

The Broadsheet November 2013

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

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Editorial

Just a reminder that if you are submitting information for inclusion in Broadsheet notices, or in the Calendar of Events, do please remember to include (at least):

- the **date**
- the **time**
- a *brief description*
- the **location**
- and (optionally) a **contact** person and phone number.

It really does help when it comes to getting The Broadsheet out on time.

Oh, and, as always, if anyone has any interesting articles that they would like including in The Broadsheet – on whatever takes your fancy - just send them to me...

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HUMSHAUGH BENEFICE

Michael Thompson's letter

Humshaugh Vicarage

Dear Readers,

Our view of warfare

For those of us privileged to take some official role on Remembrance Sunday, there is a temptation to assume that the gatherings we lead or address are all of 'one heart and mind' - to assume that the congregation are all thinking and feeling the same thing. Three things come to my memory to remind me that we do not come to Remembrance Services all 'bearing the same baggage'.

When I was undergoing clergy training, I was, for a year, assigned a hospital ward to visit each week. I vividly remember a conversation with one particular patient, an old gentleman who had been a hairdresser in a Lincolnshire market town. He remarked to me that the First World War had completely changed his life. I fully expected that he would embark on a tale about the impact that the horror of the trenches had had upon him. In fact he went on to explain that, as an apprentice barber, a large part of his task had been to give weekly shaves to men too nervous to use a cut-throat razor for themselves. He and many of his neighbours volunteered for war service, and those who survived had, by the end of the war, learnt to use a 'safety razor'. Despite three years of horror and hardship, therefore, his abiding memory of those fateful years was of 'custom lost'!

A few years later I was walking home at lunchtime on Remembrance Sunday when I encountered a retired trawler skipper. He remarked that Remembrance Sunday gave him an overwhelming sense of guilt. Seeing my puzzlement he went on: "*That Hitler, he made me*". He elaborated, explaining that in 1939 he was an apprentice trawler-man. With the outbreak of war, when he was transferred to mine-sweeping, he had gained a remarkable training in seamanship. Six years later he returned to trawling the North Sea, which had been little fished during the hostilities, and become re-stocked. He had therefore *prospered* as a direct consequence of the War.

I tell these stories because they are about people who served our Nation in the two World Wars of the last century. They demonstrate that our assumptions about Remembrance can be awry. In no way do they conflict with other memories, such as that of a single friend of my late mother, who was almost inconsolable each Remembrance Sunday as she contemplated the loss of both her only brother and her fiancé in the Battle of Britain. It is quite simply the case that alongside a commonly held desire to honour the memory of those who have died for our freedom, and that of others, there are vastly differing personal and family memories, all of which deserve to be treated with gentility.

Looking after our churches

Sometimes I fear that we do not give sufficient prominence to the vast amount of skill, generosity and diligence that a large number of people quietly put into the care of our churches, week after week, to ensure, not only that they are reasonably cared for to the benefit of those who come to Sunday services, but also that they give a favourable impression to an ever increasing number of visitors. Behind the favourable comments in our visitors' books lie the efforts of flower arrangers, Churchwardens, those on 'brass cleaning' rotas, our Architect, and a host of others who often work in isolation, and quietly 'get on with the job', far from any public notice.

The last few weeks have seen a flurry of diverse activity. At St. Mungo's Simonburn, a week's work, generously funded by local Trusts, has been completed on the organ. There is good hope that the work now done will not only improve the 'handling' of that instrument, but also delay by a good number of years its next major restoration. At Wark some of the most precious of our altar frontals and communion veils have received expert attention from Mrs Robson and Mrs Young of Hexham, and a meeting has taken place in which diocesan advice has been received about the next phase in the gradual repair of the church windows. (It is agreed that the next priority is to restore the 'unseen' window which is blocked from view by the organ - its poor condition being both a cause of draughts and a potential 'threat' to the organ.) Meanwhile, in Humshaugh, the Churchwardens, the Architect and I have met with the Archdeacon and Mr Duff, of 'Inspire North East', to discuss possible funding for, and progress towards, repair of the church parapets and improved access to the building. Despite the many difficulties attaching to that scheme, the meeting was encouraging, and a significant step on the very long road towards realisation of those objectives.

With good wishes to all our Readers, Michael Thompson

From our Registers

A service of commendation and thanksgiving was held at St Mungo's Simonburn on October 1st, for **Mr John Renton**, following his cremation at Newcastle. A native of North Northumberland, John had, with his late wife Shirley, spent a considerable portion of his life in North Tynedale, and, through his Police Service and subsequent bus driving, was known to many. We condole with Chris and Elaine and their families in their loss.

A funeral service, followed by burial in the churchyard, was held at St. Michael's Wark on October 8th, for **Mr Joseph Scargill**, late of Jesmond, and Son of Mr & Mrs Scargill of Wark. Most of Joseph's life had been spent in the Newcastle area, whence a considerable number of friends came to attend his service and join his family, including those who had travelled from the USA to join in the occasion. Both Joseph's sister and aunt movingly paid tribute to what his life on earth has meant to those closest to him.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Round and about Humshaugh

(Notes compiled by Liz Hayward)

Humshaugh playing field firework event will be held on November 5th, with fireworks starting at 6.15 pm and refreshments served. Please do not bring any personal fireworks, even sparklers, due to insurance requirements. There will be donation buckets circulating on the night for contributions towards the funds for this fun filled event. Let us hope for a dry night.

A Children in Need cake stall will be held on Friday 15th November in Humshaugh School between 2.45pm – 3.15pm. Any cake donations will be gratefully received in school that Friday morning. Please pop along if you can for a tasty treat, and to support Pudsey Bear! The TV event will be filmed and broadcast from Hexham that evening.

Humshaugh Christmas Market will take place on Saturday 23rd November from 1pm - 3pm in Humshaugh Village Hall. A selection of local trade stalls displaying crafts, clothing, food, books and gifts for children and adults, together with Christmas floral arrangements and many more goodies, will all be available for sale. A grand raffle, hamper and scrummy homemade teas will be served, and the proceeds of this event will be donated to the Friends of Humshaugh First School. Any queries, please call Louise Armatage, Tel 689438.

Great fun has been had by all those people who came to the Village Hall to use the recently acquired apple press. Over the first of two weekends, 200kg of apples were pressed into 100 litres of juice. Along with the results of the chutney making group, look out for the produce in the village shop, once it has matured. Photographs can be found on the village website at www.humshaughshop.co.uk. The perfect Christmas present for a foodie, maybe?

Marilyn Robins is holding a fundraiser in memory of her father, on Sunday 3rd November, from 4-6pm. It will be a pop-up café, serving afternoon tea, a bric-a-brac stall and raffle. The money raised will go to the Motor Neurone Disease Society. Anyone who has sampled Marilyn's delicious cakes will know this is a treat definitely not to be missed, and a cause well deserving of support.

The Pub Quiz at the Crown on Tuesday 17th September was won by "The Late Takeaways", when £120 was raised for Humshaugh Playgroup. The October quiz raised funds in aid of Humshaugh Playing field Trust Firework Event.

Under the auspices of Humshaugh Arts Project, Jen Ogle is still collecting family memorabilia or stories reflecting Humshaugh's connections with the First World War. Please search through your own archives to see if you have anything which could be displayed in next year's commemorations of the start of WW1. Jen can be contacted by email: jen@dogle.wanadoo.co.uk, or on 681193 (this is the correct number; apologies for the mistake in a previous issue of The Broadsheet).

Finally, an ongoing plea for information on sightings of red or grey squirrels. The reds are beginning to make a comeback, and in some pockets of Northumberland the numbers are encouragingly healthy. However, the pox, which is transferred

from the greys to the reds, is still the greatest danger to the indigenous population. If you see any of these animals, telephone Laura Waugh on 07852 233880, or email her at tynevalleyredsquirrels@live.com, and appropriate action and recordings will be made.

Humshaugh Youth Theatre Group

The Snow Queen – the Panto

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th December at 7:30 pm

Humshaugh Village Hall.

Tickets available from Humshaugh Community Shop from 4th November.

£7.00 adults, £3.00 concessions

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union met at Bell Wilson's home in October, where the Reverend Canon Michael Thompson spoke about "St Luke and the Apostles." I was away, but I have been told what a very interesting talk it was, comparing items written in those two bible books.

On November 7th, we will be visited by another vicar, the Reverend Mike Slade, who is coming across the water to speak on the subject: "How I became a Christian." The meeting will take place at the Langfords' home, and will begin at 2pm.

As always, anybody is most welcome to join us.

Liesbeth Langford

Information for the next Broadsheet

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

Simonburn notes

"*The times they are a-changin'*" could quite easily be used to describe our village at the moment. Not only can we see the natural world preparing for the coming winter, but we can see changes taking place in the village itself. In a relatively short space of time, several residents have left the village, and houses now stand empty. In such a small community this can be very significant. Let's hope new tenants can soon be found, and that they will bring with them new ideas and an enthusiasm to become involved in village life.

Many thanks to all those people who contributed towards this year's Harvest Festival. Once again the church looked resplendent, with autumnal flower arrangements and an array of fresh produce. The service proved to be thought provoking and an interesting change to the usual format. It was good to see members of the local farming community, both past and present represented.

Having undergone general repair and servicing, the Walker Organ is once again filling the church with glorious music, courtesy of John Roper and Lewis Watson, our organists. Both have expressed their delight at the improvement.

November is a time for memories. This year's Remembrance Service will be held in St. Mungo's on Sunday 10th November at 10.45am. In preparation for this service, a small band of volunteers will be tidying the area around the War Memorial. If you can spare time to help, please contact Roger Hadley, on 681077, for more information.

There will be a Christmas Bingo in the Village Hall on Thursday 21st November. Eyes down 7.30pm. Prize donations would be very gratefully received. Please contact Sue Hickman on 681578 for more information.

Congratulations to Denis and Veda Grugan, who will be celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary this month. They were married at Hexham Abbey on 7th November 1953. Best wishes to them, and to you all.

Pat Fairless

Wark Parish news

On the day Ann and I had our visitation from the Archdeacon, little did we appreciate that he was bringing along, for the first part of the meeting, a stained glass specialist, along with an organ specialist, *and* the Secretary to the Diocese Advisory Committee. The Architect looking after St Michael's was also present. Thank goodness Rector Michael was with us to help decipher the jargon. The reason for this posse, as we mentioned the last time we chatted, was to look into the restoration of three windows within St Michael's. Apparently one window, rarely seen from inside the church, is in bad condition, and urgently requires restoration. This is the one behind the organ. More about this matter later. The specialists then left, so that Ann and the slightly younger of your two writers could have our meeting with the Archdeacon (such a nice man). We are pleased to say we passed with almost flying colours, only being picked up on two small points.

The Harvest Soup and Pudding Night went off well, and, as promised, it was HOT, HOT, HOT, in the Community Room. How it gets that hot we simply do not know. Makes you want to bottle up some of the heat to bring back home.

The Benefice Remembrance Service this year will be held at 10.45am on Sunday 10th November, at St Mungo's Simonburn. For those who wish to remember and show respect to the servicemen of this parish, there will be a short service at Wark War Memorial at 12noon.

The next meeting of the PCC will be on Monday 18th November at 7.30pm in Westacres Community Room. We are sure much discussion will take place over the restoration of the windows. Although it is not seen from inside the church, the window behind the organ is in very poor condition, and the damage could possibly affect the organ, if restoration work is not urgently undertaken. We shall have to ensure that one of the criteria for companies giving quotations, is that their workmen be slim, as there is very little room for access, or space to work, behind the organ! Watch this space for more details – details of the *project*, not the size of the workmen.

Christmas celebrations in Wark commence on Sunday 1st December with the Ladies Guild Christmas Bazaar in the Town Hall starting at 2.00pm. Along with cakes, tombola, raffle and other usual stalls will be a Christmas stall with decorations and wreaths. Refreshments will also be available. Why not come along and get your Christmas shopping off to a good start. The Ladies Guild was due to meet on 28th October to put the finishing touches to their arrangements for the Bazaar.

Advance warning to our readers in Stonehaugh: we shall be joining you for the annual Christingle Service on Sunday 15th December at 6.30pm. A friendly enjoyable visit (with great refreshments!) so why not come along and join us? The full Christmas order of services at St Michael's will be in the December issue of The Broadsheet.

Autumn is now well established so we are sure 'The Monday Boys' will have completed the final cut of the churchyard. We've lost count of the number of times they have done this over the spring and summer. We are most grateful as they have maintained it to a very high standard. Thank you so much for all the work.

During the wonderful summer there was one Sunday evening when Rector Michael came to church with a story we'd like to share. On a visit to Wark School, a pupil had remarked on the smart beige linen jacket Michael wore over the summer, asking where he had bought it; to which Michael replied, indicating a shop in Newcastle; the pupil replied: "*I cannot wait to be old, so I can buy a jacket like that*".

What more can or should we say?

Love from Cyril and John

Wark Ladies Guild

Christmas Bazaar

Sunday 1st December, from 2.00pm, Wark Town Hall

Cakes, tombola, raffle, Christmas stall with decorations and wreaths.

Refreshments available

Come along and get your Christmas shopping off to a good start!

SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER 2013

Benefice of Chollerton	Benefice of Humshaugh
Sunday 3rd November – All Saints' Sunday	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion 6:00 Chollerton All Souls' Service	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion, 1662 11:00 Simonburn Holy Communion 6:00 Wark Holy Communion, 1662
Old Testament: Dan 7,1-3 &15-18 Gospel: Luke 6, 20-31	Epistle: Eph. 1, 11-end Psalm: 149
Sunday 10th November – Remembrance Sunday	
9:00 Thockrington Holy Communion 10:00 Birtley Wreath Laying 10:40 Chollerton Service of Remembrance 6:00 Birtley Service of Remembrance	10:45 Service of Remembrance at Simonburn , then services at: 11:45 Simonburn War Memorial 12:00 Wark War Memorial 12:30 Humshaugh War Memorial
Old Testament: Micah 4, 1-5 Gospel:	Epistle: Romans 8, 31 end Psalm:
Sunday 17th November – 2nd Sunday before Advent	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Holy Communion 6:00 Wark Evening Prayer
Old Testament: Malachi 4, 1-2a Gospel: Luke 21, 5-19	Epistle: 2 Thess. 3, 6-13 Psalm: 98
Sunday 24th November – Sunday next before Advent	
9:00 Thockrington 1662 Communion 10:30 Chollerton Holy Communion	8:00 Humshaugh Holy Communion 9:30 Wark Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Morning Prayer 6:30 Humshaugh Evening Prayer
Old Testament: Jeremiah 23, 1-6 Gospel: Luke 23, 33-43	Epistle: Col. 1, 11-20 Psalm: 46
Sunday 1st December – Advent Sunday <i>(Year 'A' readings from Common Worship begin)</i>	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion, 1662 11:00 Simonburn Holy Communion 6:00 Wark Holy Communion, 1662
Old Testament: Isaiah 2, 1-5 Gospel: Matt. 24,36-44	Epistle: Romans 13, 11-14 Psalm: 122
Sunday 8th December – Advent 2	
9:00 Gunnerton Holy Communion 10:30 Birtley Holy Communion	9:30 Humshaugh Holy Communion 11:00 Simonburn Morning Prayer 6:00 Wark Holy Communion
Old Testament: Isaiah 11,1-10 Gospel: Matthew 3, 1-12	Epistle: Romans 15, 4-13 Psalm: 72, 1-7 & 18-19

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Details
Wed 30 Oct	12:00 pm	Gunnerton Lunch Club, 12noon-1.00pm, £2.50. Delicious homemade soup, pudding, tea and coffee and, as always, good conversation. Raffle
Thu 31 Oct	7:30 pm for 8:00	Friends of Chollerton Churches Halloween Gourmet Dinner, The Barrasford Arms, £40 excl. drinks, tickets from Bob Fletcher, 681949 or bob.fletcher@sw.co.uk (page 15)
Fri 1 Nov	7:30 pm	Chollerton WI: Northumbrian Night with Eddy Milligan & friends, Barrasford Village Hall. Tickets £5, from Barrasford shop; in aid of Village Hall and the WI
Sun 3 Nov	4:00 pm to 6:00	Pop-up café, Humshaugh Village Hall, afternoon tea, bric-a-brac stall and raffle; in aid of the Motor Neurone Disease Society. Contact: Marilyn Robins (page 5).
Tue 5 Nov	6:15 pm	Humshaugh Fireworks, on the playing field, with refreshments. NO personal fireworks please, even sparklers, due to insurance! Donation buckets for contributions (page 5).
Tue 5 Nov	7:30 pm	Monthly meeting, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Thu 7 Nov	10:30 am	Coffee Morning, Barrasford Village Hall: delicious coffee, homebakes and enlivening conversation guaranteed! (page 14)
Thu 7 Nov	2:00 pm	Humshaugh Mothers' Union, talk by Revd Mike Slade: " <i>How I became a Christian</i> ", at the Langfords' (page 6)
Fri 8 Nov	7:30 pm	Chollerton Churches Wine Tasting Evening with Ken & Alison Carlisle: ' <i>Super (-market) Sicilian Wines</i> '. £12.00 – SOLD OUT; for reserve list phone: 689996
Fri 8 Nov	8:00 pm	Quiz Night, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Sat 9 Nov	5:30 pm	Tea time Special, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Mon 11 Nov	9:15 am	Armistice Day Collective Worship, Humshaugh School, led by Class 2. Open to all the community.
Tue 12 Nov	7:15 pm for 7:45	Birtley & District Gardening Group: ' <i>Valerie Finnis & the Golden Age of Plantmanship</i> ' with Ursula Buchan; Birtley Village Hall (page 14)
Wed 13 Nov	10:00 am	Dunkers coffee morning, Barrasford Village Hall, 10.00-11.00am (page 14)
Fri 15 Nov	2:45 pm	Children in Need - Pudsey Bear! - cake stall, Humshaugh School, 2:45–3:15pm (page 5)
Sat 16 Nov	3:00 pm	Messy Church, Barrasford Village Hall; messy but creative activities, simple prayer & worship, lovely family meal. Contact: Mike Slade, 681721 (page 13)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Details
Sun 17 Nov		Toddler Fund Raiser, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Mon 18 Nov	7:30 pm	Wark PCC meeting, Westacres Community Room
Tue 19 Nov	7:00 pm	Chollerton Parish History Society ' <i>Nostalgic Views of the North</i> ', Barrasford Village Hall, 7.00 for 7.30pm
Thu 21 Nov	7:30 pm	Christmas Bingo, Simonburn Village Hall; contact Sue Hickman, 681578 (page 6)
Sat 23 Nov	1:00 pm	Humshaugh Christmas Market, 1:00-3:00pm in the Village Hall; proceeds to Friends of Humshaugh First School (page 5)
Sat 23 Nov		Dine and Dance, Barrasford Village Hall - limited tickets available from 24 East Acres (page 14)
Mon 25 Nov	6:30 pm	Humshaugh School Christingle Service at St. Peter's Church. Open to all the community.
Wed 27 Nov	12:00 pm	Gunnerton Lunch Club, 12noon-1.00pm, £2.50. Delicious homemade soup, pudding, tea and coffee and, as always, good conversation. Raffle
Thu 28 Nov	7:30 pm	Christmas Bingo, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Sun 1 Dec	2:00 pm	Ladies Guild Christmas Bazaar, Wark Town Hall; cakes, tombola, raffle, Christmas stall with decorations and wreaths; refreshments (page 7)
Mon 2 Dec	6:00 pm	Preschool Play, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Tue 3 Dec	7:30 pm	Monthly meeting, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Fri 6 Dec	8:00 pm	Quiz Night, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Sun 8 Dec		Parish Children's Party, Barrasford Village Hall (page 14)
Wed 11 Dec	10:00 am	Dunkers coffee morning, Barrasford Village Hall, 10.00-11.00am (page 14)
Thu 12 Dec		Dunkers Christmas Lunch, Barrasford Arms
Sun 15 Dec	6:30 pm	Christingle Service, Stonehaugh
Wed 18 Dec	12:00 pm	Gunnerton Lunch Club Christmas Special, 12noon, £4.00. Contact: Susan Reay, 681852 (page 14)
Fri 20 Dec		Yuletide at Chipchase Castle Chapel – a magical evening of carols & music; tickets from Bob Fletcher, 681949 or bob.fletcher@sw.co.uk (page 15)
Tue 24 Dec	6:00 pm	Santa visits Barrasford to check the chimneys, Barrasford Village Hall, details to be confirmed
Sat 18 Jan	10:30 am to 4:00 pm	Chollerton Benefice Mission Action Plan: discussion day at Shepherd's Dene (see page 13 for details); contact: Mike Slade, 681721

CHOLLERTON BENEFICE

Chollerton Vicarage

Dear friends,

How blessed we are to live in villages where the community spirit is alive and well.

As an example of that, the effort and participation which went into making and erecting scarecrows in Barrasford and Gunnerton in September, was remarkable. I think there was the best part of fifty about the villages, and some were such good likenesses to certain members of the community that people were seen talking to them! Many remarked that they didn't know I had a twin brother. It really was a splendid event. The afternoon tea was delicious and very well attended, and the Grand Draw generously sponsored by many people and businesses. And then, with immaculate timing, the roof was replaced on Barrasford Village Hall quicker than I could shake a stick at it. People now say the Hall hasn't looked so good for many years - decades probably.

Amazingly, all this wonderful activity was organised by a few people who worked their socks off to make sure everything happened as it did. They were ably assisted by many others who turned to, and made things happen on the day.

There are some other events provided by the community where it would be lovely to see more people - attending and helping. Dunkers in Barrasford Village Hall, the monthly coffee morning in Birtley Village Hall, and the Gunnerton Luncheon Club, would all welcome new faces, to enjoy the lovely food, drinks and friendship on offer, *and* join the rota of people who prepare, set up and put away. These events in particular are not restricted to people over the age of 60, and mums and dads at home during the day are more than welcome to come along and bring their children with them too. Older people (like me!) usually delight in the presence of young ones, and you will be made very welcome.

As we fast approach Remembrance Sunday, Winston Churchill was quite right to say, in a wholly different context, that '*Never was so much owed by so many to so few.*' That is still the case in peacetime in our communities, when it is often the same people who do much of the work for the rest of the community. Good on them. But good on *you* if you will join them, and give of your time, talents and gifts, for the good of all.

Without the sacrifice of men and women in the Second World War, we wouldn't be free to start up a Scout Troop in the village (another wonderful idea!), but something wholly different. I shall once again be giving thanks for that sacrifice in our services on Remembrance Sunday, and I do hope you will join me then, no matter how old you are.

With love and best wishes, Mike

Harvest Festival services

Thank you for supporting the Harvest so generously this year. Your donations in church and school have been distributed to Mencap Dilston National College and the Cedarwood Trust, in their work to the poorest people of the Meadow Well Estate in North Shields. Both were delighted with our support.

Messy Church, Barrasford Village Hall, Saturday 16 November

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.

Mission Action Plan

It has been over four years since the last Mission Action Plan was submitted to the Diocese of Newcastle, and the Bishop has requested that all parishes consider this again. To help the Chollerton Benefice discern the way forward for our churches in future years, a day at Shepherd's Dene Retreat House, near Riding Mill, has been arranged for Saturday 18th January 2014, from 10.30am. There will be time for thinking and discussing together, with space to be alone in the beautiful grounds, or enjoy the warmth of the house (log fires usually provided!). Morning coffee, lunch, Holy Communion in the Chapel, and afternoon tea, will all be provided. We should be away by 4.00pm. The cost is £12.50 - very reasonable, especially since we shall enjoy a two-course, hot lunch, and homemade cakes and biscuits.

Everyone - whether Parochial Church Council member, regular or occasional worshipper - is invited to this day, which will be led by Mike. If you 'only' come to Messy Church, you are particularly welcome to come. You don't have to live in the three parishes to attend. But we do need to know numbers. A sign-up sheet will appear in churches early in November.

So, to help begin our thinking, the Diocesan Synod in 2012 set the following priorities for the churches:

- deepening spirituality and prayer
- more young people involved in the life of the church, and
- numerical growth in congregations

As a first step, can we ask ourselves:

- Where are we starting from?
- What are our local church's current strengths and weaknesses?
- What are we (or they) currently good at - and not so good at?
- What needs to be changed?
- What needs to stay the same?

Can you make a list? By all means have a chat with Mike if you wish. Or drop him a line if you have something to say and really can't come. It is a wonderful opportunity

to shape the thinking and approach of Chollerton, Gunnerton, Birtley and Thockrington churches in the coming years.

Birtley Village Hall

Birtley & District Gardening Group

‘Valerie Finnis & the Golden Age of Plantmanship’

with Ursula Buchan – author and columnist for the Telegraph and Spectator

Tuesday 12th November, Birtley Village Hall

7.15pm for 7.45pm

The group always welcomes new visitors or prospective members whether experienced or rookie gardeners. The annual membership for 2013/14 season will be £20.00. Guests/single talks £4.00 (£6.00 in December)

Community events in Gunnerton Church

Gunnerton Lunch Club - CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Wednesday 18th December at 12 noon

£4, to include seasonal delights, in addition to soup and a pudding with a festive flavour, raffle of a Christmas Hamper, and other goodies!

Reserve your place, by 10th December please; call Susan Reay on 681852

Bookings for Gunnerton Church can be made by contacting Susan Reay on 01434 681852

Barrasford Village Hall

For more information on *any* event at Barrasford Village Hall, read the weekly “*Chollerton Notes*” in the Hexham Courant, and the monthly “*What’s On*” bulletin on the village notice boards. Or why not join ‘Barrasford Village Hall’ on Facebook? (*where I see there’s LOTS of information – Ed.*)

Birtley Local History Group

Further details from Mary White 01434 230307

Friends of Chollerton Churches

The Friends of Chollerton Churches held an informal get-together on the evening of 10th October. Many thanks to Andrew and Liz McCoull for hosting this very enjoyable evening. Friends' Chairman Ken Carlisle was pleased to report that in its first year of operation the Friends achieved a £5,893 surplus, and in the current year has generated a further £2,700.

Chollerton St. Giles' Church has now raised over £22,000 through grants and fund raising activities, and has, with the Friends' help, achieved its current target of £30,000. This will enable the restoration of the tower parapet and pinnacles, and the boiler house roof, to proceed. The Architect is currently preparing documents to go to tender within the timetable set by Heritage Lottery.

Ken went on to note that further work will be needed to re-slate the main roof of Chollerton Church, and also restore the hearse house. To support this work, a number of further events are lined up for the future, including, on the 31st October, a Halloween Gourmet Meal at the Barrasford Arms, tickets priced £40, 7.30 for 8.00. Then, on the 20th of December, Chipchase Castle will host Yuletide at Chipchase Castle Chapel. Tickets for both events are obtainable from bobfletcher@sw.co.uk
Tel: 01434 681949.

Northumbrian Folk and Gospel Evening

To everyone who was able to come to the music night which took place in the Mart function suite on the 10th October, a big thank you! We had, as they say, a really good night, with Kathy Anderson on the keyboard, Roly Johnson on the guitar, and Roddy Matthews on the Northumbrian fiddle, providing us with some inspiring music and songs, while Bob Bolam's wit and humour caused much laughter.

The Rev'd Malcolm Jones shared his story with us, about how, at 55, he was led to begin helping Palestinian children through educational and medical sponsorship. Thanks to the generosity of all concerned, we have been able to share over £500 between Malcolm's charity, Practical Compassion for Destitute Children (PCDC), and Release International, so that they can provide basic foodstuffs, blankets and clothing for those whose homes, crops and possessions have been destroyed by Islamic extremists in Northern Nigeria.

Richard, Alison, Andy, Katherine

(They are too modest to say that 199 people came along; a wonderful occasion – Mike)

New Scout Group

The new Barrasford Scout Group will be holding weekly Cubs and Beavers sessions in Barrasford Village Hall on Tuesday evenings, 5.30 – 6.30pm.

Children aged, 5 – 10 years old, can come along and see what Scouting is all about!! Lots of fun, games and activities.

For further information, call the Group Leader: Paul Mordue, 07966 902530 or email: pmordue@hotmail.com.

Other church services within the Chollerton Benefice

Barrasford Methodist Chapel: 6.30pm on November 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th.

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



Barrasford Baby and
Toddler Group
are holding a
**Children's Duathlon
and Fair**
at Barrasford Village Hall
Sunday 17th November 10am



Run and bike races for children 1 - 9 years.
(Bikes, trikes, balance bikes,
scooters or sit ons all fine.)

Teas, Cakes, Games & Stalls