

# THE VILLAGE VOICE

Issue No 2 Volume 11

Lanchester, February 2010

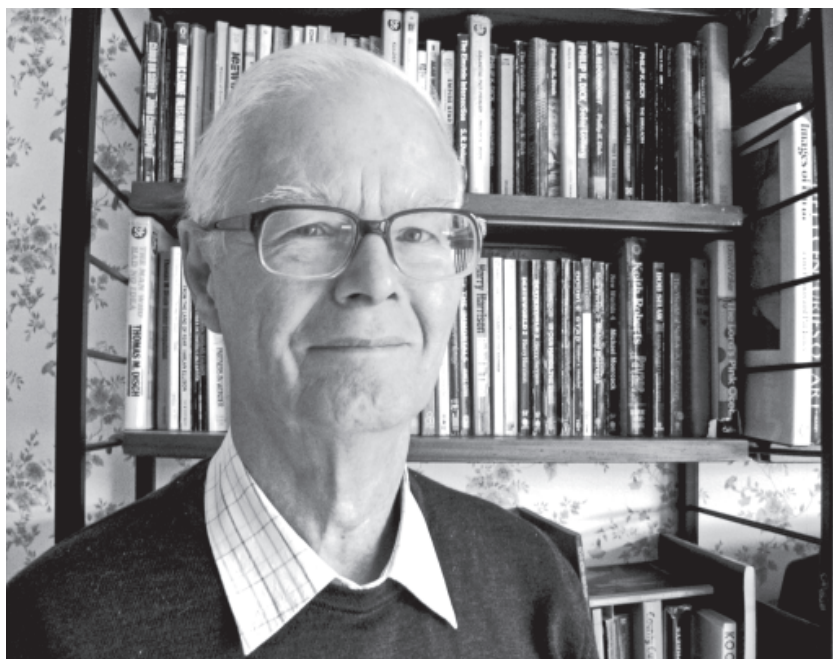
For contact information, see page 2

## MALCOLM MCKENZIE

Malcolm McKenzie died on the 3rd of February two days after his 75th birthday. He suffered a ten month illness when he was taken ill with a severe stroke on Palm Sunday, 2009. His death has meant that Lanchester and the Village Voice has lost a ubiquitous, unique character.

He was seen nearly every day strolling around the village, camera ready in his pocket waiting for a story or photographic opportunity to occur. He was both an interesting and interested man. He belonged and contributed

to so many organisations in the village. Among his interests locally were 'Friends of Longovicium', 'Wild Life', 'History Society', 'Bridge', 'The Partnership' and of course the 'Village Voice' of which he was a founder member, Director, Editor and Chief Reporter for several years. Malcolm was also involved with the Creative Writing and Poetry groups. He has had several articles and poems published as well as two books of walks. Probably he was happiest when walking in the fresh air in the countryside rather than pounding away on a



Malcolm at home in October 2008



*Malcolm appearing in the Village Voice in November 2002 with the caption 'Our Reporter/Editor, Malcolm McKenzie, becomes a roving Village Voice one man stand' sporting his famous straw hat with Village Voice motif. Here he is talking with Community Policeman, PC Alan Patterson at the Partnership's Open Day'.*

computer. His other favourite hobby was composing music and lyrics, and singing folk songs along with his guitar at the Sunday night music sessions.

Malcolm was born in Newcastle but spent a large part of his life in Newark where he taught French and Spanish at an FE College. He is survived by his wife Anne, who has cared for him in difficult circumstances since his illness. They have a son Andrew who has two

children, and lives in Gloucester, and a daughter Katherine, who lives in Derby. Malcolm was also close to Anne's sister, Elizabeth.

All will miss his penetrating, wry sense of humour, his stubbornness and determination to see everything through that he ever started.

Anne would like to thank those who have supported her and Malcolm during his illness and for support, tributes and cards after his death.

## THE FUTURE OF LYNWOOD HOUSE

At the Parish Council on Tuesday 9th of February, Councillor Wardle reminded colleagues that it was four years ago this month that the Parish Council, in conjunction with the Lanchester Partnership, had arranged a one-day conference on the

future of Lynwood House since its closure was under discussion at that time. The Parish Council had followed this up since then with informal discussions with many relevant organisations (such as the Park House Practice and the owners of Howden

Burn Home) in order to identify some options for the potential future development of Lynwood House. He therefore wished to propose that, since the County Council were now formally consulting with residents of Lynwood House and their relatives regarding

the future of the Home, that the Parish Council formally request the County Council to include them in the consultation at the appropriate time. This was unanimously agreed.

The Chair, Ossie Johnson, informed the meeting that members of

the public were welcome to attend the next meeting of the Area Action Partnership, on March the 17th at Lanchester EP Primary School when officers of the County Council would be attending to outline the proposals for the Home from 5.30 pm to 6.30 pm.



# 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.

Dear Sirs,

For about five years I have sold free range eggs from outside my front door.

It has been a real pleasure to have never had anyone abuse the honesty egg box until recently when not only did someone steal the eggs but also the box itself.

Yours disappointedly  
Chris Davis  
Hollinside

## COMMUNITY DRAW

The winning number in the Community Draw for January is 37. The draw was made by Mrs P Janahan of Durham Centre for Education.

## TO CONTACT THE VILLAGE VOICE

### By email:

lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk (please include Village Voice in the Subject line).

### By post:

The Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggin Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0JQ.

### To advertise:

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Dear Sirs,

There are people who do not clean up after their dogs. Do they know about Toxocara canis and other health hazards of dog faeces? How easy it is to use the free doggy bags and place dog excrement into the special bins provided? Most dog owners do pick up, but there are a lot who don't. Recently it was very easy to spot dog faeces but as the long-lasting snow finally began to disappear, my walk from Newbiggin Lane to Hurbuck became a disgusting morass of dog dirt. As the centre of the track was covered in sheet ice the unhappy alternative was to walk along the edges where one could literally step from one mushy dog pile to another. I wonder how many parents have had to clean up offensively smelling dog-dirt from their own and their children's shoes.

Speaking as one who uses the doggy bins daily, I get really irritated when I go to pick up my own dog's deposits, to find that I have also picked up someone else's leavings or I am standing on another dog's faeces. How inconsiderate the lazy people are to our fellow villagers. They should be ashamed of themselves. I hope that the bad habits change. Ever hopeful.

Name and address supplied

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## THE VILLAGE VOICE

## IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

Dear Sirs,

Snow and Litter

A fortnight of fun! It was great with hundreds of sledgers, snowboarders and even a kayak that went up and down Paste Egg sledging field; lots of exercise, laughter and... litter too!

This is a pity. There were at least 40 blue plastic bags tucked into the bushes and hedge roots by people who knew that they shouldn't just drop litter so they hid them under the snow. However, snow melts and behold there is the mess. Sledges broke and some people took them home but not everyone, leaving many sharp shards to injure dogs



Some of the litter left on Paste Egg hill

and other animals. So please, next snowfall, have fun but take your rubbish home.

The annual village litter pick will be on Saturday March 27th. Please come along and help because

now that the snow has gone lots of rubbish has been revealed. For details see the "What's On" page in this paper. Posters will be put up nearer the time.

Jill Gladstone

Dear Sirs,

I would like to say a huge thank you to the people of Lanchester and to my customers, who gave me so much support with their kind thoughts, cards and flowers on the occasion of the recent passing of my Mum. I feel so very completely overwhelmed by all the kindness shown by everyone, many of whom have gone out of their way to offer me help during this very difficult, sad time for me. Yours sincerely  
Trisha Donley of K9 Grooming

Dear Sirs,

In reply to Mr Howatt regarding fox hunting, we had a visit from Mr Fox and he killed 51 point of lay pullets, £4/5 each and on another occasion, he visited us, chased and killed 61 cock chickens which we were rearing for the Christmas table. Many died of heart failure. These were about £4 each. Another night, he pulled a safety board off a night ark which had a slatted floor and chewed the toes and legs of many birds. They kill new born lambs, hare, rabbits and wood pigeons which they mesmerise out of tall

trees, also that lovely little water hen and its eggs just before hatching. Hunting with hounds is a necessity and the only way to control the numbers. Young foxes escape, it is only the old ones who are prone to disease that the hounds catch and kill instantly. Hunt followers come from all walks of life. Some farm workers will take a day off instead of annual leave. The people you mention, Mr Howatt, enjoy the sight of hounds, the atmosphere, friendship and meeting old friends. Frank Kemp, Mill Farm, Lanchester

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# JOHN BURDON RETIRES

John began work with Durham County Water Board on the 12th of September in 1966. He was told the initials DCWB meant 'Don't come to work without bait', as you never knew when the job would be finished and you could go home - a far cry from today's world. John began as a Trenchman and over the years gradually rose through the ranks into management. On the way he studied at both Darlington and Durham Colleges and served an apprenticeship in motor vehicle engineering. His career has covered mains laying, arranging services to new housing developments and works management. His various jobs have been as a Fitter, a Chargehand and as a Mechanical Superintendent looking after Tankers and Sewage Works. He retired as Works Manager in charge of the Durham and Sunderland

Group with a work force of 29, on 20th January 2010 after just over 43 years service. He is a second generation of 'Burdons' in the company now re-named Northumbrian Water Ltd, following his father. One of his two sons has continued the family tradition as a Projects Manager. At John's retirement he was presented with an historical and technical book called 'Water Reflections', a fine publication and an appropriate gift. What about the future? John has plenty to do. He and his wife Liz, who married in 1972 have two holidays planned shortly, and there will be much more leisure time together. John intends to take up cycling, swimming, gardening and DIY. Life will be busy and never dull. He and Liz look forward to their first grandchild in a few months' time.



*John poses for a photograph*

## LETTERS Continued

Dear Sirs  
Re: Village Speed Limit A691  
Whilst I am not normally in favour of any unnecessary restrictions in our lives or in our village, I have always been somewhat mystified as to why there appears to be an anomaly in respect of the short forty mile per hour speed limit stretching from the Green School to the de-restriction sign

beyond St Bede's School.  
Most of the roads that are near to our schools nowadays are usually set at thirty miles per hour, or even at twenty. I think therefore that in the interest of the safety of our young people, the whole section of road should be no more than thirty miles per hour. What do other readers think?  
Ian Tute

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# PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 9th FEBRUARY 2010

**Police Report** road traffic collisions in the Rowdy Nuisance 4, Street Drinking 1, Vehicle Nuisance 5, Theft 2, Burglary 1, Criminal Damage 2, Vehicle Crime 0. Peth Bank closed twice by police due to severe weather conditions (black ice/large amounts of snow. Police attended several

Parish due to severe weather conditions. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the previous Ordinary Meeting and those of the Planning Committee on 7th January and the Finance, Development and General Purposes Committee on 27th January were approved.

Cllr Jackson mentioned that the skips in front street are taking up a large number of parking spaces in Front Street and suggested that the builders be asked to put them in the lane behind the property.

**Correspondence:** Releasing Time to Care - Stakeholders Event. As this is to be held this coming Friday, there was not enough notice for any Member to attend. North Pennines AONB and European Geopark 'Geodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015'. Cllr Harrison agreed to look at the consultation document.

NHS County Durham and Darlington PCT Stakeholder Events. Cllr Mrs Gray agreed to attend.

Litter Pick Date. The Partnership has asked permission to use the Village Green from 10am to 12.30 pm for the annual litter pick on Saturday, 27th March; this was granted. Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Cllr Mrs Gray agreed to attend.

**Area in Front of the Library:** Concern has already been raised by a resident at the state of this land and the Lead Officer has written to the County Council about it. However, the land is in private ownership, and as neither the County Council nor the Parish Council has persuaded the owner to tidy it, it was suggested

that the Lead Officer should write to the complainant and suggest that he/she writes direct to the owner.

**LINK Membership** - to consider membership of groups/forums etc. It was decided that the Council is now a member and receives newsletters and information and is well represented on the Council anyhow by Cllrs Burton and Lindsay.

**Energy Saving in Lanchester Public Buildings.** Members had been asked to look into this by a resident at last month's meeting but as none of the public buildings belongs to the Parish Council it was agreed that the owners should be contacted jointly by the Parish Council and the Environment Group. The Parish Council is looking into replacing the Christmas lights with energy-saving LED lights when the time comes to replace them and the County Council is moving forward on reducing the wattage of street lighting.

**Winter Maintenance - Emergency Access to Estates.** Cllr Jackson stated the necessity of having a contingency plan during severe weather; Cllr Harrison stated that farmers used to clear roads but cannot do so now because the use of red diesel is prohibited on public roads; Burnhope had been cut off for three

days during the previous week due to the road conditions. It was agreed that the Lead Officer should write to the County Council asking them to lobby Central Government to allow the use of tractors by farmers in an emergency. Cllr Burton said he would bring up this matter at the next AAP Meeting.

**Lynwood House:** Cllr Wardle stated that there is to be a meeting about the future of Lynwood House on Wednesday, 17th March, to which it is hoped the public will be invited. **SEE ARTICLE ON FRONT PAGE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.**

**Financial Information.** Members were informed that funding applications had been submitted toward the cost of this which Cllr Wardle said would probably be launched in May this year.

**Village Green.** Information on grants/funding for tree seats, car park surface and Christmas lights were discussed.

**Accounts for Payment.** These were approved. Cllr Jackson remarked that David, the village Handyman, had been seen on Sunday, clearing up Saturday's litter in the village and that David should be thanked.

**Grass Cutting Contract.** Tenders were considered. **Date of Next Meeting.** 9th March at 7.15 pm in the Conference Room, Park House, Lanchester.

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## PLANNING MEETING 7th JANUARY

**Public Participation.** Christine Lever spoke on behalf of Lanchester Partnership about an application for the demolition of stable building and workshop, erection of three holiday cottages and creation of five parking spaces at Forest Lodge, Knitsley Lane. She presented the

Partnership's view and asked if the Parish Council could attend the County Planning meeting on 14th January to put the Parish Council's objection to the meeting.

**Planning Applications.** Members considered the following:  
 1. Demolition of stable building and

workshop, erection of three holiday cottages and creation of five parking spaces (resubmission) at Forest Lodge, Knitsley Lane.

The Lead Officer said that a response had already been forwarded to the principal authority. Members were informed that the County Planning

## PLANNING MEETING Continued

Committee Meeting on 7th January had been cancelled and therefore a further response could be sent to the County Council. Resolved: a further letter be sent to the County Council stating members:

- i. object and see it as unacceptable in the countryside;
- ii. thought the existing stable block should have been removed as a condition when the permission was given for its replacement;
- iii. were concerned about the visual prominence of this roadside development.
- iv. objected to the development outside a built-up area.

2. Crown lifting, pruning and removal of dead wood from various trees at Woodham Court, Lanchester. RESOLVED: No objection.

3. Crown reduction and reshaping three silver birch trees at 16 Woodlands, Lanchester. RESOLVED: No objection.

4. Installation of one roof light and creation of window to side elevation at Dairy Cottage, Knitsley. RESOLVED: No objection.

5. Erection of one 15 metre high wind turbine at Woodlands Park Farm, Knitsley. Members discussed the application. It was noted that the application was just outside the Parish but was very close to the border. RESOLVED: no objection to the application subject to consultation with neighbours.

6. Pruning of one ash tree at 7 Front Street. RESOLVED: No objection.

7. Listed building consent to replace two windows to rear at 1 Hollinside Terrace, RESOLVED: No objection.

8. Erection of replacement conservatory to rear at 22 Broadoak Drive, Lanchester.

RESOLVED: No objection.

9. Erection of agricultural building at Square House Farm. RESOLVED: No objection.

10. Removal of leylandii, hawthorn and elder bushes, crown lift, crown reduce and removal of lower limbs from holly, lime and horse chestnut trees at Prospect House, Cadger Bank. Members considered the application and said that it was policy to request that a suitable replacement be planted in the event that a tree is felled. However, Members said that this would not be requested as the trees to be felled were not substantial trees. RESOLVED: Members raise no objection to the application subject to the County Council's arboriculturist visiting the site.

**Decisions of the Planning Authority.** The following applications have been approved by Durham County Council.

Change of use of garage into a studio, installation of patio doors to rear at Newfield Lodge.

Change of use to hot food takeaway at 18 Front Street.

Erection of garage and single storey extension to link garage to converted gin gang (resubmission) at Middle Newbiggen Farm, Newbiggen Lane.

Erection of agricultural building and access road to land to the west of West Newbiggen Farm, Newbiggen Lane.

Application to discharge condition 4 of planning permission 1/2008/0095/DM relating to fuel vent arrangement and location at Witbank Garage.

Listed building consent for the installation of replacement window to front at The Deanery Farm.

Conversion of redundant rural buildings to form two dwellings and extensions/alterations to existing farm

house (resubmission) at Margery Flatt Farm, Newbiggen Lane.

Pruning of two cherry trees, one conifer tree and one hawthorn bush and pruning of one oak tree which overhang from 4 Hallgarth Terrace at 14 Lee Hill Court.

Installation of replacement windows to rear at 1 Percy Crescent.

Erection of single storey extension at St Bede's RC Comprehensive School, Consett Road.

Application to make a non-material amendment to planning permission 1/2009/0417/DM relating to change of colour of fibre cement sheeting for roof from Van Dyke to Grey and revised plan of access on land to the west of West Newbiggen Farm, Newbiggen Lane.

The following application was refused by Durham County Council:

Erection of new dwelling at Woodlea, Browney Bank.

**Planning Appeals.** Members were informed that the Planning Inspectorate now decides the way in which an appeal is to be dealt with. The Parish Council cannot request whether an appeal is conducted as a public hearing or through written procedure. County officers confirmed that a public hearing would only deal with large developments and that most appeals would therefore be dealt with written procedure.

**Planning Applications.** A response from Durham County Council regarding the poor quality of some planning applications. RESOLVED: that the information be received.

**Fir Tree, Browney Bank.** The response from Durham County Council regarding the amendment to a planning application. RESOLVED: that the information be received.

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## GOOD NEWS FOR LANCHESTER DAIRIES

Lanchester Dairies took on some considerable extra work to maintain the supply chain after the Dairy Farmers of Britain's co-operative closed last year. As a result of this extra work, eight skilled jobs are being created at the dairy with some further expansion being confidently expected within the next four years. More good news came recently, when the regional development agency One North East announced the award of a grant of £120,000 to this local company.

The investment will provide funding to buy two new milk tanks, doubling the existing holding capacity, as well as providing more new machinery which will reduce energy and increase efficiency. Employment in the region will be secured, local milk production ensured, and food miles for North East dairy products will be minimised - good news for everyone! Lanchester Dairies was established in 1992, and it is a family-owned business, supplying different dairy products

all across the North East and Cumbria. The company currently supplies 460,000 litres of milk to the more traditional milk rounds in the north-east, supermarkets, food service outlets and some care homes. The business has expanded steadily, and during 2007, the Dairies became the regional supply hub for the twenty-one Asda supermarket stores in the region, enabling many small local food producers to sell many of their products on to a variety of different retailers.

## CREATING A BETTER VILLAGE OF BURNHOPE

It is a well known fact that the people of Burnhope care about their village and only want the best for it - to create and maintain an environment that they and everyone else who knows of Burnhope can be justly proud.

There is much that is needed to be done in the future but much is already being done at present, though this is not always communicated effectively to the people who matter - the caring and proud people in the village of Burnhope.

A Newsletter is on its way! Many people have already indicated that they are willing to contribute to the project, again showing how many caring and proud people there are in Burnhope.

Currently one of the big concerns in the village is that of Anti - Social Behaviour and already steps are being taken to tackle this concern.

Did you know, for instance, about the organisation DISC, which is a respected voluntary organisation that gives young people an opportunity to do activities which take them off the streets which is designed to assist with anti-social behaviour problems? There are notices in Helen's Top Shop and the School about the organisation and already over eighty young people from the village have benefited from this. Their contact telephone number is 01388 424450 and are pleased to hear from residents.

There's more that can be done and this is only a snippet of the type of information that will be published in the Newsletter.

The Newsletter should be ours: designed and produced by the people of Burnhope and belonging to us, and therefore the information, articles and ideas that will be included should be from the people of Burnhope and about the people of Burnhope and those who want the best for this village. You should look out for the first issue coming through your doors by the end of March. Where it goes from there is up to us all. We all need to support the publication that is so much needed for the caring and proud people of Burnhope.

## KNITSLEY FARM SHOP AWARD

Knitsley Farm Shop has been awarded the title of Own & Local Farm Shop of the Year at the prestigious Farm Retail Awards from the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association (FARMA). The award decision was announced at the Awards Dinner as part of FARM+MORE, the farm retail sector's national conference.

This national award is the crowning glory in what has been a successful first year for the Shop and Cafe which also gained the highest level of accreditation in the Taste Durham Awards, along with the butchery department winning first prize in a national butchery competition for the standard of their sausage display.

Knitsley Farm Shop prides itself on its home grown, beef, lamb, mutton and pork, which account for 50% of sales in the farm shop. The meat is all butchered and prepared on site, turned into prime and unusual cuts, smoked, roasted, glazed, or turned into bacon, terrines, pates and pies, for sale over the counter and in the restaurant. The shop also makes cakes, scones and other sweet treats, and there are plans to create a fresh herb garden. Owners Edward and Rachael Jewson both designed and converted much of the impressive courtyard themselves, which took around two and a half years to complete with the couple, particularly Edward, undertaking a huge amount of work themselves in the planning, construction



and manufacturing of internal fittings.

The farm shop opened in November 2008 and much of the food on sale is sourced within three miles of the shop.

*Sir Donald Curry (3rd from left), Chairman of the North East Food and Drink Group, together with Rachel and Edward Jewson and Ron Jewson, father, proudly show the 'Own & Local Farm Shop of the Year Award' from the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association*

## RED CROSS HAITI APPEAL

A Coffee Morning was held at the Red Cross Shop for the Haiti Disaster

Appeal on 28th January. Shop Manager, Brenda Gibson, would like to thank

all those who attended and supported the appeal, which raised £156.50.



*A crowded room for the Haiti Appeal at the Red Cross Shop*

## LADIES WHO LUNCH

It was very cold, frosty, and icy in January - we were looking for somewhere comfy and warm with easy access - and we found it. Ramside Hall Hotel, just outside Durham City provided the perfect spot. The car parks were beautifully cleared and we were quickly inside surveying

our options. They have a restaurant with an à la carte or a good choice set menu, or there is the self service carvery, which is what we opted for. We sampled for main courses, lamb stew and dumplings, turkey salad and monkfish gratin, puds were banoffee pie, banana and chocolate bread and

butter pudding with custard, chocolate torte and orange and chocolate mousse and it was all very nice. Ramside Hall has an enjoyable easy going atmosphere which is complemented by some good food. What more could we ask?

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## PHYLLIS CELEBRATES HER 70th IN STYLE

A very generous Phyllis Reed of Alderside Crescent decided to do something very special for her 70th birthday. She booked the Pavilion Cantonese Restaurant at Iveston and treated 45 of her women friends to lunch! Men out there reading this can imagine the noise pollution of the chatter caused by 45 women all together!

Phyllis is well known in the village, having worked for Davisons for 18 years and as a regular church goer who is very involved in many activities in the Parish Church.

Phyllis who hails from Bishop Auckland first moved to Lanchester at the tender age of 17. The following year she had her own hairdressing business in Railway Street based in her mother's front room. She married John when she was 23 and it was off to pastures new to Edmundbyers where John was appointed as the village policeman. They have two children, Phillip,



Phyllis cutting the birthday cake at her 70th birthday celebration. The cake was made by close friend, Betty Reed.

a policeman, who lives in Sherburn Village, and Suzanne, who serves in the police in the London area. There are four grandchildren - two from each family. After their stay in Edmundbyers Phyllis and John moved to Newby Wiske, Yorkshire where John became an Instructor at the Training School for Northern Police Forces. In 1974 it was a happy return to Lanchester

where they now reside in their third home in the village.

Phyllis and John enjoyed walking, mountain climbing and holidays abroad including Australia until John was taken ill with Parkinsons Disease about 10 years ago.

Phyllis is making the very best of this special birthday and in addition to the 'Big Lunch' at the Pavilion she will spend Tuesday 16th, the actual day, with John, followed by a meal in the evening at Valentinos with Phillip, his wife and the two grandchildren.

Wednesday is the finale of Phyllis's 70th birthday celebration with a 'drop in session' for close friends at her warm welcoming house. Phyllis has insisted on a 'no presents policy' but guests are invited if they wish, to make a donation to the Parkinsons Disease Society of the UK. Phyllis would like to thank her family and friends who have supported her over the years, for their great company, and generosity with giving to charity, at her birthday.



Phyllis enjoying a glass of wine at her 70th birthday celebration



# LANCHESTER HISTORY SOCIETY AN EVENING WITH THE FRIENDS

Mr Ian Bean, Secretary of The Friends of Beamish delighted the History Society with a light-hearted talk about the work carried out by their members. Supported by an excellent slide show, the audience had a glimpse of the many achievements made by The Friends, (mostly retired), and the amazing depth of knowledge and variety

of skills they freely make available to the museum. We saw how these skills, honed and developed over lifetimes of work are extremely helpful to the museum staff for the cataloguing, repair and maintenance etc, of long forgotten items of all descriptions that still arrive at the doors of the museum.

But we also heard that it's not all work!

Mr Bean rounded off the evening by talking about the social side to The Friends; weekend visits to other museums, local events, team work and, of course, the chance to wear fashions of long-ago, seen now only on TV or in films. Who could resist?

A delightful evening and a very welcome opportunity to reminisce!

## Gardening in March

March is the time when, hopefully, temperatures begin to rise and the many of the plants in our garden begin to awake from their winter slumber. So, we need to plan for the year ahead and there are plenty of jobs waiting for us. We need to think about the three main areas of our garden: the patio, the lawns and the borders. There is spring cleaning to do, bulbs to plant and seeds to sow. Two of these require, perhaps, the purchase of compost and a recent article in the 'Journal' warned that gardeners could be wasting money on some of the composts which are on the market. The article, which quoted trials in the Jan/Feb *Which? Gardening* edition suggesting that B&Q Multipurpose was a consistent performer for both seed sowing and for growing on of small plants whilst some composts performed poorly with only 40% of seeds germinating and producing only small plants when used for potting-on. You can also make your own compost and leaf mould

mixed with an equal amount of grit is good or collect molehill soil which is weed free and not too nutrient rich.

### Lawns and Borders

March is the time to rake and aerate the turf and give the lawn its first cut. However, remember to ensure that you lift the blades of the mower for the first cut.

For the borders it is time to sow half hardy annuals (eg Alyssum, Petunia, etc) in a greenhouse or frame and sow hardy annuals (eg Calendula, Pansy, etc) if the ground is workable. You should also plant begonia corms and Lily bulbs which I start off in a cold greenhouse. Strong new delphinium shoots make perfect cuttings. Cut a new solid (not hollow) stem, dip the end in hormone rooting compound and root in moist compost. You can also start off your dahlia tubers in warmth to provide cuttings and/or plant out in your borders when all risk of frost has passed.

### Vegetables

This month you can get a good start in your

vegetable plot by covering the ground with cloches or a sheet of polythene to warm the soil. This cover should be left for a week or two prior to planting. March is the month to sow directly outdoors vegetables like beetroot, spinach, peas, cauliflower, turnip, broad beans and leeks. You can also plant first early potatoes and I use potato planters for this. Additionally, but in warmth, you need to sow tomato, chilli and sweet peppers if you did not do so last month.

### General Tasks

This month is the time when the patio, paving and steps will benefit from a spring clean to remove the dirt and grime which has built up over the winter. Pressure washers are ideal for this type of job and there are some great value offers to buy at the moment. However, the washers should be used carefully so as not to damage the surface of old paving or remove the mortar from between slabs.

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# CREATIVITY WEEK AT THE E P SCHOOL

## A Chinese Workshop

Can you read the following words:  
 Ni hao Hello  
 Kuaizi Chopsticks  
 Xiexie Thank you  
 Ido-shi Teacher  
 Ido hu Tiger  
 Bei Jing

These were some of the words which the Foundation Stage or Reception Class in the EP school were learning to pronounce in their Chinese workshop on February 10th. They were asked questions to gain knowledge of Chinese customs compared with ours in this country and like all good teachers the Chinese teacher had a number of artefacts and visual aids to hold the interest of these young children. A large map of the world was shown to establish the whereabouts of China. The most popular artefact was a 'fortune



*'Where is China?'*

biscuit'. This was a small crunchy biscuit within a pink-foil packet. Inside also was a slip of paper telling you your fortune eg 'Thursday is your lucky day, enjoy it'. 'The colour orange will bring you luck'. After this the children were each given a pair of chopsticks and were shown how to use them. Some managed this skill very well, while others, myself included, struggled. There was even a touch of magic in the air when the teacher produced some

'magic salt' which was able to make four separate pieces of cloth, each a different colour, (red, green, blue and yellow) join together to make one piece of material. The Chinese spelling and pronunciation was practised. Before going to their tables to complete a worksheet, the teacher explained about the Chinese New Year which is being celebrated now. There are twelve animals around which each New Year is named. This year

is the year of the Tiger. The workshop was further extended into art work in the classroom. There were some cleverly made big wearable Dragons Heads, which were to be used in the talent concert later in the week and as well as pictures and vocabulary in the classroom there were a number of authentic artefacts from China, brought in by Jason who lives in our village and whose parents are Chinese. Altogether it was a very worthwhile, creative learning experience.

### Play in a Day

This was another creative learning experience - the turn of Year 4. The task: learn the words and perform a Play in a Day. As they did last year the school had brought in a member of 'The Lynx Theatre' from Carlisle, namely Lisa Moffat who was delighted to be back at the school. She worked with the children all day, until at 2.00 pm they were ready to give a performance of the play, for the school and parents. The play took us to the Land of Egypt, the Land of the Pharaohs and the main character was the most famous Pharaoh of all 'Tutankhamun'. This play, set in Egypt had been chosen because there was an on-going project in the school about Egypt, and was therefore a good curriculum link. Tutankhamun died before

his 19th birthday and, as was the custom for a Pharaoh's burial was buried with all his valuables in a pyramid tomb. There was great mourning, but the tomb got lost in the 3000 years since Tutankhamun's death. Miraculously in 1922 it was discovered, almost intact by Mr Howard Carter. It received worldwide press coverage and sparked a renewed interest in

Ancient Egypt. Tutankhamun had famously said before his death that he wanted to share his riches with the whole world, and as we know his valuable possessions are scattered in museums worldwide. In their play Year 4 did extremely well, remembering all the words and actions, and 'Tutankhamun' gave a very good performance.



*Lisa Moffat talking about 'Play in a Day' with pupils*

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## Lanchester's Got Talent

This was the title of the last afternoon of Creativity Week at the EP School. Individuals and whole classes had been asked to produce an item for the concert which showed individual or group talent. The programme opened with an Egyptian flavour. It was a dance of the Pharaohs performed by Year 3. All the programme items were very varied and there was a great deal of appreciative applause from the audience of mums, dads, grans, granddads, aunts, uncles, sisters and brothers.

This was followed by two good individual performances. Hettie

Moore recited poetry and Michael Boyd played the piano and they were very good. Then it was the turn of the Reception and Nursery Class to perform the Chinese Dragon Dance. The large bright wearable Dragon Heads had been expertly made by staff and pupils in the classroom and they were most effective. Libby Wright as a stand-up comic and Leon Muir giving a dancing demonstration gave delightful performances. Year 4 like Year 3 performed an Egyptian Dance featuring realistic mummies. In contrast Years 1 and 2 gave us a Mediaeval Dance and French Singing. All the pupils were dressed up

for the concert and care had been taken to match the costumes with the performance.

Verity Place of Year 1 demonstrated her talent in Irish dancing beautifully, while Hannah Pybus of Year 2 demonstrated her gymnastic skills. There were some good individual singing performances by Jamie Coxon, Anna Hall and Alice Davis and Year 6 sang the song 'Food Glorious Food' from Oliver' extremely well. Amy Lawrence of year 2 made us laugh with her jokes, Jacob Lloyd showed skill playing the drums as did Jack Robinson playing his guitar. There were even

4 mini Cheryls, from Year 5 performing, namely Chloe, Erin, Felicity, and Casey. Year 5 also demonstrated some lively Street Dancing. Finally it was the turn of the staff who rang hand bells to a well known tune, guided by Mrs Davis. It was a very popular performance! Everyone left the hall in good spirits after a very enjoyable afternoon.

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