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THE VILLAGE VOICE

Issue No 1 Volume 7

Lanchester, February 2006

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VILLAGE VOICE SPONSORS BAND

Lanchester Brass Band have secured new sponsorship after a previous sponsor had to pull out.

Their appeal was considered by the committee of the Village Voice, which decided that in view of increased revenue from advertising in recent times the Voice would be able to sponsor the band with £1000 in 2006 and 2007,

after which further funding would be dependent on the paper's revenue.

The Brass Band plays a major role in the village, performing without payment at many events like the Carnival and Remembrance Sunday. They also maintain a Training Band which enables many young people to learn to read music and play an instrument.



Lanchester Brass Band playing carols around the streets of Lanchester

WINTER SNOW



All those citizens of Lanchester who've been whingeing about the few flakes of snow that fell recently and melted away after a day or two should meditate on this photo.

Mr Harry Dent of Partridge Close Farm took the photo at the top of Cadger Bank, just below the Roman

fort, with the telegraph pole just about emerging from the bank of snow, in February 1947. This snowfall brought the North-East to a standstill for a week or more.

Thanks to Harry's nephew, Ray Thompson, for providing the photo. The motorcycle is a BSA 250cc C11.



The hillside from the railway down to the play area was an ideal place for young sledgers and their parents to test-drive their winter vehicles



Dear Village....

The views expressed in letters to the editor are not necessarily those of the newspaper, the editor or persons working for the newspaper. The editor retains the right to cut or otherwise amend any letter published. Letters must contain your name, address and telephone no., all of which may be withheld at your request.

To the Editor

I would like to say thank you to the Lions organisation for the invitation I received to the party they held in the Community Centre on Saturday the 10th December, 2005.

I had a very enjoyable evening. Sherry or fruit juice was served on arrival and a very nice three course meal was provided, cooked by the ladies and served by the gentlemen. Lovely hot coffee or tea was available along with After Eight mints. There were Christmas crackers and entertainment. Judging by the noise level from everybody chatting away, all seemed to be enjoying themselves. Some lucky people won the table decorations and

Santa Claus appeared at the end of the evening and every guest received a gift.

It seemed such a pity for the Lions that they had unnecessarily laid table places, cooked meals, wrapped gifts, and in some cases arranged transport for some people who did not turn up and did not have the courtesy to inform them they would be unable to attend.

A. Tait
Briardene

Dear Editor,
Lynwood House Trolley Shop W.R.V.S.
The impending closure of Lynwood House and the reduction in the number of residents therein means that regrettably, trolley shop service has had to be discontinued. I would like to thank all helpers past and present who provided the service on Friday afternoons for their kind co operation and the valuable time that they have given to the elderly in Lynwood over many years. Thanks to Sarah

Allison, Pam Bygate, Alan Williams, Judith Wilkinson, Angela Lee, Freda Smith, Ann Allen, Joan Massey, Mary Richardson, Peggy Atkinson, Edith Pierce, Marjorie Halliday, Jean Densham, Ann Sirs, and Joan Beardsworth.

The trolley service was initiated by the late Edith Britton before I came to the village in 1974, so please forgive me for any names which I have, no doubt, omitted.

Yours sincerely
Pat Heppell, Lee Hill Court
W.R.V.S. Trolley Shop
Organiser.

Dear Sir,
Mr and Mrs Cowan of 17 Burnhopeside Avenue would like to say 'thank you' to friends and neighbours for many flowers and cards of sympathy that we received following the death of our daughter Vivienne on the 4th December in Wolverhampton.

Dear Sir
In recent months we have been plagued by piles of dog dirt being deposited at the corners of Foxhills Crescent and Broadoak Drive, outside Nos 50 & 67 Foxhills respectively. Matters reached a disgusting peak over the New Year Bank Holiday when so much dog dirt was deposited outside No 67 Foxhills that walking down the pavement towards the stream was like negotiating a dog dirt minefield.

The strange thing is that no one ever sees the dirty dog at work, so to the owner of the Phantom Pavement Foulter I would say please either take a plastic bag with you when walking your dog, or invest in a Poopa Scoop so that you can clean up your dog's mess.

Yours faithfully
Name and address supplied

THE VILLAGE VOICE

IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

AUSTIN ROGAN

All Saints Catholic Church was filled to overflowing for Austin's Requiem Mass on November 15th. The family did all the readings and prayers. Austin's grandchildren brought the gifts to the altar in an offertory procession.

Canon Spence gave a warm tribute to Austin. He asked us in the first place to thank God for a marvellous man of family in his original Leadgate family and particularly for his very happy marriage to Shirley. We said thank you for Austin as a great father to Philip, Andrew and Catherine and to David and Jen, and very specially for a very proud grandfather of Jonathan, Susannah and Tom.

Publicly, Austin was a generous and talented member of All Saints Parish and the Lanchester Community. Fittingly the family had chosen the Parable of the Talents as the gospel for his Requiem. He was chair of the

Parish Pastoral Council when he died. A "Doer" rather than a "Talker", it was noted that he chaired meetings very briskly if there was an important match on TV that evening! He was, of course, an ardent supporter of Newcastle United and seemed to have an infinite collection of Sunderland jokes!

Austin established a successful engineering business, High Force Engineering. He built many significant structures in London, particularly at Canary Wharf. He served with the Royal Engineers in Korea.

Austin was a keen gardener and many will remember him from the Allotment Society and the Horticultural Club. The Leek Show at Lanchester Club was an important time for him. We were led by Canon Spence to thank God for a lovely man of family whose humour and talent warmed the life of Lanchester.

FREDERICK WILLIAM OATES

The funeral of Mr Frederick William "Will" Oates took place in the church of St Mary and St Cuthbert, Chester le Street on January 13th.

Mr Oates, President of Lanchester Bridge Club, had been a committee member for over twenty years and MC since 1995, signalling with a hand-bell each stage of play. He was a keen, effective and

competitive bridge player and supporter of the North-East Bridge Association as well as numerous charity bridge drives.

Will Oates was born in March 1911, carrying his enthusiasm for bridge and his skills well into his 90's. In the words of Lanchester club chairman Peter Curnow, bridge has lost a great character and a great supporter.

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RETIREMENT PARTY

Members of the Community Association committee, friends and colleagues of Olive Simpkins, gathered in the Community Centre on December 23rd to mark Olive's years of service to the Association.

Chairman Arthur Maughan paid tribute for what Olive has done for the Centre over nearly 19 years since she was appointed by Durham County Council, starting with an office in what is now a store cupboard off the main hall. Her responsibility was booking groups into rooms in the Community Centre and the Green School, which then had spare capacity.

Olive was also the organisation's Secretary and fundraiser, raising about £2000 a year. A major event including "Petticoat Lane" in Croft View together with a Grand Auction raised an



Arthur Maughan makes the presentation to Olive Simpkins

amazing £3000. Even in 1993 when Harry Taylor became Secretary, Olive continued with fundraising.

In 2003 Olive also became Adult and Community Learning coordinator as well as

Warden, organising an ever-growing list of classes.

Olive's colleague Jean Hunter testified to Olive's persuasiveness. Sixteen years ago she had been approached by Olive with a request

to become Community Association Treasurer. Resistance was useless, and she ended up attending a meeting and accepting a job which she still does - with great efficiency.

Olive would like to thank

all those who contributed to her leaving gifts, and also to all those who came down to the Centre just two evenings before Christmas, to bid her farewell. It was most appreciated.

S & J

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WILDLIFE LEADERS RETIRE

Ted and Ann Welding, Chairman and Treasurer respectively of Lanchester's Wildlife group, resigned from their posts at the group's AGM on December 13th.

They had already been members of the Wildlife group for about ten years when they took on the jobs ten years ago 'for a year or so'. It is a testament to them that they helped to keep the club going well, widened its scope and became more pro-active in local issues such as biodiversity, the County Plan and Planning Inquiries. They were presented



Ann and Ted Welding with their friends at the Wildlife Trust AGM and party

plants got their names, "The Naming of Names" by Anna

Pavord, and some cash which will go towards buying an old

variety of apple tree. They will continue to be members of the

Wildlife group, which will continue to benefit from their experience.

BBC BLUE BUS VISITS THE VILLAGE

The BBC Blue bus Radio Newcastle took such was the diversity of the interests of the people phoning the studio. The link man on Ellington Colliery, Drayton, who spoke at Lanchester, which may be purchased for £12.99 at the Library or Newsagents in the village.



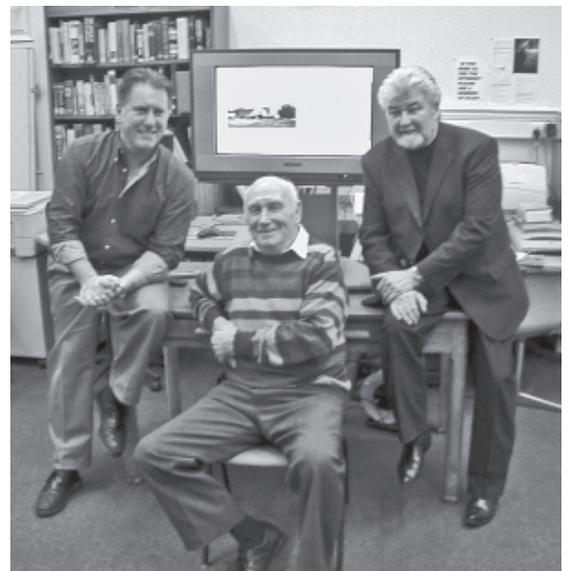
Steve Drayton, Presenter for Radio Newcastle, chats to local photographer Eric Burns about his new DVD of old Lanchester



The BBC Blue Bus – parked outside New Image on 9th January

DVDlightful

The opportunity to view commentary, apart from the new DVD showing Eric's description of his attempt to take photos of the Lions delivering logs to pensioners, only to don his waders and photograph the famous December floods. All three were present in Lanchester library and were able to answer questions after the viewing. Many of the audience had lived in the village for a few years and were able to comment on the photos from memory. Some enjoyed a second viewing, and copies were and still are for sale in the library.



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LANCHESTER CENTURIONS PRESENT FUNDS



Members of the Centurions: Assistant Secretary, Glenda Averre-Laing; Dawn Jackson, Treasurer; Wayne Tilley, Chairman, present a cheque for £500 to Brin Jones, President of Lanchester Lions Club

What great fund raisers these local bikers are! They spend from May each year until the following May going to motorcycle rallies, and in between times hold lots of functions to raise money for charities. Several of their events are held at the Social Club and the Black Bull. Last year they raised £3000 for Air Ambulance. This year they have raised £700, of which £200 has been given to

Wheatley Hill Sure Start for under-privileged children and the remaining £500 to Lanchester Lions for distribution among the young, the youth and the elderly of Lanchester, Burnhope, Langley Park and small villages in those locations. Having recently held a Senior Citizens Party for the elderly in those areas, organized a Travelling Grotto around the small villages, and contributed funds to schools in many of those places for Christmas

parties, the money from the Centurions will go a long way to off-setting those costs. The Lions Club is extremely grateful for this very large unexpected donation. Likewise, the Centurions would like to express their thanks to all the people who have given so generously to all their fund raising efforts, and particularly The King's Head, The Queen's Head, the Black Bull and the Social Club for donating prizes and generally supporting the club in their events.



Members of Lanchester Centurions in party mood after the presentation



Staff at New Image really go to town on the fancy dress costumes for Christmas Eve

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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS DECEMBER 2005

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS thanked for their attendance and helping the evening to have a really festive feel.

LYNWOOD HOUSE The Parish Council is to hold a conference on care for the elderly in the parish as a direct result of the impending closure of Lynwood House in 2006. The Elderly Conference will take

place on Saturday 25th February at the Community Centre. Among the guest speakers will be our MP Hillary Armstrong, representatives from Derwentside District Council, the Alzheimers' Society and carers groups as well as the Parish Council.

OPEN-CAST MINING The Parish Council has officially voiced its opposition to open-cast mining. There are three proposed schemes to begin open-casting in Derwentside, including one near Hurbuck Cottages.

PLAY AREA FIRE

A fire was spotted in the under 12s play area in Lanchester by a local resident one evening. No damage was caused and by the time the police arrived, the perpetrators had gone.

CHURCH CLOCK

The Parish Council has donated £200 towards the maintenance of the church tower clock this financial year.

ALL SAINTS PRIMARY CAR PARK

The Parish Council has been asked by Lanchester All Saints Primary School to help them with improved access to their car park. There is concern that when the new housing development on Kitswell Road is finished, the increase in traffic will make it more dangerous for pupils at the beginning and end of the school day. At present there is only a narrow lane to the car park, and the school wants to build a new one on neighbouring County Council owned land. The Council has said it will support the school's plans.

KITSWELL ROAD PLAY AREA

A feasibility study is to be undertaken ahead of work to build a new play area on Kitswell Road adjacent to the current football field. A similar study had to be done before the creation of the under 12s play area behind Park House.

HOLLINSIDE PLAY AREA

The Council is to carry out repair work on the Hollinside play area after it was damaged by a falling branch. The branch fell from an Ash tree on the public highway damaging a fence.

LIGHTS OFF IN THE PARK

The council's plans to introduce floodlighting in the village play area have been stalled over the cost. Enquiries revealed that in order to connect the lights to a power supply it would cost a prohibitive £10,000. The decision to put lights up has now been deferred.

PLANNING DECISIONS

Derwentside District Council have granted planning permission to Oakwood Stables in Lanchester to extend the time of floodlighting from 1900-2000 hours.

POLICE REPORT

During the past month, the crimes reported to the police included; the theft of two large gates from a farm field, two tyres were slashed on a vehicle parked in Valley Grove, and a window was smashed.

OTHER MATTERS:

Fish sellers are still active in Lanchester, and may be the same ones as I previously reported. A resident contacted the police after being visited by these men. They were sent on their way, after advice given in last month's Village Voice.

Two Polish men are also still selling door to door. On one occasion they attended an address and gave the occupant a note saying 'I am Polish, would you like to buy my paintings?' Please be aware of the above people and contact the police should you encounter them.

I am appealing for witnesses, or information, on youths who are responsible for throwing mud and stones at passing traffic on Peth Bank in the last month. This has been happening

on evenings, mainly between 5.00-6.30pm. Although the incidents seem to have stopped, I am concerned they may start again. It goes without saying the culprits do not realise the consequences of their actions, and if caught will be severely dealt with by the police.

The Police Licencing Unit and the passive drugs dog carried out another visit to the pubs in Lanchester. This has provided useful intelligence and reassurance to the residents of Lanchester. In addition, a walk through the village resulted in several seizures of alcohol from persons under age.

Fixed penalty tickets being issued for parking offences are on the increase. Extra police attention will continue during December, and into 2006, until the 'message' gets through.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful and a very Happy New Year. PC 1875 Norman Foster Lanchester Beat Officer

Stuart Wright

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LYNWOOD HOUSE

It was revealed at this month's Parish Council meeting that the decision to close Lynwood House will not actually be taken until residents have been consulted. This consultation process has not yet begun ... could Lynwood House yet be saved?

ELDERLY CONFERENCE

The proposed conference to discuss the provision of care for the elderly is to go ahead on 25th February in the Community Centre. Among the speakers confirmed so far are Hilary Armstrong MP and representatives from The Alzheimer's Society and Derwentside Carers.

TRAFFIC MATTERS

(i) Ford Road

Councillor Tom Forster reported to the Parish Council that a traffic survey carried out on Ford Road revealed that 46% of vehicles were travelling above the 30 mph speed limit. Councillors spoke about the possibility of introducing some kind of traffic calming measures along this stretch of road, particularly as the pavement is so narrow putting pedestrians and in particular prams in danger of the speeding traffic. Councillor Forster said he would speak to Durham County Council about this matter and that at the very least remedial work should be undertaken on the road surface.

(ii) Parking tickets

A number of Parish councillors asked whether the current police crack down on illegal parking in the village was indeed having the desired effect. One example was given of a

woman who was seen by a councillor parking on the double yellow lines outside Spar, leaving a child in her car and the engine running. When she returned several minutes later she was greeted at the car by a police officer, she was spoken to and then allowed to drive off without a ticket. Councillors resolved to speak to the police about the success of the scheme and just how many tickets have been issued.

NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET Parish councillors have agreed their expenditure for the next financial year and pledged that their spending will increase by no more than 4%.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Plans to erect a conservatory to the rear of 35 Broad Oak Drive were approved by the Parish Council Planning Committee.

An application to change the use of a garage/studio at Newfield Lodge on Ford Road to an ancillary residence has been granted by the District Council. A further application to change the use of an agricultural building to a dwelling at Ragpathside Farm in Lanchester was also granted at District level.

STONE HEAP OPEN CASTING

Durham County Council has approved plans to open cast an area of land at Stoney Heap. The process is to last no longer than 24 months and restoration work is to be carried out on completion of the mineral extraction. Work is expected to begin shortly. Both the Parish and District Councils opposed this application.

POLICE REPORT

Reported crimes since the last meeting:

A house window was broken during the night by an unknown person throwing a snowball at an address close to Front Street.

A steel light bar unit was stolen from a truck during the night. It was parked up outside H Eggleston Malton Works.

A shed was broken into and garden tools were stolen from Sheepswalk Farm.

A vehicle was broken into and a CD player stolen, while it was parked behind the Queen's Head pub.

Two 4x4 vehicles were broken into outside two different addresses, nothing was taken on either occasion.

OTHER MATTERS:

There have been reports of mini motorbikes being driven on Peth Bank. The people responsible for this are unknown to the police. These mini motorbikes and mini motos are classed as motor vehicles and are therefore subject to the same laws, i.e. persons riding them must have driving licences, insurance and MOTs. They should also wear helmets and only be ridden on private land with the permission of the landowner. They are not permitted to be driven on public roads. Fixed penalty tickets are still being issued regarding the parking problems in the village. Police will continue to monitor the situation. PC 1875 Norman Foster Lanchester Beat Officer

KNITSLEY MILL

After closure the restaurant and accommodation at Knitsley Mill has now reopened under new ownership and management after refurbishment, with a carte and table d'hote menus. The new owner's Mill House pub and restaurant at Eighton Banks recently won a Pub of the Year award.

KEYS FOUND

A key-ring with a house key, an Audi car key and central locking remote control were found, before Christmas, beside the grass area near the garages in Deanery View. Will the owner please ring 521427 and identify the silver-coloured attachment on the ring to have it returned.

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TRIP TO MIDDLETON

On the morning of Tuesday 10th January, Class 4 (children from years 5 and 6) from All Saints' RC Primary School, left for a visit to the field studies residential centre in Middleton in Teesdale, waved off by lots of parents and Class 1 (reception and year 1 children). They were escorted by teachers Mrs Karen McKenna and Mrs Catherine Summers, along with Mr Stephen McKenna, who had volunteered to take a week off work to help the group. After unpacking and lunch, they were led on a damp walk up Kirkcarrion by the centre's leader, Mrs Angela Gillings, escorted by her two Springer Spaniels, Jess and Rocky. At the summit, the children listened intently to a ghost story about Prince Carrion who was buried at the top of the hill. A quick descent was needed as the fog was closing in and an evening meal calling. The following day, the party set off for Bowes Museum, where they worked with a residential artist and watched the world famous Silver Swan



perform. After a walk around Barnard Castle and a visit to the shops, the children ended the day with a torchlight walk around the centre's grounds. Thursday saw a full day's walking. Perfect walking weather meant that the children were able to explore the lead mining trail which led up to Coldberry Mine. Here they searched for lead ore or galena, which still has

value today. Although they should have been exhausted, after more than six hours of walking, the children managed to fit in a games session, playing table tennis and pool before bed. The visit to Middleton ended with a mystery tour along the banks of the River Tees and a stop at the shops to buy presents for those at home. The children had an enjoyable week,

learning geographical skills, finding out about the history of the area and developing teamwork, all aided by the vast knowledge and experience of Mrs Gillings, who commented on what a great group they had been and that, although the girls' dormitory as always was tidy, the boys' dormitory had rarely been kept tidier! Mrs Karen McKenna (Deputy Headteacher)

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PLAYGROUP PARTY



Mothers, grandmothers and child-minders playing with the children before the fun really starts

Children at the Community Centre and Playgroup held their Christmas Party at the lovely food, and had a great time playing enjoying a visit from Santa Claus. games, eating some

PLAYGROUP RAFFLE

Lanchester Playgroup and Tiny Tots would like to thank all those shops and restaurants who kindly donated prizes for their Grand Christmas Raffle. Their support and the support of all who bought and sold the tickets helped to make it a great success. The total raised for Playgroup funds was £567.50.

FIRST PRIZE FOR VILLAGE WEBSITE

Lanchester Community Centre has won the first prize in a competition to find the Best Community Website in the north-east through the Communicate initiative. The prize of £3000 was awarded by Newsquest (North East) Ltd, publishers of the Northern Echo and Barclays Bank. A total of 54 websites entered the competition. Runners-up Shadforth Women's Institute and Northern Pulse, an organisation for triathletes, received prizes of £1000. Lanchester was praised for the content of the site, the ease of access to information and the fact that it has been kept up-to-date from its inception in 2001. The site was originally set up by Christine Monaghan and John Wills. Many of the groups that use the Community Centre provide information and pictures for the website so it is a real community effort. Christine maintains the site apart from the Male Voice Choir page that is

John's responsibility and the poetry page that is kept up-to-date by Isam Husain.

The Communicate project was set up by Newsquest as a free service to community groups and has been supported by, amongst others, Barclays Bank. It allows groups to set up their own website without specialist knowledge.

Christine was amazed when the prize was announced as she had only entered the competition after being pushed into it by her husband. The prize money will be used by the Community Centre for the good of the people of Lanchester and top priority will go to the Computers for All project. Christine would like to thank all the people who have helped with the website and would like any group using the Community Centre that does not have a page devoted to their activities to contact her for inclusion.

You can view the prize-winning website at www.communicate.co.uk/ne/lanchestercommunitycentre.

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Photo: Northern Echo

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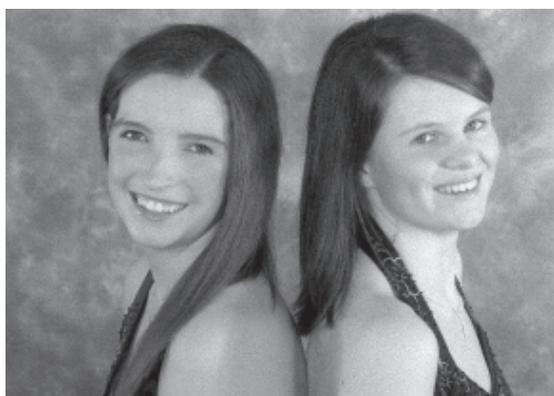
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THURSDAY CLUB NEW YEAR PARTY



On the evening of January 19th., in the Small Hall of the Community Centre, the Thursday Club were to be found enjoying their New Year Party. Fun, games, merriment, scrumptious food and good company all added up to a most entertaining and uplifting experience with which to start 2006. Thursday Club membership is currently standing at 51, anyone wishing to join needs to see Liz Smith our treasurer as soon as possible as the membership list will close at 60.

SITTING PRETTY



These two Lanchester young ladies were the centre of attraction at the Conssett and District Photographic Society's meeting on January 9th. Nicola Behan (left) aged 18, of Deanery View, and Emma Burns, aged 16, of Bishop's Meadow, were photographed at the Society's Practical Model Night wearing ball gowns as shown here, and also modelled casual attire as club members snapped away with their digital cameras. Both thoroughly enjoyed their evening under the lights.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



Delightful display at Deanery View



Even more features have been added to the display at Valley Grove

OPEN CAST AT STONY HEAP

Durham County Council have approved plans by UK Coal to mine 39 acres of land North of Stony Heap over a period of two years, exploiting the Fivequarter and Main seams. The remains of the Stony Heap colliery buildings will be removed. Acceptance of the plans was recommended by the Council's officer. The decision, taken on December 20th, ignored objections from Derwentside District Council, English Nature, Durham Wildlife Trust, and the CPRE. The open cast mining will destroy one third of a County Wildlife Site. Following mining, the company will plant a considerable area of woodland and create new footpaths and a bridleway. The decision was discussed at some length at the January meeting of Lanchester Partnership. It was decided to write to the Council expressing disquiet that the opinion of the District Council and other groups had been ignored, particularly in view of Hurbuck site being put forward in the County's Minerals Plan.

WILLOW BURN COFFEE MORNING

At a crowded event held at Ferndale, Conssett, in memory of the late Martin Harrington of Lanchester, £688.02 was raised. Many people from Lanchester, Conssett and surrounding areas attended, helped, or contributed in some way, and thanks are due to all those kind people who between them raised such a magnificent sum of money for Willow Burn.

DLI 68 ANNIVERSARY

The thirtieth anniversary of DLI68, the group dedicated to recreating the life and history of the DLI in Napoleonic times, was celebrated in Lancaster Community Centre. As always the men were in full uniform and most ladies wore period costume. After

reports and presentation of prizes and a buffet dinner there was a ceilidh to the music of "The Twiddling Thumbs". Our photo shows the top table with Lieutenant Russell Parker and Mrs Jane Parker, commanding officer Captain Robert Yuill (a Major in real life) and Mrs Ann Yuill.



PUB CRAWL



Santa with two young ladies, Catherine and Natalie, enjoying a night out at the King's Head

What a great way to raise money for charity! Four freezing cold Lions plus Santa called at local hostelryes, Queen's Head; King's Head; Social Club; and The Black Bull, where patrons gave generously to Lions rattling their tins. £145

was collected during the course of this lively, enjoyable evening and thanks are given to the various landlords who allowed the collection to take place and, of course, all those who supported the event by the generosity of their giving.

LADS' CHRISTMAS PRESENTS



Lion Stan Ashton distributes Christmas presents to the 'Lads' in the Community Homes in the village. Above: John Parker, Richard Parker; Colleen Walker (Home Support Worker) and Eddie Fletcher.

Below: Ronnie, Alan and John, with Ean Botcherby (Home Support Worker) in the background



ART ATTACK

If anyone is offered a bronze statue of an alleged reclining figure by doorstep salesmen, they are advised that it may not fit neatly into your garden, will not go into the 4by4 to take to granny and is wanted by the police and previous owner in Much Hadham, Herts. It weighs 2 tons (or maybe tonnes) and was the work of a chap called Henry Moore.

CRACKERS

- Q. How do snails keep their shells shiny?
 A. They use snail varnish.
- Q. Why didn't the skeleton go to the New Year's Eve party?
 A. He had no body to go with.
- Q. What is the difference between a fish and a piano?
 A. You can't tuna fish.

SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTY

Despite a very mild evening numbers were lower than usual for the Lions' traditional Senior Citizens' Party held at the Community Centre. There were about fifteen unexpected last minute cancellations but those who attended obviously had a very enjoyable time. As usual, Lady Lions provided an excellent

three course meal which consisted of Fruit Salad starter, a main course of Roast Pork with all the trimmings, a sweet of Sherry trifle and finishing off with Coffee. Guests were greeted on arrival with a glass of sherry or orange juice. Superb entertainment was provided by the 'Lantones Barbershop

Quartet' who sang a repertoire of English and American short, sharp, witty songs with great harmony, jocularly and enthusiasm. The banter and wit in between the numbers also went down well with the audience. Following the excellent 'Barbershop' the Lady Lions continued the entertainment in

seasonal spirit by singing carols, without having had any rehearsal. They were helped along by the audience and it all sounded pretty tuneful and certainly added to the seasonal occasion. Beautiful table decorations made by the ladies were raffled at no charge so about a dozen people went home with a lovely

decoration for Christmas. The evening drew to a close with Vice President Mike Stoddart making an appropriate speech in his usual light hearted manner, and the 'unexpected' appearance of a certain Mr S. Claus, who delighted everyone by distributing presents among the guests.

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The Lantones Barbershop quartet enjoying the evening as much as their audience



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Santa giving out presents at the end of the evening

MUSIC FOR GOA

A Christmas Musical Evening was held in All Saints RC church hall on Friday 16th of December in aid of the village of Assolna in Goa, India, served by recent visitor to Lanchester Fr Caetano Fernandez.

A large cast of local singers were joined by professional musician Michael Kelly to provide a varied menu of tasty songs. Anne and Malcolm McKenzie, Margaret and Megan O'Brien, Chris Kelly, David Conlin and Michael Kelly were introduced by MC and singer Colm Doyle, who also introduced a vast number of reject jokes from the cracker factory. (They were very good, really.) The evening was



Michael and Chris Kelly get together for a duet at the 'Goa' evening

enhanced by a quiz at the interval and ended with carols sung by audience and the massed musicians, ending with John Lennon's "So this is Christmas". The total raised from the evening including a raffle and bar was £390. In

addition £250, being two years' profits from Traidcraft sales, plus £100 from Lanchester Lions and private donations added up to about £800, the sum which Canon Spence has taken to Goa. It will be split between two parishes.

COFFEE FOR LANCHESTER HOUSE

A coffee morning together with a light lunch was held in the Methodist Church in Lanchester on Saturday 10th December and together they raised the goodly sum of £454 for Lanchester House, the orphanage in Liberia 'adopted' by Mel and Sue Somersall. Coffee mornings are being held every Saturday in the church for various charities, and soon after Mel and

Sue returned from serving aboard the Mercy Ship 'Anastasis' they learned that the charity assigned to December 10th could not organise it. A few phone calls recruited a band of willing volunteers to share the work of making cakes and staffing the event, which happily coincided with the 'Christmas Tree' festival.

CHORAL AND OPERATIC CAROLS



Members of the Choral and Operatic Society singing carols around the streets of Lanchester

SUNDAY SCHOOL NATIVITY

Children of the Parish Church Sunday School who performed the 'Images of Christmas Nativity'



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Sedgefield: 23, 30 Jan, 6 & 13 Feb 2006, 6pm - 9pm

In partnership with: Sedgefield Borough Business Service

Derwentside: 2 & 16 Feb 2006, 10am - 3pm

To book a free place or for more info please contact Alison on 0845 245 0212 or email alison@peopleintoenterprise.com



LIONS' TRAVELLING GROTTO

The Lions' Travelling Grotto attracted about forty or so children from the villages of Hollinside; Satley, Cornsay Colliery, Cornsay; Quebec and Wilks Hill on a bitterly cold December Sunday afternoon. Children and some of the elderly who turned out to see the decorated van received free sweets. Donations of £10 were also gratefully received by Santa on behalf of the club. At the final stop at Wilks Hill, Mrs Wass kindly proffered some warm refreshment to Santa and his driver which was eagerly accepted. Once again this was a worthwhile event which lots of children really enjoyed. Thanks are due to Lanchester Motors who provided the transit van free of charge and to Diane Burns and Partner who paid for the diesel.



Santa with Bethany, Louise and Sophie at Satley

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BRAES OF DERWENT HUNT



*The demise of hunting seems to have been greatly exaggerated, as Boxing Day saw a good turn-out for the traditional Braes of Derwent meeting, seen here leaving the Queen's Head yard.
Photo: Eric Burns*

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

There was a goodly turn-out for Carols on the Green, organised by Churches Together



E P SCHOOL CONCERT

Lanchester E P School held a Concert and Coffee Afternoon towards the end of the autumn term which attracted a completely full hall of parents and friends. Those who attended were able to relax with a cup of tea or a cup of coffee as the children performed their concert of mainly seasonal songs and carols. Taking part were the Upper Juniors, Lower Juniors, School Choir and Infants. The songs and the carols ranged from a mellow but melodious 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney'; and their finale, 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'. At the end the School Choir rendering a lovely alternate version of 'Away in a Manger'. The little children ended the concert with a Christmas party atmosphere as they joyfully sang a selection of children's favourites; these included 'Jingle Bells'; 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney'; and their finale, 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'. At the end the audience burst into rapturous applause and much to their delight children were allowed to leave school a little earlier than usual. A magnificent total of £163.72 was raised and thanks are due to all who helped at the function.



The junior EP school carol concert included Christingles and banners, seen in our photo, to convey the Christmas message



Lower Juniors E P School performing at the Concert and Coffee Afternoon



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ALL SAINTS' SCHOOL CAROLS



Children of All Saints' RC Primary School at their carol concert

All Saints' RC Church was packed with parents and grandparents for the primary school's Carol Concert. A programme of modern carols was sung by the children, who gave an excellent performance, accompanied on guitar by Margaret Doyle and Head Teacher Tony Reather.

Among the carols sung were 'Our God is here', 'Open the eyes of my heart', and 'We have seen the light' performed with movements by the older pupils. A collection was taken in support of Mel Somersall's project to improve the girls' dormitory in a Liberia orphanage, raising £250.

THE LITTLE ANGEL

What a wonderful performance of this Nativity Musical! The infant children of the Lanchester E P School excelled themselves and gave their audience a very enjoyable, emotional time as they watched the children perform. Led by a little boy with lots of confidence and a superbly tuneful voice the choir of angels really sang well. The narrators were really clear,

and interspersed with their readings, various other groups of children sang or spoke on stage dressed as Christmas Toys, Seasonal Food, Snowflakes, Angels, Shepherds, Kings and, of course, there was Mary and Joseph. It was very enjoyable to watch, also to listen to and there was also a glass of wine or orange juice plus snacks for those who wished to join in the seasonal spirit.



The infants perform at the EP school's concert and coffee afternoon

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DONKEY FOR SALE

What a delightful performance of this lovely Nativity Story by the Nursery children based at the E P School! It was a very emotional time for proud parents as they watched their little ones in an absolutely crowded hall

with camcorders and cameras continually flashing. The children sang their hearts out in sheer enjoyment and not a little fun! The little boy who played the donkey strode around the set as if he owned it, followed by

Mary and Joseph competing for who was to be the boss. The Narrator was Mrs Knowles, the singing and music was wonderful but above all the children were simply delightful. It was quite an enchanting morning.



A crowded set as children enjoy their Nativity - 'Donkey for Sale'

FIESTA DE NAVIDAD PARA AMIGOS

The Amigos group for senior members of the village, which meets on Friday mornings, enjoyed a fun-filled Christmas party on December 16th. Members and helpers sang appropriate songs, accompanied at the piano by Pam Bygate, played party games including a frantic 'pass the parcel', listened to and joined in with songs from Anne and Malcolm McKenzie, visited the playgroup next door with gifts of chocolate, and of course were visited by Santa Claus with his traditional black plastic sacks full of goodies. Finally after grace said by Rev Mary Lloyd they tucked into a Christmas dinner prepared by chef-helpers.

Santa always has a gift for Olive, organiser of the 'Amigos' group



Members of the 'Amigos' group visit the tiny tots playgroup party with gifts of chocolate

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

Once again this year the Methodist Church hosted a Christmas Tree display on the weekend of the 10th and 11th of December.

The trees were contributed by the following village groups: church groups and Amigos; the Community Association; the Thursday Club; and Lanchester News.

This year there was no competitive element to the display.



A quire of angels on this Christmas tree were made by members of the Methodist Church "to give to those we would like to touch with love at Christmas"

Lanchester Community Association MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Lanchester Community Association would like to announce that membership fees for 2006 remain the same as 2005 and are now due. The fees can be paid via members of the Management Team, the Treasurer or by completing the form below and taking it to the Community Centre between 9.30-11.30 am or 2.00-4.30 pm each day (Monday to Friday).

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Adult member £2.00 Pensioner Member £1.00 Family member £3.00
(Please tick one of the above)

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NEW BIBLE STUDY/COFFEE GROUP

FORMOTHERS AND PRE-SCHOOLERS

Would you be interested in meeting other people as well as reading and discussing short sections from the Bible? If so, then come along to the first meeting in the creche room of Lanchester Methodist Church 9.15 to 10.45 on Wednesday 18th Jan. There will be toys and space for children to play, but the accompanying adult must be responsible for them. You don't have to have a child to come along though! For further details contact Liz 521025.

SOCIAL CLUB

A very good programme of entertainment has been enjoyed by all over the festive season. It was party-time all the way.

The regular programme of entertainers continues every Saturday evening with no cover charge, as well as ballroom dancing in the Concert Room from 8 to 11pm every Friday night, with a cover charge of just one pound.

New members male and female over the age of 18 are always welcome, the annual fee being just £1 per year.

Sat 4th Feb, Richie Young
11th Feb, Lisa Edwards
18th Feb, Nigel's Karaoke
25th Feb, Eddie Charles.

LANCHESTER BRASS BAND

Lanchester Brass Band will hold their Patrons' Night at the Methodist Chapel on 28th January, with tickets priced £2.50.

Anyone wishing to become a patron or support the band, please contact Catherine Johnson on 01207 271337.

MOTHERS' UNION

The next meeting is on 8th February at 7.30pm in the Chapter House adjoining the Parish Church, when the speaker will be Revd. Mary Lloyd of the Methodist Church talking about her trip to America.

COURSES IN FEB.

New courses starting in the Community Centre in February are German Verbs, starting on Wednesday 1st at 2.30pm and German Survival Friday 3rd at 2pm.

JUNIOR WILDLIFE GROUP

The group for young 6-11 year olds will meet on Saturday February 11th in the small hall of the Community Centre. Parents are welcome to attend with younger children who are interested in wildlife.

For more details please contact Noel Jackson (560684) or Elaine Williams (520063).

WILDLIFE GROUP

At the meeting on Tuesday, February 14th in the Community Centre Fiona Green's subject will be 'Saltwell Park'. The meeting is due to start at 7.30pm

WHAT'S ON?

CARE OF THE ELDERLY

A very important Conference will be held in Lanchester Community Centre on Saturday February 25th as a result of concern about the future of Lynwood House, or its site.

The Conference, sponsored by Lanchester Parish Council, welcomes anyone concerned about care for the elderly. The morning session, chaired by The Right Hon Hilary Armstrong, will include Duncan Callum of Durham County Council, the Alzheimers' Society and Derwentside Carers.

After a buffet lunch, Peter Innes will chair speeches from Wyn Griffiths of Derwentside Primary Care Trust, Careline Services and Sheltered Housing Services. Both sessions will finish with a plenary discussion where questions can be put. Councillor Ossie Johnson will speak for the Parish Council. The County is still considering the future of Lynwood House, and consultations are promised. It is hoped that the conference will enable information to be made public and the right decision to be reached.

At the request of the Parish Council the Lanchester Partnership is collecting the views of the residents of Lanchester in advance of the conference. If anyone wants to put forward their views at this stage they should contact Mike Gladstone on 528114

CREATIVE WRITERS

A small group of writers meet in Lanchester library on Tuesday afternoons from 2 till 4pm. Members take it in turn to lead the meeting, providing topics or inspiration to get the pens scribbling. A piece of 'homework' is also set and read out the following week.

Mutual congratulation, support and even criticism is always welcome.

The group now has its own website, thanks to the Northern Echo's 'Communicate' site, and looks forward to new members appearing on Tuesday afternoons.

FRIENDS OF THE FORT

The Friends group is now working hard to gather material about Longovicium and its inhabitants with a view to publishing some comprehensive guides for adults and children, developing the existing Virtual Reality tour of the site, erecting a notice board, etc.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 23rd February in the Community Centre dining room, starting at 7pm, and all are welcome to come along.

LIBRARY EVENTS

During February there will be a book sale and a display of photographs by Mr K Coates in Lanchester library. People who would like help with tracing family history can attend the regular drop-in session on Thursday 23rd February from 9.30 to 11.30am.

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LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

THE BATTLE OF NEVILLE'S CROSS

The first talk for 2006 will focus on a piece of the colourful history of our Region. Indeed, this historic event took place right on our doorstep at Durham City. It was, of course, the Battle of Neville's Cross.

The talk will be given by Mr David Butler, a well known historian and archivist who has spent many years working at the Department of Archivist Records, County Hall. He will be explaining the bitterness and hatred which lead to the conflict, the build-up of troops, the battle plans and battle layout. He will also be covering the involvement of the Nevills (sic) of Raby Castle.

The talk will be held in the Community Centre on Friday, 3rd February, at the usual time of 7.30 pm.

PARISH COUNCIL

The next Parish Council meeting is held in Park House on Tuesday 14th February starting at 7pm. Constituents are invited to attend and may speak on any of the topics discussed by the Council.

POETRY GROUP

People interested in poetry are invited to join the group's meeting on Monday 6th February in room 3 in the Community Centre. The idea is to bring poems, either by a favourite poet or self-written, to read to the group. Discussion can arise from each poem, and new work may be published in the Poetry Journal by Isam Husain.

COUNTRY MARKET

Don't forget to call in at the Community Centre from 10am on Saturday February 4th for your monthly stock of cake, preserves, and canny crack. And maybe a cup of tea and a scone.

MP IN LANCHESTER

Our Member of Parliament, Hilary Armstrong, will hold a special 'surgery' in Lanchester in February in addition to her surgery in Consett. She will be available to see constituents on Saturday 4th Feb from 9.30am at the Community Centre, Lanchester to discuss matters of concern with constituents before going on to her regular monthly surgery from 11am at Citizen's House in Consett.

LANCHESTER PARTNERSHIP

Following the publication of the Parish Plan, the Partnership is fully involved in activating the Plan. It meets on the second Monday of every month, so the next meeting is on the 13th February.

The Youth group meets at 6.30pm and the combined Environment and Transport groups at 7.30pm in the small hall of the Community Centre. All are welcome to attend.

WI

The next WI meeting is held on Monday 6th February in the Community Centre, starting at 7pm. The speaker is David Hughes, his subject "A Journey to Remember", and the competition is for a pretty notelet.

LANCHESTER & DISTRICT AMATEUR CHORAL & OPERATIC SOCIETY

Owing to circumstances beyond our control Lanchester Operatic Society have had to postpone their annual musical production. It will now be held on March 15th, 16th and 17th in St. Bede's School Hall, Lanchester.

In spite of this I am sure you will all think the 'Best of Cole Porter' Review will be well worth waiting for. Songs such

as 'I Love Paris', 'True love' 'In the Still of the Night' 'Begin the Beguine' and 'Wunderbar' are just a few of the wonderful tunes I am sure you will remember and love.

Sharon Murray and Richard Woods will again delight us with their singing as well as other members of the Society. David Hughes has worked very hard in

his combined roll as Musical Director and Producer to make your visit a night to remember.

Tickets are £5.00, concessions £4.00 and children £2.50. If children bring an adult on Wednesday the child will get in free (an offer difficult to resist). To obtain a ticket contact any member of the society or ring 01207 521458).

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Lanchester Lions are presenting their theme evening 'The Sound of Music' in the Community Centre on 4th March at 7.30 for 8.00pm. Guests will be able to enjoy a two course meal whilst enjoying the film and a 'sing-along' to all the wonderful songs in the

musical. Hopefully, guests will turn up in fancy dress but this is not compulsory. However, there will be a prize for the best dressed person. There will also be a raffle. Tickets from Mark Draper on 529775 or any Lion member priced at £6.50. All profits will go to local causes.

FLOWER CLUB

Members of Lanchester Flower Club will be treated to Philip Nixon's audio-visual presentation "The Border Reivers" at their next meeting, which is on Wednesday February 22nd at 2pm in the Community Centre.

LANCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL IS SPONSORING A CONFERENCE ON

THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY IN LANCHESTER PARISH

The conference will be held in the Community Centre from 9.30am Saturday 25th February 2006

Buffet Lunch and refreshments provided

Guest speaker

The Right Honourable Hilary Armstrong MP

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

MR. MIKE WARDLE ON

01207 521622

PROGRESS IN CUP

The month of December saw the Chapel in action with home games against Jesmond and League leaders St Peters.

The 'home' game against Jesmond was played at St Bede's School as the old goal posts at Kitswell collapsed, so many thanks to St Bede's School for allowing us to use their field while we waited for the replacement posts, kindly ordered by the Parish Council.

The Chapel lads had to turn to Karl Hepplewhite to deputise in goal as both regular keepers were missing. Unfortunately our defence crumbled like our old goal-posts as we slipped to a 4-1 defeat, David Marrin with the consolation strike.

New posts up and St Peters Low Fell were in town for a game which was played in icy conditions. St Peters adapted better as our defence froze and the visitors took a 3-0 lead, but goals from David Marrin and Nigel Hepplewhite had us back in it. Many chances went begging but the League leaders stepped it up late in the second half to secure a 5-2 win.

The New Year saw the return game against Jesmond; revenge for our pre-Christmas home defeat was the aim. Myself, Glyn Davison and Ian Locky, decided to take a January 'Career Break' and see if some of the younger lads on the team could take over the reins on a trial basis as

the 'Lanchester Chapel Baby Boom' takes a grip. Congratulations to Glyn and Vicky Davison on the birth of Oliver Henry, a future Centre Forward for the lads. The young gaffas picked their team and lads battled their way to a creditable 2-2 draw. Going 2-0 down after 10 minutes was hardly the best start but goals from the Wilkinson/Sword combo restored the balance, a close shave.

St Cuthberts were drawn at home in the cup. Lanchester soared to a 4-0 lead with goals from Ray Wilkinson, Lee Hall, Steven Behan and a goal of the season contender from Andy Sword. But then a sickening challenge by the opposing goalkeeper saw David Marrin leave the field requiring stitches in a facial wound. Dave's presence in the centre was missed as Lanchester lost their shape and St Cuthberts plugged away, eventually pulling it back to 4-4 in a game that should have been easily won. However, the pack was shuffled again and Lanchester came back to the ascendancy, Andy Sword danced through the St Cuthberts defence to make it 5-4, St Cuth's players dropped to their knees and that was it, we were through to the next round.

All the best for 2006 from everyone at Lanchester CFC.

Yours in football
Jeff Parker

WELCOME TO LANCHESTER RFC

A new registered rugby club has been formed in Lanchester by Dick and Dorothy Parry. It is called Lanchester RFC, and will cater for children between 9 and 14 years of age, though it is hoped to extend this to 18.

Dick and Dorothy are extremely grateful to St Bede's school, which has offered their pitch for all training and home games. Dick is senior coach, aided by Dorothy and assistant coach Jack Wilkinson, a former pupil and player who has just finished university.

At the present time, donations have been coming in with the help of our three local Councillors Ossie Johnson, Tom Forster and Richard Young, plus John Richards

and the Lanchester Lions. Some village and local businesses have also contributed towards the start-up costs of safety and training gear, and the organisers are grateful for their help.

The very first game was played on December 16th under floodlights against Consett RFC under 14's, which resulted in a narrow 20-19 defeat. A big thank you to John O'Connor of Consett RFC for his help and advice. An under 12's competition at Newcastle Falcons RFC was entered and resulted in a joint 2nd position out of 16 teams. Training is every Saturday from 9.15 to 10.30am at St Bede's school, and everyone in the 9-14 age group is urgently required to keep the numbers up.

Games will be arranged to suit the age groups.

The following businesses are thanked for their support;

P & M Jackson of M-I-S Leadgate, John of the Queen's Head, Mary of New Image salons, Peter of Valentinos, Paul of the Black Bull, Frank Ellison engineers, Lanchester News, Mark Garfoot driving school, Anita and Mark of Lanchester Pharmacy, Lilydale Pet Supplies, Kevin of Design Express, The Country Store, Mr Richard Rose, Mr David Wright, Talking Heads, Dave Donnelly garage, Lanchester Paint and Wallpaper Co and Alistair Wade optometrist. Contact Dick or Dorothy to pledge donations or to join the club on 520412.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

The Christmas Celebration organised by the Male Voice Choir and supported by Lanchester Choral and Operatic Society is always an opportunity to sing favourite carols and be entertained by our two major musical groups.

The 2005 programme on December 19th, held in All Saints' RC church, was a classic with both groups in good voice offering a varied selection of carols. Outstanding were the



A packed church listens to the combined Operatic and Male Voice choirs

Operatic's rendering of "And the Glory of the Lord" from the Messiah, the contrasting up-tempo "Ragtime Carol" from the Choir and "Bethlehem", the final piece uniting

both choirs to tremendous effect. Clergy from the three village churches did the readings, and a retiring collection was donated to Willow Burn hospice.

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Thank you

NEWS PLEASE

Please send any contributions for the next edition of the Village Voice by Tuesday, 14th February.
Thank you.

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