

# HILL TALK

A Village Partnership and Parish Council joint publication

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## QUARRINGTON HILL BANNER

After two years hard work, the new Quarrington Hill banner was finally completed, with an unfurling ceremony in Cassop School on 28<sup>th</sup> June and a dedication by the Bishop of Jarrow in Durham Cathedral at the Miners' Festival Service on Gala Day.



The original banner was paraded at the Miners' Gala in 1873, after which time nothing is known about it. Details were found in Norman Emery's book, 'Durham Banner Makers', and showed on one side a thin pony attempting to pull a tub, encouraged by the driver saying, 'Come up Bobby, ten hours a day,' and on the other side, a strong pony with the driver exclaiming 'Woh Bobby, woh Bobby, eight hours a day.' The new banner was designed by Hugh Lotte and Emma Shankland, based on the description in Norman Emery's book. It was funded by the National Lottery, County Councillors and other groups plus local fund raising.



**Remember, remember, 5th November**  
**Quarrington Hill Fireworks Display, Community Centre 7.00**  
**pm**



On 28<sup>th</sup> June, the main hall at Cassop School was packed for the unfurling ceremony of the new banner, which was carried out by former County Councillor Dennis Morgan and Clive Lawson, the treasurer of the Banner Group. A north east tradition of miners' brass bands and traditional local folk songs was also in evidence. The Sedgefield Community College Brass Band Ensemble gave a resounding

performance of varied tunes, including the miners' anthem, Gresford. The children's rendition of local traditional songs in a wonderful Geordie accent was a credit to both the music and dialect coaching. Clive Lawson said that the Banner Group had been keen to involve the children in the project and to teach them about their mining heritage. Among those present were Hugh Lotte, Emma Shankland, Dr. Roberta Blackman Woods, M.P, and County Councillors Jan Blakey and Mac Williams.

It was an early rise for residents on Gala Day, 13<sup>th</sup> July, as they came out to support and to march with the new banner along Front Street to the community centre led by the Kelloe band. There, for the first of four occasions on the day, the miners' anthem, Gresford, was played by the band in front of the miners' memorial.



The banner and its supporters then travelled by bus from the Half Moon to the New Inn in Durham. Again, the Kelloe band led the banner and its supporters marching to the assembly point by the Three Tuns. Fortunately, there was only a wait of about 20 minutes in ever rising temperatures, before going round the corner to the Marriott Royal County Hotel for the band to play and the banner to be displayed in front

of the dignitaries on the hotel balcony. The march then continued to the racecourse where the arrival of the new Quarrington Hill banner was announced over the tannoy. The display of the banner attracted great interest and favourable comment from many people who

were attending the Gala. In ever rising temperatures, the occasional light breeze was a welcome relief to everyone who was there. The speeches started at 1 o'clock, and then it was time for the banner and its supporters to make their way to the Cathedral.

Whilst waiting outside the Cathedral before the 3 o'clock service, the number of supporters was increased by many residents from the village coming specially to attend the service. As well as the Quarrington Hill banner, the new Thrislington banner was also to be dedicated. The Thrislington band led its banner and supporters into a packed Cathedral followed by the Quarrington Hill banner and its supporters.



At the dedication, 8 year old Charlie Hobson, grand daughter of Clive Lawson, Banner Group treasurer, asked the Bishop in a loud and clear voice, 'Bishop Mark, on behalf of the Quarrington Hill community, I ask you to dedicate this banner as a symbol of the friendship and service of our local people.' After the dedication, the Ripon City

Band played Gresford, with the sound echoing round the cathedral as if it had been built to provide such a suitable setting for this music. The preacher was Canon Dr. Giles Fraser, vicar of St. Mary's, Newington, London, and former Canon Chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral. He



commenced a thought provoking sermon by stating that, like some people, he did not like the North East.....he loved the North East, having lived in the area some years ago. The service ended with the organ voluntary, 'Allegro con spirito' which commenced with what was probably the loudest chord anyone

present had heard played on an organ in a building such as Durham Cathedral. The Ripon

City Band then led the banner and its supporters out of the Cathedral passed an applauding and very appreciative congregation, a most moving and emotional experience which will



forever be remembered by everyone who was there. The Banner Group would like to thank the residents of Quarrington Hill for their support on the day, especially Raymond Wilson and Daniel Whinham who carried the banner in the heat of a very hot summer day. Also, special thanks to the Heritage Lottery, our County Councillors, Coxhoe Parish Council, Trevor Smith who took the pictures, and finally Keith Pattison, who is making a DVD of the day which will be shown together with the photographs in the community centre in a few weeks time. The DVD can be viewed on the Durham Miners' Association website.

**YOUTH CLUB**  
**MONDAYS 6.30-8.00pm**  
**Community Centre**

## NATURE DIARY

The Dingy Skipper is, as its name suggests, a rather dingy coloured butterfly. But it is not very common. One of its last strongholds is around Quarrington Hill on the limestone areas. I have only seen one, earlier this year when walking up from Cassop Vale towards the Hill. It landed on the limestone rock after I had climbed up out of the Vale. It was so well camouflaged it almost disappeared. Butterflies generally have been suffering in recent years and last year's weather certainly did not help them. But with the warmth of this year there has perhaps been a bit of a revival in their fortunes. Certainly during July and early August, the Ringlet Butterfly was particularly numerous. A small brown butterfly, it gets its name from a series of small rings at the edge of its wings. Another butterfly that has been reasonably common this year has been the Meadow Brown. Larger than the Ringlet, it has an orangey tinge to the tip of the forewing and a dot on it. The Small Skipper is another small butterfly that has been present in reasonable numbers. This little butterfly has almost orange brown wings that somehow, when it is resting, appear to be stacked up, one on top of the other. Recently, I have seen the Wall Brown in the Reserve. Another orange/brown medium sized butterfly, it has black lines on its wings – almost, I suppose, looking like bricks. Its numbers have decreased in recent years and it is now largely confined to coastal areas. But I have often seen them in the Reserve and two were flying on the path below Cold Knuckles in mid-August.

By the Ponds, walkers may have heard on occasions a particularly loud call, almost building to a scolding noise as though warning people they are getting too close. The Sedge Warbler is a summer visitor, like most warblers in this country, and in recent years they have been nesting at the Ponds. Their song is loud and varied, one of the most varied in the bird world. They will reveal themselves but do spend a lot of time hidden in the reeds. They are smallish birds with streaked brown backs and a prominent light stripe over the eye. They are still here but will be returning to Africa in the autumn. A quieter but more visible bird of the Ponds is the Reed Bunting. The male can be a striking bird. Like the Sedge Warbler he has a streaked brown back but his head is almost jet black and white. His call almost reminds me of the buzzer I used to hear on trains in the days of British Rail. The female does not have the black head but still has a striking brown and whitish pattern on her face. This bird is resident in the UK so it is likely that it can still be seen during the winter.

Richard Cowen

## KINGSWOOD NATURE RESERVE

*This information is correct at the time of going to press*

Residents were shocked and concerned to learn that the part of Kingswood Nature Reserve behind Steetley Terrace is to be sold, especially as many residents thought that it was either owned by Durham County Council or had been gifted to the village several years ago, and not owned by Premier Waste. This sale details were initially misleading which has partly led to local concerns as it stated in the particulars it was 'Greenfield' not woodland. As confidential business negotiations are in progress, it is impossible for the progress of these negotiations to be made public, however, the following facts have been provided by a Durham County Council officer:

- The site freehold is owned by Premier Waste Management who are now in liquidation.
- Premier's liquidators are KPMG who have appointed Sanderson Wetherall as agents to sell all assets in order to ensure maximum funds go to creditors.
- Sanderson Wetherall placed a 'For Sale' sign on the site.

A large number of Quarrington Hill residents attended the Coxhoe Parish Council meetings in August and September, and at both meetings raised many concerns in relation to the proposed land sale. At the August meeting, the Parish Council indicated that it appreciated the strength of public support within Quarrington Hill and would assist in whatever way it can to achieve a positive outcome. Following the announcement at the September Parish Council meeting that Durham County Council was in negotiation with a view to purchasing the land, the Parish Council agreed that if Durham County Council are successful in their bid to purchase the land that the Parish Council will in principle accept the ownership and custody if agreed by Durham County Council, subject to clarification and costs. If this course of action is to be successful community support would be required to help with the on-going maintenance of the land and once things are clearer the Parish Council will invite Quarrington Hill residents to a meeting to consider the matter further.



Monday and Thursday - 6.00 - 6.30 pm

Quarrington Hill - Community Centre

## COMMUNITY CENTRE

It is 18 months since the management committee entered into negotiations with Durham County Council (DCC) for the asset transfer of the building to the community. Whilst there were concerns among members of the management about taking on the extra responsibilities in agreeing to the asset transfer, not to have done so would have resulted in its closure. Members of the management committee have attended numerous meetings and workshops with DCC and other organisations before finally producing a very detailed business plan for the future of the community centre to meet DCC's requirements, and to convince them that the centre can have a long term sustainable and viable future.

At the beginning of September, the management committee were very pleased to learn that DCC's community buildings asset transfer panel had agreed in principle for the asset transfer of the community centre to the community. There is still much work to be done which includes the Community Association changing from being a registered charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and agreeing a new lease with DCC. It is envisaged that the asset transfer should be completed by the end of the year.

Separately, DCC, as landlords, has approved the plans for the structural changes and improvements to the community centre. Quotations for the building and structural work are currently out to tender, and it is hoped that these will be agreed by the end of November. Funding for the work will have to be obtained, and if this is successful, then the work should be completed by this time next year.

The management committee are appreciative and grateful for residents support for regular community centre activities and also special events including the fireworks display, family fun day, Easter fair and children's christmas party. However, to build on the progress achieved to date, and to ensure that there is no question of the centre having to close in the future, the management committee would like to invite more residents to become involved in helping the centre to continue to meet the aspirations and needs of the community. New members to the management committee will be most welcome, and whilst not everyone likes to attend meetings, residents can also help and become involved by becoming 'volunteers' and helping out in specific areas when needed.

Could anyone who may be interested contact a member of the management committee or Keith Pounder on 377 3611 or at [keith.pounder@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:keith.pounder@hotmail.co.uk).

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

## COMMUNITY CENTRE EVENTS

**Family Fun Day.** August's family fun day activities were again well supported by residents. The children enjoyed the bouncy castle, games, races and competitions. The fire engine was again a draw, and this year there was a police van rather than the usual panda car. Some children were queuing up asking to be 'arrested' so that they could be locked up; some parents were disappointed when they were released! The table top sale, tombola and raffles were again very well supported. The management committee would like to thank residents for their continued support and everyone who contributed to making it another successful and enjoyable day. These included Tommy Dyson, Alan and Margaret Simpson, Marian Myers sisters, Eva and Sylvia, and everyone who donated prizes and items for the table top sale, and finally all the volunteers who worked on the day. **Diary Dates.**

**5<sup>th</sup> November** 7.00pm Fireworks display, hot dogs, broth

**11<sup>th</sup> November** 11.00am Remembrance service

**8<sup>th</sup> December** 4.30pm Pantomime-Jack and the Beanstalk

**14<sup>th</sup> December** 3.00pm Children's Christmas Party

## AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP

The East Durham Rural Corridor Area Action Partnership will be holding its Up 2 U Participatory Budgeting event at Sedgefield Community College on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November from 10.00am to 2.00pm. Projects from the village will be applying for funding, so it is hoped that as many residents as possible can attend to vote for Quarrington Hill projects in order to ensure that they will get the funding which they are requesting. Anyone over 10 years old is eligible to vote. It will also be an opportunity for residents to learn about other projects and community work taking place within the AAP area and to vote on priorities for the coming year.

## QUARRINGTON HILL CHURCH YARD

Following request for clarification Coxhoe Parish Council has no responsibility for St Paul's churchyard in Quarrington Hill, the churchyard is solely the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council in Bowburn.

