

# The Broadsheet September 2013

for the parishes of Humshaugh  
with Simonburn & Wark, and  
Chollerton with Birtley,  
Gunnerton & Thockrington

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## Editorial

This month we've added a new section called "*For all of our readers*", at the end. This is a slightly clumsy way of saying that *everyone* might be interested in these articles. At times it can seem that our Benefices are on two very separate 'sides' of the same river. Maybe the new section will go some way towards providing a new North Tyne 'bridge'.

Finally, if contributors have information to go in the Calendar of Events (see page 9), can you remember to include the **date**, **time**, a *brief description*, the **location**, and (optionally) a **contact** person and phone number. It all helps.

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# HUMSHAUGH BENEFICE

## *Michael Thompson's letter*

Humshaugh Vicarage

Dear Readers,

### **In touch with reality**

The imposition of so called 'realism' found its most acute expression in Stalin's Russia and Mao's China, where countless millions suffered under state directed practicality. Even there, recreations and culture were not entirely blotted out.

Art galleries, allotment gardens, bingo halls, clay pigeon shoots, museums, sports clubs, churches and theatres all stand as testimony to the fact that the majority of people need something more than the 'daily round'.

Some will feel that, by 'burying' churches within a list of ways in which people shake free of work and other pressing needs, I am trivialising the claims of religion! My intention is not to trivialise religion but to elevate all that 'takes people out of themselves'. All the things I have listed involve a degree of participation or attention, and a journey from and to our homes. In our age we can thank God that television and the internet bring some of these things within partial reach of the housebound and the frail.

Sadly however, the notion that people associate with one another - whether in church, concert hall, or leek club - to express the side of their humanity that does not find full expression at home or work, is not quite the full picture. Over against those who join in local groups to express their humanity and creativity, there are many others whose lives are rather different. There are widely diverse groups of people who find 'release' in activities far removed from any form of local communal life. For some there is the 'cyber world', in which there is little engagement with real people. Others find their leisure time devoted to putting as much distance as possible between themselves and the place where they live! Yet others give all their free time to their immediate and extended family circle.

When we turn our backs on some form of community engagement - be it church, cricket club, drama group, the hunt or whatever - we are less likely to be drawn to see our lives in their broader context. Without that engagement, we are less likely to fully realise just how valuable we are in the sight of others. It is in that context that our participation in the life of the religious group to which we may belong is so important. In church, chapel or synagogue, we are reminded that, not only are we valuable to a wider circle than our kinsfolk and work colleagues, there we are reminded that we are, individually, of value to God Himself.

Each of us has a need to remember that the apparently urgent list of things we need to 'get on with' is not our whole story. As we move towards another autumn, may we all find ourselves more in touch with the 'really real'.

Yours sincerely, Michael Thompson

## ***From our Registers***

On July 9<sup>th</sup> a funeral service was held at Newcastle Crematorium for **Mrs Jean Purvis**, late of Forest Hall, a long-term friend of Mrs Brenda Armstrong of St. Michael's Mount Wark, and God Mother to Mrs Linda Famelton. We condole with Brenda and Linda and all Mrs Purvis's many friends in their loss.

On August 2<sup>nd</sup> a wide circle of relatives and friends gathered at Newcastle Crematorium to celebrate the life of **Mr Summers Johnson** late of Westacres, Wark and formerly of Fourstones and Warden. Mr Johnson and his late wife, Ethel, moved to Wark some eleven years ago to be nearer their daughter, Mrs Carson. Sadly, Mrs Johnson died within a year of coming to Wark, but Mr Johnson has enjoyed remarkable health until very recently.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

It is always good to be able to report the welcome of new members to the family of Christ's Church. July 21<sup>st</sup> was marked by the baptism, at St. Michael's, of **Georgie May Thompson** of the Ash, the sixth generation of her family to be brought to baptism at St. Michael's since the 1830s.

## ***St Peter's Church - Burial of Cremated Remains***

The Rector and Churchwardens would like to describe a new development within the Churchyard at St Peter's. Nowadays many people prefer cremation to traditional burial. As a result of this change, we have had discussions about the possibility of an area in the Churchyard to be set aside for the burial of cremated remains. A faculty has recently been granted authorising us to carry out the proposals in accordance with the documents and photographs already displayed earlier this year.

The area is situated just as you leave the Church by the main west door and turn left within the older part of the Churchyard. This area will be divided into plots for the burial of cremated remains, either in degradable caskets or poured loose to earth. A record book and plan will be prepared for recording burials. A Book of Remembrance will be available. There will also be a memorial stone delineating the eastern boundary of this area.

Floral tributes may be placed on the individual plot at the time of burial, but thereafter only on the foundation plinth of the memorial stone. The scattering of cremated remains in this area is not permitted.

The funeral directors in the area will be aware of this development, but any families wishing to discuss this further, please speak to either the Rector or Churchwardens.

**John McCollum**

## ***Prospective University Students***

The Evans Trust may be in a position to award small grants of say about £200 to those students successful in A levels this Summer, and commencing university in the Autumn of 2013. The terms of the Trust specify that such students must be resident within either Humshaugh, Simonburn or Wark. The purpose is to assist with book purchase, to help at the beginning of the course of study. Applications should be sent to Mr Antony Braithwaite at Haughton Castle, Humshaugh, Hexham, NE46 4AY - or any of the Trustees. The Trustees wish the students good luck and much satisfaction in their course and chosen career.

**John McCollum**



## ***Round and about Humshaugh***

*(Notes compiled this month by Anne Race)*

I hope Liz has been enjoying the same good weather that we have been having this summer whilst she has been on holiday during August. The Mothers' Union and the Wildlife Group have certainly been taking full advantage of the sunshine.

### **Mothers' Union**

On 7<sup>th</sup> August Humshaugh Mothers' Union spent the afternoon at Butteryhaugh, near Kielder Village, where they had been invited by the Kielder members. The 3 members who live there come all the way to Humshaugh for the monthly meetings (a 60-mile round trip!) They wanted to host the August meeting, and what a wonderful afternoon it was.

The weather was perfect – we walked from Butteryhaugh to the Viaduct, crossing the second bridge over the North Tyne, and were told that there are 87 bridges before you come to the sea. We stopped for several beautiful prayers and poems on our way, and when we came back to the house of one of our hosts, a fantastic tea was awaiting us in the garden. Even a family of ducks came to see what it was all about.

We raised well over £200, and we want to thank everybody who gave a donation, and thereby helped families to have a holiday they would not be able to afford themselves. Many thanks indeed.

The September meeting is on Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup>, when Canon Pat Johnson will be speaking on "The Seeds we Sow", the Diocesan Theme for this year. The meeting will be held at Liesbeth Langford's home, and will start at 2pm.

Liesbeth Langford

## **Wildlife Group - Ospreys and Orchids**

A small but select party from Humshaugh Wildlife Group set off from the Crown Inn, in convoy for Kielder, anticipating a sight of Ospreys, followed by a walk and a nice pub lunch at the Blackcock in Falstone. We were trussed with binoculars, waterproofs and camera straps, but hopeful for the day to stay fine, and it was a wonderful day.

On site, the volunteers from Northumberland Wildlife Trust were just setting up the array of telescopes and information displays. We saw a small grey splodge atop a tree, 2 miles away, which was the Osprey on the nest with a nearly full-grown youngster. The adults were rather fed up with the heat, and were resting not feeding.

There were some brilliant shots of the family in action, as part of the exhibit, which we could see and talk to the volunteers about. The Leaplish observation platform also included a camera and live feeds from the nest, which captured the whole of the nest in amazing detail. We were treated to lots of wing flapping, skulking, and views of the clear yellow eyes of these graceful fish-eating birds. In only a few days, the youngster would be off to Africa, and might not return to the exact nest site for four years.

## **Monday Badminton Group**

Humshaugh Village Hall, 8pm, Mondays - recommences Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

This is a friendly sociable group. Beginners and new members welcome. The cost varies depending on numbers attending. Do come along and join us. All Welcome! Great fun and lots of laughs.

For further information telephone Joy McCollum, 681682.

**Joyce Burgon, 681571 / Fiona Charlton, 681272**

## **Information for the next Broadsheet**

Please send any information you would like including in the next Broadsheet, either by email to: [nick.hayward310@btinternet.com](mailto:nick.hayward310@btinternet.com), or on Liz Hayward's answerphone at 681463.



## ***Simonburn notes***

Thank you to everyone who helped with this year's Village Fete on Saturday 27th July, which produced our 2<sup>nd</sup> best financial results ever, at around £3,500 after costs. Equally important was that everyone involved seemed to enjoy helping out, not least because of the number of new faces we had working so hard this year. We also seem to have provided a good day out for our visitors,

judging by the very favourable feedback - and the money we made, which all goes to support St Mungo's Church of course. So thank you again to everyone who put in long hours and hard work to make the Fete such a success, and congratulations all round.

We're about to leave on holiday – oh! and the 'proofreader' tells me we are short of space - so that will do for this month. Enjoy the rest of the Summer.

**Pat Fairless**



## ***Wark Parish news***

The slightly younger of your two writers starts these notes on the evening of the wettest day so far this August (he's going off for a break, and the deadline is while he is away), so it seems rather odd to reflect on all the sunshine enjoyed for the various events over the last couple of months. The slightly older of your two writers says Rector Michael must be happy to have three dry garden fetes under his collar. St Michael's on 6<sup>th</sup> July enjoyed a superb day with a little under £1900 being raised. A sincere thank you to all who joined in with the preparation, assisted, spent, then helped with the 'clear up'. Now there is one villager unable to read these notes, as, when the gazebo used at Wark was unpacked for Simonburn Fete, a pair of spectacles was found in the tub storing the joints, feet and pegs. Anyone knowing the owner please tell us - or for that matter them.

Then, behold, the following weekend, on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July, there was the Ecumenical Open Air Service on the Village Green, with the theme this year of 'The Good Shepherd'. The gazebos were necessary *this* year, to keep the sun off your head, rather than protect you from the elements, as in previous years.

And we did have sheep! - along with a collection of shepherds' crooks. The speakers, the Revd. Canon John Sinclair, and Simon Lloyd representing Farming Community Network, joined all present for refreshments in The Town Hall. We have been able to send on to Farming Community Network £187 from the collection in the caps that day. It is so good to see four branches of the Christian family coming together for this annual service. The slightly younger of your two writers then enjoyed an evening, amongst sheep, celebrating his birthday! Thank you to all who contributed in any way to the service and refreshments.

After the last two weekends' events, you may just have retained sufficient stamina to join the Benefice trip to Durham, for the Lindisfarne Gospel Exhibition. There is a separate piece, written by the organizer, Paddy Walters, in this edition of the Broadsheet (see page 16). By all accounts the day was superb. We also understand that Paddy became a 'ticket tout', though you will need to ask her about that, as we could not possibly say any more!

August and we are writing of September. Believe us, there is a lot going on in September! The wonderful Ladies Guild meet on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> at Ann Bell's, where they will be making arrangements for Harvest Supper and - it appears odd to say – for the Christmas Bazaar. The following week there is a PCC meeting, on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm, in Westacres Community Room. (Don't get too excited as the meetings can *sometimes* be a little boring.)

However we do have something exciting for Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September (unlucky for some). This will be ***Fashion Through the Ages*** which will be in The Town Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets are £5.00, including a glass of wine. This is your opportunity to see vintage fashions. All we require are models with a 22" waist. Help! Tickets from Ann, 230259, or John, 230367.

The annual Steeplechase/Ride and Stride takes place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September. This event raises money for Northumbria Historic Churches Trust. Further details can be found in the Broadsheet (see page 14). The slightly older of your two writers (cheekily) says it was a good opportunity for hoeing the church path, as there were never many visitors. St Michael's will be open to welcome any visitor, be assured.

Then it is Harvest (I told you September was a busy month). On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 6.00pm in St Michael's, we shall sing all those wonderful hymns, and hear readings, reminding us to be thankful for all good gifts. The following evening, Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will gather in Westacres Community Room for our annual Harvest Supper. Delightful soup and wonderful puddings will be served. We are assured "*it will be a very reasonable price*".

September concludes with our patronal festival, 'St Michael and All Angels', on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>, Michaelmas. The feast of Michaelmas will be celebrated with a Benefice Eucharist at St Michael's at 10.30am on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Between Harvest and Michaelmas we both hope you find time to go along to the MacMillan Coffee Morning, on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September in The Town Hall. This is a wonderful organization; until you need them you will never know just how much they can provide. Please support.

As we go to press we have received a copy of a local Parish magazine where they say "*Feeling run down? Then why not come in for a service?*" You will find details of the services at St Michael's here in this Broadsheet. Why not come along? The service may just keep you going.

Until we chat again, what more can, or should we say.

Love from Cyril and John

### **Fashion Through the Ages**

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September Wark Town Hall at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5.00 including a glass of wine. This is your opportunity to see vintage fashions. Tickets from Ann, 230259, or John, 230367.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Details
Mon 02 Sep	19:30	Wark Ladies Guild. Contact: Ann Bell, 230259
Tue 03 Sep	19:30	Monthly meeting, Barrasford Village Hall
Wed 04 Sep	19:30	Chollerton WI: Willow Weaving Demonstration.
Thu 05 Sep	10:30	Coffee Morning, Birtley Village Hall
Thu 05 Sep	14:00	Humshaugh Mothers' Union: Canon Pat Johnson will speak on: " <i>The Seeds we Sow</i> ", the Diocesan Theme for this year; at Liesbeth Langford's home
Tue 10 Sep	19:30	Wark PCC meeting, Westacres Community Room
Wed 11 Sep	10:00	Dunkers coffee morning, 10am–11am, Barrasford Village Hall
Fri 13 Sep	19:30	Fashion Through the Ages, Wark Town Hall; tickets £5.00 including glass of wine (see page 8)
Sat 14 Sep		Steeplechase 2013 / Ride and Stride, Northumbria Historic Churches Trust (see page 14)
Sat 14 Sep	18:00	<b>POSTPONED</b> - Visit to Capheaton Hall (see page 13)
Mon 16 Sep	20:00	Monday Badminton Group, Humshaugh Village Hall; contact: Joy McCollum, 681682
Tue 17 Sep		Quiz, Humshaugh Village Hall, contact: Liz Hayward
Sat 21 Sep		Barrasford & Gunnerton Scarecrow Weekend: display of scarecrows (see page 13)
Sun 22 Sep	15:00	Messy Church, Barrasford Village Hall. Includes Scarecrow Tour, Afternoon Tea from 2.30pm to 5pm (£2.50 for a drink & 4 items), and summer raffle draw.
Mon 23 Sep		St Michael's Wark, Annual Harvest Supper, Westacres Community Room
Wed 25 Sep	12:00	Gunnerton Lunch Club, 12noon-1.00pm, £2.50. Delicious homemade soup, pudding, tea and coffee and, as always, good conversation. Raffle
Fri 27 Sep	10:00	MacMillan Coffee Morning, Wark Town Hall
Tue 01 Oct	19:30	Monthly meeting, Barrasford Village Hall
Wed 02 Oct	19:30	Chollerton WI: " <i>The true story behind the Millennium Bridge</i> " - a talk by John Johnson, Project Manager. An open meeting, as the subject will appeal to everyone.
Wed 09 Oct	10:00	Dunkers coffee morning, Barrasford Village Hall
Fri 11 Oct	19:00	Birtley Harvest Supper, Village Hall (see page 12)
Sat 19 Oct	15:00	Messy Church, Barrasford Village Hall (see page 12)
?? October		Safari supper, Barrasford Village Hall. Details tba.
Fri 01 Nov		Chollerton WI: Northumbrian Evening with Eddy Milligan & friends, Barrasford Village Hall. Proceeds to Village Hall funds and the WI.

## SERVICES FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

Benefice of Chollerton	Benefice of Humshaugh
<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Trinity 14</b>	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Holy Communion 6:00 Wark Holy Communion (1662)
<b>Old Testament:</b> Jeremiah 2, 4-13 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 14, 1 & 7-14	<b>Epistle:</b> Hebrews 13, 1-8 & 15-16 <b>Psalm:</b> 81, 1-11
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September – Trinity 15</b>	
9:00 Thockrington Holy Communion 10:30 Chollerton Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Morning Prayer 6:00 Wark Holy Communion
<b>Old Testament:</b> Jeremiah 18, 1-11 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 14, 25 -33	<b>Epistle:</b> Philemon 1-21 <b>Psalm:</b> 139, 1-7
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September – Trinity 16</b>	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Chollerton Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Holy Communion 6:00 Wark Evening Prayer
<b>Old Testament:</b> Jeremiah 4, 11-12 & 22-28 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 15, 1-10	<b>Epistle:</b> 1 Tim.1, 12-17 <b>Psalm:</b> 51, 1-11
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September – Trinity 17</b>	
9:00 Thockrington Holy Communion (1662) 10:30 Chollerton Holy Communion	8:00 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Morning Prayer 6:00 <b>Wark Harvest Festival</b> 6:30 Humshaugh Evening Prayer
<b>Old Testament:</b> Jeremiah 8,18- 9,1 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 16, 1-13	<b>Epistle:</b> 1 Tim. 2, 1-7 <b>Psalm:</b> 79, 1-9
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September – Michaelmas</b>	
10:30 <b>Benefice Holy Communion at Thockrington</b>	10:30 <b>Benefice Eucharist at Wark</b>
<b>Old Testament:</b> Genesis 28, 10-17 <b>Gospel:</b> John 1, 47-end	<b>Epistle:</b> Rev. 12, 7-12 <b>Psalm:</b> 103, 19-end
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October – Trinity 19</b>	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion 6:30 Gt Bavington URC Harvest Svc	9:30 <b>Humshaugh Harvest Festival</b> 11:00 <b>Simonburn Harvest Festival</b> 6:00 Wark Holy Communion, 1662
<b>Old Testament:</b> Lam. 1, 1-6 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 17, 5-10	<b>Epistle:</b> 2 Tim. 1, 1-14 <b>Psalm:</b> 137

# CHOLLERTON BENEFICE

## ***Mike Slade's letter***

**Chollerton Vicarage**

Dear friends,

Well we've deserved it: a lovely spell of warm weather. It has done us all good, and many of us are smiling with those broad smiles which say 'We've got the hay in', or 'We've had a lovely barbeque out in the sunshine.'

We could not have asked for better weather during our holiday in July, and we left just as the Chollerton Flower Festival was finishing. You may not have heard but over £5,600 was raised, all of which will go into the fund to stabilise the pinnacles on the church tower. We plan for this work to start next year.

Of greater benefit was the amount of time, effort and talent which went into making the event such a success. We had over 800 visitors. All commented on how much they enjoyed seeing the creativity of the displays: from the small arrangements around the font, made by the children, to the amazing stands and window displays that would have graced a cathedral church. Many of you were very generous in preparing and delivering delicious bakes, cakes and quiches for our visitors – one morning I found a box of 50 scones on the church doorstep, delivered anonymously by some kind person. Others supported the festival by their musical skills, or in preparing, serving and clearing up after.

My poor old legs said to me that I hadn't stood on them that long for very many years, yet it seemed to prepare me for the walks to castles and beaches on our beautiful Northumbrian coastline. It has been a wonderful summer.

For some though, it has been less than rosy. Unexpected illness and the sudden death of loved ones have brought quietness to the villages at times, and just at the moment there seems to be a lot of it about. These different yet important feelings of joy, mingled with loss and mourning, typify what life can be like, and I know I can remember such differences in feelings, at various times, when I look back in my own life. I know that God is with us during all of these good and bad times, in sickness and in health, loving us and bringing us comfort when we turn to him. An empty church during the week, a candle to light, and allowing the peace to envelope us, can help us to listen out for God's '*still, small voice*'. We are often so busy that sometimes I feel he must be shouting out to us, lest we be deaf to it! Even in the busyness of that flower festival I know that God was there with us, in the music of Northumbrian pipes or recorded Taizé music playing in the background, helping me to hear God in all his beauty – reminding me of his presence.

Wherever you are in your life at this time I pray for God's blessing to be upon you, and that you may be able to be still, to know that God is with you.

With many blessings, Mike

## **Messy Church, Barrasford Village Hall, Saturday 19 October**

At 3.00pm. Messy but creative activities, simple prayer and worship and a lovely family meal. All warmly welcome as usual.

More details from the Vicar on 681721.

## ***From the Registers in the Chollerton Benefice***

### **Holy Baptism Confirmations**

We welcomed into the Family of the Church **Harry Buckingham**, on Sunday June 30th 2013 at Gunnerton St Christopher, and **Thomas Edward Forster**, on Sunday July 21st 2013 at Chollerton St Giles.

### **Funerals and Memorial Services**

We celebrated the life of **Valerie Armstrong**, 75, at Chollerton St Giles on Wednesday July 31st 2013, and **Laura Grace Johnson**, 92, at Barrasford Methodist Church on Wednesday 7th August 2013.

### **Weddings**

We witnessed and celebrated the marriages of :

**Nicholas Philip Walton and Rachel Claire Lawson**, at Chollerton St Giles on Saturday July 27th 2013, and

**Damon Mark Wingfield and Melissa Cox**, at Chollerton St Giles on Saturday August 10th 2013.

A service of Prayer and Dedication after a Civil Ceremony was held for **Nicholas Welford and Amanda Clare Rice**, at Chipchase Castle Chapel on Friday August 2nd 2013.

## ***Birtley Village Hall***

### **Birtley Harvest Supper, Birtley Village Hall, Friday 11 October**

7.00 for 7.30pm. Musicians Stephen Fry and Pete Stenhouse will provide traditional Northumbrian music, Eddie Milligan will be our compere, and a lovely hot supper and selection of puddings will be prepared for us.

Cost: £10. Drinks available.

**In aid of Birtley Parish Church - ALL welcome.**

## **Birtley & District Gardening Group**

The group always welcomes new visitors or prospective members, whether experienced or rookie gardeners. The 2013/14 annual membership is £20.00.

## **Birtley Local History Group**

Further details from Mary White, 01434 230307.

## ***Community Events in Gunnerton Church***

Details of events are now in the Calendar of Events, on page 9.

Bookings for Gunnerton Church can be made by contacting Susan Reay on 01434 681852
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## ***Barrasford Village Hall***

The Village Hall has received a £5000 grant towards a new roof from the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland. This is great news but we have a shortfall of £3000. The committee is organising several events to try and raise the shortfall, so please try to support them.

## **Barrasford and Gunnerton Scarecrow Weekend**

The Annual summer Raffle tickets are on sale. This year the aim is to double the number of tickets sold. Fabulous prizes - £100 cash, car MOT, trio of spirits, etc. The raffle will be drawn on Sunday 22nd of September during the Scarecrow weekend (see the Calendar of Events, on page 9, for details).

Messy Church made a lot of scary scarecrows (some modelled on villagers, including the Vicar!), however there is still time to make your own special creation. The scarecrows will be put up around the village on Saturday 21st and a map will be available. Please let Deb Haycock know where your scarecrow is, so that it can be included in the map.

## ***Friends of Chollerton Churches***

<b><u>POSTPONED</u> - Visit to Capheaton Hall, Saturday 14 September</b>
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The Friends of Chollerton Churches event at Capheaton Hall on 14th September has been postponed until next year. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.
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## **Steeplechase 2013 / Ride and Stride**

See the separate notice, on page 14, about the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust event. Volunteers are required to welcome Steeplechasers at Gunnerton and Chollerton.

Chollerton Church is also very grateful for the promise of £4,000, which was received from the Trust in July. The money will go towards the pinnacles work.

## **Christian Aid Week 12-18 May 2013**

Many thanks to the collectors from Chollerton, Barrasford and Thockrington parishes, and for everyone's contributions. This year's grand total was £626.

**Claire Ridley, Organiser**

## ***Other church services within the Chollerton Benefice***

Barrasford Methodist Chapel: No details of Services received.

Great Swinburne: St Mary's RC Church Holy Mass at 10.15am every Sunday.

## **Northumbria Historic Churches Trust Sponsored Steeplechase**

**10am and 4pm, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

Part of National Ride + Stride

This is always a good interesting day and each year raises about £25,000 for the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust - an ecumenical project. I do urge and invite you to take part and help this charity, which is then able to consider giving grants for small building or repair jobs.

You can do the Steeplechase in a variety of ways: churches throughout Northumberland and Durham are open and you could spend some time, say an hour, in your own Church, greeting visitors and signing their forms. Alternatively you could visit as many, or as few churches as you wish, throughout Northumberland or Durham. You could be sponsored for hosting in your Church or for going out visiting. You can use any form of transport that you wish - ride, bike or stride! Individual organisers in each parish have forms and all the information you will need.

If you would like to ask anything at all about this event, do please contact me, John McCollum in Humshaugh - Tel. 01434 681682.

## FOR ALL OF OUR READERS

### ***From Alison Williams***

I happened to be alone in Birtley church recently with nothing in particular to do – for the moment – except revel in the peace of that place and look about me, taking in the care and precision with which the door and window arches had been put together by local craftsmen. I felt a real sense of gratitude to them. As I stood there, not praying, not particularly thinking, but just taking it all in, I wanted to say to everyone in the parish who may not have stopped to think about it, that this is *your* church – the church for all of us, whether or not we feel like joining in the Services conducted there. It is always open, and a place for you, or anyone, to go when you are feeling fraught, need space to think, or just to be quiet – to be still and just absorb the peace of that place. You don't have to think you should pray, but if you do feel the need to pour out your worries, anger or sadness to God, there is a prayer corner just inside the chancel arch, with candles to light should you wish, or cards to read or take away. However the important thing is to know that this is a place for you to go and look about you, soak up the peace and feel renewed.

The same can no doubt be said of most of our parish churches, as many of them are open during the day for that purpose.

**Alison Williams, Lay Reader**

### ***Northumbrian Folk and Gospel Evening***

Just to let you know that the Northumbrian Folk and Gospel Evening will be on the 10th October in the Tynedale Function Suite, Hexham Auction Mart. Seating capacity is up to 240... so how much of a challenge is that?!

Along with talented musicians Roddy, Roly and Kathy, we've invited Bob Bolam, whose humorous songs we've so enjoyed at Wall. Further information on the guest speaker to follow.

Entry will be £7.50 per person, which will include a pie and pea supper and light refreshments. Any donations can be made to Release International on the night – see [www.releaseinternational.org](http://www.releaseinternational.org) for details.

Bookings can be taken through Richard Dodds (01434 681847), Katie Matthews (01434 672424), Peter (01434 609485) or Kathleen (01434 684560).

**Richard Dodds**

## ***Pilgrimage to Durham - Monday, 15 July***

I stared and stared at St Cuthbert's ring. It has a very large gold band, topped with a giant sapphire, and is believed to date from the 13th century. Poor Cuthbert, a truly humble saint who retreated first to that tiny island off Lindisfarne, and then to Inner Farne. How he must have suffered with arthritis to have had such a huge ring placed on his finger. Or so I thought. Later however, I learned from the erudite priest who was on our pilgrimage to Durham, that in the Middle Ages such rings were worn *outside* your gloves, hence that huge band.

"*But what about the Gospels?*" you ask. Well the anticipation builds and builds as you go round the showcases at the exhibition, and learn much history, and see many fascinating artefacts, before you finally get to view the book itself. In a purposely dimly lit and carefully temperature-controlled room is "*The Lindisfarne Gospels*", created by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne from 698 to 722. It took him four years to copy out the four Gospels in Latin, in a beautiful script. Then someone else probably added all the wonderfully coloured and embellished folios that help to make this book such a treasure. It was then bound in leather, gilded with silver and gold, and covered with many gem stones. Three centuries later, a priest, Aldred, carefully scripted into the Gospels the Old English translation of each of Eadfrith's Latin lines. Thus the Lindisfarne Gospels contain the earliest version that we have today of the gospels in Old English.

At the end of the Exhibition there was an opportunity to study, in depth, all the pages of the Gospels on iPads, under the instruction of a lecturer. And there was a further exhibition that detailed how the pigments and inks were made, and the parchment prepared. If you had managed to go to all three exhibitions, you were hard pressed to fit in lunch, before it was time for a specially guided tour of the Cathedral which lasted over an hour. How many times have I been to Bede's tomb in the Lady Chapel, yet never noticed the mediaeval paintings on the walls, or spotted the line at the west end, across which no woman was allowed to step (so the monks didn't get distracted ...)?

Finally we all enjoyed a well-earned sit down and cup of tea with cake in the mediaeval Prior's Hall at the end of the Cathedral cloisters. What a day! But there was still further excitement to come... Without going into great detail, our very large coach ended up in the top car park at Durham Railway Station. The driver had helpfully driven there at our request, but, horror of horrors, it proved to be a very small area for a three point turn. If ever there was an occasion for an arrow prayer this was it. Sufficient to say our prayers were answered as our driver held his nerve and eventually got us out of there. Thirty-two tired but happy pilgrims arrived back in the North Tyne Valley just before 7pm.

PS: For those of you who were unable to join us, do go and see the Gospels before they are taken back to London. You will not be disappointed.

Paddy Walters