Disclaimer: - The information in this newsletter is correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print. Quarrington Hill Village partnership accepts no responsibility for any error, omission, subsequent changes and complaints arising from items printed in this newsletter. The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Village partnership or the Parish Council

NATURE DIARY May 2013***Richard Cowen***

Winter dragged on this year as I am sure you will have noticed. This meant that the first migrants that I expected to find in the Reserve were delayed. Chiffchaff, instead of arriving in mid-March, waited until April to arrive. But if you walk around now you can often hear this little bird as I mentioned in my last report. However its cousin, the Willow Warbler, arrived all of a sudden and if anything a little early. Its lilting song can now also be heard in many places as you walk around the Reserve.

Another bird which appeared to arrive a few days early this year was the Swallow. It can be seen quite often flying over the ponds and you may see it skimming the water for a drink. I have not seen its cousins, the House Martin or Sand Martin, around here yet. Both are bright white below but the Sand Martin has a pale band around its throat. The House Martin is blue above and has a bright white rump which is clearly visible when it flies. The Sand Martin is smaller and brown above including the rump. The Swallow can be heard uttering a pleasant, twittering sound. Both Martins by comparison give a bit of a grunt.

The other similar bird that I have not yet seen around here is the Swift. All dark apart from a pale throat, this is a bird of the air and only comes to ground to nest. The rest of its life is spent on the wing with its almost sickle like wings. Its call is like a scream. Wonderful fliers, I have seen up to 400 of these birds together chasing insects around Hurworth Burn but generally around here the flocks are in single figures.

I have not heard many owls recently but at the beginning of May I was walking through the Quarrington Grasslands early in the morning when one suddenly appeared, flying silently towards me. It was a magnificent Long-eared Owl. The "ears" are frequently not visible – in fact, they are not ears at all. But when they do show, they really are visible as long protrusions. This Owl has orange eyes so, if you are able to see them, this can help with its identification.

Amphibians are now in our ponds. Of these the Great-crested Newt is a protected species and is fairly widespread in our area. Unfortunately, that does not apply throughout the rest of the country. Standing at the ponds early in May, I saw one swimming along the bottom, stopping and resting and then moving on again. These are beautiful creatures but it is illegal to disturb them so if you do see one, enjoy watching it as it swims by.

Last time I also mentioned the Cowslips. These are now beginning to flower, their bright yellow bell-like flowers providing colour in a number of locations. Soon it will be the turn of the Orchids of which we have a few in this area.