

RETURN HOME

Upper Wensleydale Newsletter
Issue 88—December 2003/January 2004
(Abridged Version)
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<p style="text-align: center;">THE UPPER WENSLEYDALE NEWSLETTER</p> <p>Printed and Published by : The Upper Wensleydale Newsletter c/o Old Station House, Hawes, DL8 3NL Telephone: 01969 667785 Fax: 01969 663559</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-mail: uwnl.web@tiscali.co.uk alan.watkinson@virgin.net</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NEWSLETTER TEAM</p> <p>Committee: Alan S. Watkinson, Nadine Bell, Rima Berry, Martin Cluderay, Josh Cluderay, Sue Duffield, Richard Ellison, Angela Le Grice, Sue Harpley, Pam Robinson, Lorna Ward, Cathy Bennett.</p> <p>Consultant: Lindsey Annison</p> <p>Printing: Peter Wood; Derek Nevill, Alan Watkinson.</p> <p>Plus: a host of slaves for collating, folding, stapling and distributing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">hearing the gossip we dare not print!</p>
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EDITORIAL

How has it been for you? 2003, that is. We suppose it depends where you draw a line round your thinking, or in the case of those getting on a bit, what they can remember at all!

On the world scene it is fair to say it has been, and continues to be, pretty dreadful. Iraq, the build-up, the war itself and the aftermath have “got to us”, the present situation still causing deep divisions- even within families and among friends; and the Middle East still on a knife-edge. Then there was the SARS outbreak which got a lot of people very worried. Serious differences of opinion between nations about world trade and the world’s environment don’t get any better. Even one part of the world church has got itself “in a right mess” over issues of sexuality.

It’s no good, we can’t get away from the effects of these; but there is an up-side! “Every cloud has a silver lining” Tourism to, and within, Britain has flourished, made even better by the best long run of wonderful weather we can remember. Farming seems to have done OK. And we live in an area hard to match almost anywhere for its natural beauty.

In the Dales we’ve had our usual, occasional ‘spats’ over planning, traffic, bikes, housing, and although most of us don’t really follow what goes on in the upper echelons of councils and partnerships where there can, sadly, be “trouble at t’mill”, we do still make progress and things tend to happen.

But we need to be vigilant; there still is ‘people power’ and if we see, having read all the facts and figures, that changes in health and community care or safety or education or the environment of the area are not to our advantage, then Dales folk know how to make a fuss! But it is easy to panic the vulnerable by painting an alarming picture before we are clear about details. (*See letter on page 35*)

On a lighter note, how about a simpler approach to life; we could learn from the contentment young children find in ignoring the expensive presents you’ve just splashed out on, and playing with, or in, or chewing, the box or wrapper and just smiling all around. They say it’s good to chew things over! We wish you all a stress-free time; some hopes! But Happy Christmas, and spend some of your present-money with our advertisers! If you think this a bit short, or even frivolous, please turn to our annual Christmas message page.



EUNICE

...was on the back page, and spotted by many of you.

Winner of the £5 prize:

**Kate Dugher,
Thornton Rust**

SANTA GETS ABOUT

He'll be on the Wensleydale Railway trains on Saturdays and Sundays up to December 21st and on December 22nd, 23rd and Christmas Eve.

We are also informed that by some very clever high-speed, in-air sleigh-riding on Monday December 22nd he will also be on the Settle to Carlisle line trains:

10.42 from Settle, 11.20 from Kirkby Stephen to Appleby or Carlisle, returning at 13.33 from Carlisle.

Children under twelve will receive a goody bag and there will be complimentary coffee and mince pies for adults. Santa's fairies and elves will also be travelling.

(Elves on the line makes a change)

NEXT ISSUE

The **January/February** issue will be produced on

January 26th and 27th

and will be distributed between

January 29th and February 2nd

Deadline for copy:

THURSDAY JANUARY 22ND

NOVEMBER'S ANSWERS

- Two wheels on a bicycle
- Three wheels on a tricycle
- Three men in a boat
- Two wheels on a penny-farthing
- Four gospels
- Five digits on one hand
- Ten digits on two feet
- Six legs on a spider
- Seven deadly sins
- Eight: square root of sixty-four
- Nine square feet in a square yard
- Thirty two white squares on chess board
- Sixty five; retirement age for men
- Two wives of Peter Barlow (in Coronation Street)
- Forty pages in this News-Letter
- Four quavers in a minim
- Ninety two million miles to the sun
- Eight letters in "Aysgarth"
- Thirty Nine Steps by John Buchan
- Twenty questions in this competition.

However, as you know, a spider has 8 legs.

So the winner was:

Barry Cruickshank of Hardraw
who pointed this out to us!

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Here's a "Christmassy" Quiz.

1. Sailing was turned into an old custom
2. O girls caning into another custom
3. The tables are turned for the birth in question
4. They might sew me in
5. They were abiding
6. This nasty guy was in the rodent-catching business
7. Rashed jam pony
8. A slight turn of him produces a turn
9. Lo bile sherry for decoration
10. Harm first cheats his merry grin
11. Section of a bit of roof in fruit-bearing growth
12. Ditch down gals les, for cosy wrap

CHRISTMAS 2003

This year's Christmas message is from Ann Chapman, Vicar of Askrigg and Stalling Busk.

When I think of Christmas I first of all think of coming out of the midnight service on Christmas Eve and it's snowing!!!

I wonder what you think of?

Is there a great pressure to get the right presents and have enough money to pay for it all? Or don't you think of the cost just what you are going to get for the people that you love? Somehow Christmas has become overrun with the celebration of St Nicholas – Santa Claus.

St Nicholas was a Bishop in times long past who once overheard a family worrying about not having enough money. He was such a generous man that he left them the money that they needed as a gift at their front door. He wore a red cloak because he was a Bishop and that's how the Santa Claus that we now know came about; the generous giving of gifts to people who need them. The feast of St Nicholas is on 6th December and people in Germany for example celebrate his feast by giving presents and having fun.

Christmas which is on the 25th December is about something else. Yes it is about the generous giving of a gift but not of money, as Santa Claus did, or of presents as we do, but of a life: the birth of Jesus who came to show us how to live life to the full, by loving God and our neighbour as ourselves. The story of Christmas shows us that the giver of life was not a king or a wealthy person but an ordinary child from an ordinary family, who grew up to be an extraordinary man who loved people equally whoever they were and whatever they had done. His life gave us the good news that God loves all of us equally no matter what. What a gift! The gift of love into the world for all of us. No wonder we should celebrate! So don't worry about spending enough or too much; the greatest gift anyone can give anyone is love and

that is freely given. The cost for Jesus was his life, the cost to us need be nothing more than a smile, a kind word and the generous giving of ourselves!

Ann Chapman

BADMINTON

The Wensleydale League held their annual mixed tournament for players aged 18 years and under and 48 players enjoyed a whole day of badminton. The high standard was reflected in the 8 finalists representing 7 different clubs. The winners finally emerged as Carl Handley and Laura Reaks who both play for West Burton in the senior B division. Linda Thornborrow from Keld also had a good tournament losing out in the finals by only one point. Other finalists were Michael Percival (Bainbridge), Stuart Dent (Coverdale), Adam Spence (Aysgarth), Christina Scarr (Askrigg) and Rachel Hemsley (Leyburn).

The senior competition started in the same format providing quite a challenge for some of our rising stars— to actually arise and play badminton at 9.30 am on a Sunday morning! Amy Poulter (15) reached the semi-finals while Laura Spence (17) reached the final for the second year running to join the elite of the Wensleydale Badminton League.

Several boxes of shuttles and 14 hours later the challenge ended with Emma Percival winning all three of her final games securing a long awaited tournament win. Her brother Mark narrowly lost to stalwart Michael Spensley.

The Wensleydale League will hold its under 8s, 10s, 12s, 14s, 16s and 18s singles tournament on Sunday January 25th, Friday 30th, Saturday 31st and Sunday February 1st 2004.

THE NORTH RIDING DALES LICENSED VICTUALLERS ASSOCIATION

Annual Charity Bike Ride 2003

The members again cycled over 20 miles from Hawes to Leyburn on their 17th Annual Charity Bike Ride to raise money for many local organisations.

There were 176 members, relatives, staff, customers and suppliers. Everyone is sponsored otherwise they cannot cycle.

This year's event was sponsored by the Black Sheep Brewery Masham, with many of their personnel riding, including the Managing Director Mr Paul Theakston.

All the pubs on the route provided refreshments with a buffet at the end at the Golden Lion Leyburn.

Among others taking part were the John Smiths Brewery, Leisure Link; Dr Malcom Hamer cycled and videoed the ride again and it was recently shown to the patients in the Hawes and Aysgarth Surgeries. Dr Jones also cycled with Practice Manager Mr C West. Mr John Dale from Leyburn follows the cyclists ready to help with punctures etc.; his help is much appreciated.

A big thank you to all the cyclists, all those who generously sponsored them, and everyone who has contributed in whatever way to make this the best year yet— a staggering **£12,950-00**.

£300-00 Raffle on the
Presentation Night

Total £13,250-00

The full list of donations is included which all goes locally.

£1,000-00 “in memory of Mr Chris Bellwood” to Mr Ken Wilding of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

The Hawes Fire Station and the Leyburn Fire Station each gave their shares of £500 to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. Mr Wilding spoke about the work they do.

Mrs Christine Whitehead presented the cheque of £1,000 in memory of her

husband Mr Peter Whitehead, to Specialist Nurse Judith Curtis of the Breast Care Unit, Scotts Suite, Friarage Hospital.

Mrs Curtis spoke about the work they do.

The Black Sheep Brewery and the Quality Hotel Scotch Corner were among the many people who generously donated prizes for the raffle.

With this year's money the members have raised a massive amount of nearly **£119,000-00** (one hundred and nineteen thousand) in 17 years.

Here is the full list of donations:

Doctors; Hawes & Aysgarth	Blood pressure Unit	£1,000
Doctors; Reeth	Syringe Driver	500
Doctors; Leyburn	Blood Pressure Unit	500
Fire Station Hawes - given their share to	Yorkshire Air Ambulance	500
Fire Station Leyburn - given their share to	Yorkshire Air Ambulance	500
Ambulance Station Bainbridge	First Aid Bags	500
Brentwood Lodge, Leyburn	Outings etc.	500
High Hall Bainbridge	Outings etc.	500
Swaledale & Arkengarthdale	Luncheon Club Scheme	500
Yorkshire Air Ambulance:	In memory of Chris Bellwood.	1,000
Children's Ward Friarage Hospital	"POD" Shows	600
Breast Care Unit. Scott Suite	In memory of Mr Peter Whitehead.	1,000
St. Peter's & St Paul's Primary School	Leyburn	250
Primary & Nursery School	Reeth	250
Skateboard Fund	Hawes	250
Play Group	Askrigg	250
Rugby Club Juniors	Leyburn	250
Pre School	West Witton	250
Junior Football Club	Hawes	250
County Primary School	Leyburn	250
Primary & Nursery School	Bainbridge	250
Pinocchio's pre school Nursery	Leyburn	250
Cricket Club	Hawes	250
Primary School	Askrigg	250
Badminton Club	Leyburn	250
Under 5s Playgroup	Harmby	250
Primary School	Hawes	250
Wensleydale School	Leyburn	250
Hospice Homecare Support Group		250
Multiple Sclerosis Dales Support Group		250
Mr David Hainsworth		250
Mr Trevor Schofield		250
Mr Robert Craske		250
Christmas Presents for Children's Ward	Friarage	100
		£12,950
Raffle on Presentation night to:- Mr & Mrs Eddie Taylors Lights (Christmas) Leyburn for "Coronary Care Unit" Friarage Hospital Northallerton		300
2003 Annual charity Bike Ride Total		£13, 250

ANGELA LE GRICE LEAVES THE COMMUNITY OFFICE IN HAWES.

I have known Angela for over nine years in different roles, firstly as a neighbour in Askrigg, then as the parish clerk, and five years ago when she started her job as community office manager.

Angela left the high pressure life in Leeds as a medical social worker at Jimmy's and came to live full time in Askrigg, where her three sons had enjoyed their early life.

Many people had doubts about the viability and necessity of the community office. The estimates for the first year were 3,000 people through the doors, but that was soon well exceeded, and now logs up over 12,000 items of work a year. Angela and her first assistant Colin Bailey welcomed residents and visitors alike with cheerfulness, with sensitivity, and efficiency. They established good links with community groups, Citizens Advice Bureau and local businesses, through the local business association which had its office there. They were awarded The Duke of York's Community Service award after only two years.

Success led to success and the police, market hall trustees and Settle-Carlisle Business Liaison Group joined to have service contracts, so earning money and providing jobs for other people in the community.

The office under Angela's guidance provided valuable work experience for some young mums and other people, who have gone on to get jobs in local banks and schools. The office staff has expanded to include full and part timers- Val, Amanda, Ade, Rima and Nigel, who have worked well as a team.

I worked closely with Angela for four years as chairman of the business association, and our time during FMD was hectic, at times fraught and depressing, but she was always supportive, enthusiastic and had a positive attitude, which gave our members hope.

The work of the office expanded into establishing a community investment

prospectus and new projects such as the child care in Hawes. This flagship office is well recognized throughout the county by various bodies, and again this year was, after thorough scrutiny, awarded the Duke of York's award.

Sadly Angela is looking to pastures new. I wish her success. I know she will succeed! It has been a privilege to work with her. We will miss her!

Kate Empsall

APPRECIATION

We shall miss his cheery whistle and chat around Hawes; the Newsletter will be deprived of his anecdotes and the occasional call as he rang up and said “you might like to put this in!” Yes, we mean Pinky Blades, aged 78, whose funeral took place on Saturday November 23rd.

He was born in Hawes, (his mother having come down from Co. Durham), never lived anywhere else, sold his fish from “The Hill” and on his market stall, and gradually extended to fruit and veg. and finally to “Spar”.

He was one of the main footballers of the area in his younger days, loved his shooting and his fishing and of course his family. In keeping with his kindness, he wanted the collection at his funeral to go to local children; accordingly the proposed Skate Park and the Junior Football will be the beneficiaries.

Our condolences go to all the family.

A.S.W.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Upper Wensleydale Business Association Annual General Meeting was held on November 19th in the Gayle Institute, enjoying a “Humble Pie” lunch after dealing with the agenda.

The officials of the organisation are now as follows:

Chair:	Pamela Hague
Vice-chair	Rima Berry
Secretariat	Community Office
Treasurer	Sylvia Turner
Committee	Brian Carlisle

Jennifer Fawcett

Liz Lawson

Simon Shaw

Sue Williamson

Richard Hynes

Angela Le Grice

Co-opted Colin Bailey (Craven

College)

Jill Robinson (Prince’s Trust)

The meeting recorded its grateful thanks to the Simonstone Estate in providing for the setting up of the website, now attracting **5000 visits per month.**

It was agreed that in future the Association would be entitled:

The Business Association supporting the Business Community of Upper Wensleydale.

ANNUAL CHARITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

This year the Hawes Silver Prize Band and the East Witton Male Voice choir wish to support the Hospice Homecare Charity to help the Support Group in their work throughout the Dale. The proceeds raised at the concert will help continue this vital aspect of care for those people who are terminally ill and who wish to be at home.

Many of us in the Dale feel passionately about the care that cancer patients need at home and also support that family members need to help maintain quality of life for those whom they love.

Don’t forget to book the date of **Friday December 19th at 7.30 pm** in your diary, but come along early to the Market House as we expect to be full as usual. Admission is £4.00 at the door; mince pies and coffee included.

The band and the choir look forward to welcoming you to this celebration of Christmas through music and song, particularly the Community Carol Singing.

Stan Roocroft

ANONYMOUS LETTERS

The writer of these (over the last few months) will be delighted to know that at last we have responded to his (or her) bait, simply to say that gossip sent in on the basis of planned incognito listening-in to conversations in the area will never be part of this Newsletter. Casual, overheard remarks of a comical nature are a different matter and add spice to life.

We are happy to receive signed letters which are looked at in committee and we are unafraid of controversial items; however, a community newsletter serves a more useful role in making people think in a balanced way and bringing the community together rather than tearing it apart. End of the matter

MARSETT CELEBRATES

Friends from far and near packed the chapel at Marsett on Saturday November 15th for a musical evening of thanksgiving to celebrate Elaine Ewbank's 60 years as organist for the dale. Starting at Countersett when she was only ten years old, then moving to Marsett Methodist Church after marrying Tommy Ewbank where she has been organist for over forty years and still counting, she also often plays at Stalling Busk church.

The Rev. Martin James took the chair, Margaret Westwood organised the musical items given by friends connected with Marsett over the years, singers coming from Hawes, Gayle, Coverdale and from Marsett itself. Elaine was presented with a framed certificate and both Elaine and Tom were given gifts from the congregation, as Tom has also been Treasurer and steward for 40 years. George Sowerby presented Elaine with a bouquet of flowers.

Elaine made everyone laugh when she commented that if the preacher was long-winded she would get her own back by playing the last hymn as fast as possible. It

was a very memorable occasion, making the words from Psalm 95 appropriate, "Let us come before God with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song".

NOT SO MUCH BROADBAND AS BROAD INTERESTS

When I am poorly I can rely on Dr West and partners to sort me out but recently that was not the case as I have been suffering from the painful effects of a virus, bug or even a worm (yuk!). I have turned not to the doctor but to a microbiologist. No, I'm not into alternative medicine, I'm talking about my PC and our local IT consultant, **Gavin Edwards**, who also keeps the Newsletter computer healthy. Gavin is very much a Dalesman, and is also a pioneer of home working and he told me recently about both his love of the outdoors and of computers.

Gavin is "half Metcalfe", with his grandfather coming from Sedbusk and his mother from High Force. From the age of 12 he had an interest in zoology but at that time Leyburn School didn't even teach biology to "O" level. So being an independent Yorkshireman, determined to go to university, Gavin left school aged 15 (the last year this was allowed) and set off for digs and college at Scarborough where he took his O and A levels. As Gavin says he had his student days young. Just as well because two years later he was well into a Life Sciences course at Liverpool University and he was married to Val. Val also has a local pedigree, her family having farmed up Langstrothdale, and at one time her parents kept the Kings Arms in Askrigg. It wasn't a typical student life, as Val was the breadwinner and they lived not in a dingy flat but in a 3 bed semi in a "posher" area of Liverpool. At weekends instead of boozing with fellow students Gavin was often back to the Dales to go caving.

Naturally, after graduating in microbiology Gavin was set on finding work and he became a production manager with Rank Hovis McDougall. He was in

flour milling management for them at Birkenhead and then in Manchester. After this he was able eventually to get a job at Long Preston this time in animal feed milling. Unfortunately this was at the same time as the milk quota came in and demand dropped instantly. From milling 200 tons of feed a day within one week they were down to 2 tons only. The mill was going bankrupt. By then Gavin and Val had two children, Gareth being about one year old and baby Sian about three months. In addition Gavin had to work shifts so he decided it was time for a change of direction.

During an earlier brief period working in Dorset Gavin had already done a course in computer programming in around 1980-81. Then, having just sold the Dorset house and seeing how things were going in animal feed milling, Gavin and Val agreed that he would back his belief in a future in computing. Val and the children went back to live in the Dales, whilst Gavin spent week-days in Bradford doing a one year MSc course in Computer Science. This he had to finance himself, fees and all. But the timing was right because the same year PCs came on the market.

Initially Gavin did some part time lecturing at Keighley Technical College. Early on he had a programming contract with Silent Night, the bed manufacturer, and he soon realised that there was a market for specialised applications on PCs, and that you didn't need to be based in an urban area. He has never advertised but work has always come allowing Gavin to live back in his home area. He is about to celebrate 20 years working from home as an IT consultant. With the internet we take all this for granted now but Gavin was a pioneer. Certainly when he applied for business start-up grants the local council told him such a business "wasn't viable" in this area!

At first most of the work was at a distance e.g. in the West Midlands for suppliers to Jaguar, but gradually local work has grown. Gavin enjoys the mix of programming, support work, supplying and installing computers, and being his own boss. He has work in the M62 "corridor", in Hull and Edinburgh and even some customers overseas in Spain and Kenya. Most of Gavin's income comes from support work as there is very little margin in supplying computers. As Gavin says "I never sell computers, but I buy a lot!"

Of course self employment means never being away from the telephone, but Gavin does take time out to walk and for holidays. From youngsters he and his two older brothers didn't want to be confined to a football pitch. At age 8 he was down the Burtersett mines, and from age 15 Gavin went caving most weekends with a group based at Lancaster. A walk might take him and his brothers from Burtersett to Buckden Pike and back. There were old canoes to try out too and his father, in the Merchant Navy, brought back some skis. "There was enough snow to ski in the fields above Burtersett then".

Holidays are active too. Now married 28 years, Gavin and Val had a 3 week silver wedding trip to Peru. This included flying over the Atacama desert to see the ancient but unexplained Nazca lines worn into the desert about ten thousand years ago. Another day required climbing up a high tower in the Amazon jungle to see the wildlife in the tree canopy, especially to see macaws nesting in hollow palm trees. A peaceful place until Val decided to eat a banana which was immediately pinched by one of these "wild" macaws much to the guide's surprise. Holidays continue to be both shared and sometimes separate, particularly walking holidays, although both enjoy the Spanish Sierra Nevada.

Local walking is important too. Gavin has done the Three Peaks Walk ten times, in all seasons and all weathers. But that wasn't enough as last Valentine's night Gavin with two friends made a second and successful attempt to do the walk by night. Originally it had been planned to do this in midsummer, but a frosty calm night gave Gavin other ideas in December. A couple of phone calls, and they were off but whilst on Ingleborough the cloudless weather suddenly changed to pitch dark and high winds. All they could do was to abandon Whernside and carefully make their way down the frozen fells off Ingleborough. But in February their luck was in and on the coldest night of the year the walk was done. The visibility by moonlight was magnificent so no torches, just silence.

Sometimes Gavin's love of the outdoors and of IT can come together. The Scott Motorbike Trial is a fund raising event run in Swaledale. There can be 200 riders and they each have 75 observed score points. Scoring was done by a team of 20 people with big blackboards. "It can't be computerised" they said. Gavin didn't believe this anymore than he had believed "University isn't for people like you" or "This business isn't viable in the Dales". He has been doing the Scott Trial scoring now for 10 years, with a network of five computers set up in the Kings Head in Richmond. With this system the presentation can be done at night.

So what has all this got to do with microbiology? Gavin is a great believer in a broad education and his family have been great supporters of the Open University. His mother started the year the OU began, and spent 14 years studying even refusing to take a degree so she could take more courses. At one time her course tutor was her son. Val has also been an OU student before going on to an MA at York. She

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

sorts out other kinds of problem, being a counsellor and currently working with schools near Barnard Castle. As Gavin jokes, he causes stress and Val deals with it. And microbiology? It's ideal training for work with computers because it's all about systems and feedback loops.

So don't imagine a computer expert is a geek crouched over a PC in the wee small hours; he's just as likely to be half way around the Three Peaks.

PJR

MORE CENSUS EXTRACTS

For the Yorkshire Dales National Park area and for England & Wales (second column)

Travel to work areas:

Working mainly at home:	26.7%	9.2%
Car	51.2%	55.2%
Foot	13.1%	10.0%
Car passengers	4.6%	6.3%
Bus	1.0%	7.4%
Bike	0.9%	2.8%
Other	0.8%	0.5%
Motorcycle	0.4%	1.1%
Train	1.2%	7.1%
Taxi	0.2%	0.5%

(For the mathematically inclined, the columns may not add up quite to 100% because of rounding off to one place of decimals)

VICTORIAN SINGERS

The HARP Singers who perform in Victorian dress are planning an evening of Carols by Candlelight in the upper room at the Bolton Arms, Leyburn at 7.30 pm on Wednesday December 17th.

This is in aid of the Downside Up, a charity which runs a day centre for about 200 Downs Syndrome children in Moscow. "In Russia, most Downs Syndrome babies are put away in institutions and 50% of them die before their first birthday" said a

spokesman for the choir. "We raised £300 for the charity last year and this year we hope to beat that." Tickets are £5 including mulled wine and mince pies.

The HARP Singers will be touring Wensleydale singing carols as follows:

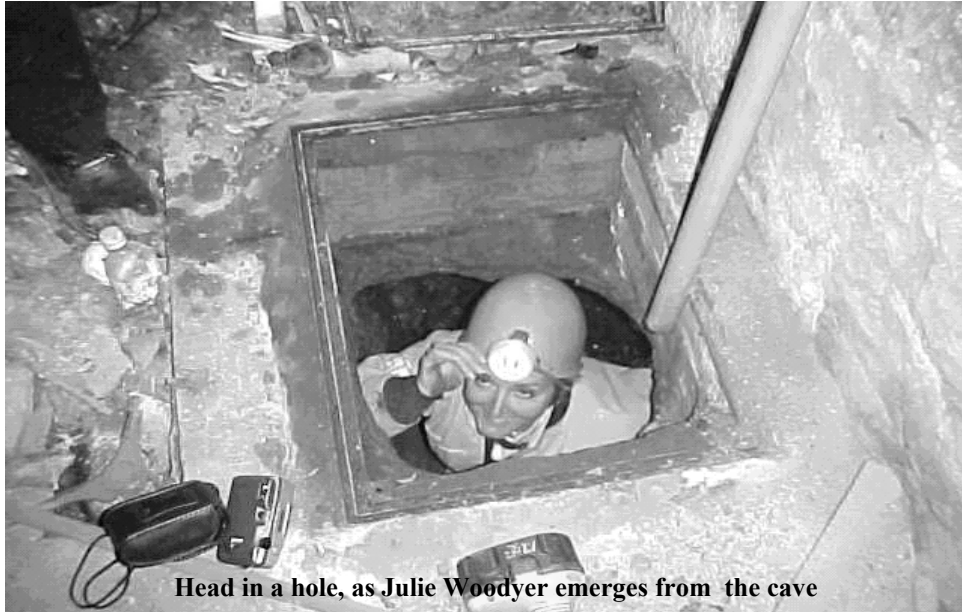
Thursday December 11th, 6.30 pm on Redmire village green

Sunday December 14th, 12 noon at the Crown in Askrigg and then at the Aysgarth National Park Centre from approx. 1.00 pm and 2.30 pm at High Hall, Bainbridge

Saturday December 20th, 12.30 pm at the Hawes Creamery and 3.00 pm at Leathley's in Leyburn. **Ralph Robinson**

For Bolton Arms tickets please ring:

663738 or 01677 422879



Head in a hole, as Julie Woodyer emerges from the cave

HAWES SCHOOL CAVE

Hidden depths to the curriculum at Hawes Community Primary School!

Hawes Primary School must be one of the only schools in the country to have its own cave! The Headteacher of the school had the opportunity to investigate the cave with her husband Phil Woodyer, Head of Low Mill Outdoor Centre, Gareth Edwards and Robin Steels, two Low Mill instructors. The cave runs down by Tommy Moore's barn, down to the council houses, under the school and across the road to Asker Well. All that now remains of the well today is a trough at the end of the newly built house, close by Bob Heseltine's carpentry workshop. The water then flows underground to the old railway line and out into the River Ure. Upstream there are some very narrow passages, with stalactites, stalagmites, columns, straws and flowstones leading to a flat bedding plane crawl, which becomes too low to follow. Downstream from the school the cave becomes very narrow, wet and difficult to pass. We know where the streambed flows because the path of the water has been dye tested and traced. People have known about this cave for some time although no one has officially

surveyed it, consequently a map isn't available in the official caving books. The Yoredale Cave group formed in 1985, explored the cave some years ago. As a consequence the Hawes School Cave Trophy came into existence. This trophy is awarded annually for acts of note by members of the group. It is currently held by Ken Read from the High Bentham area. If anyone has any further information about this cave or Asker Well please contact the school.

DECEMBER GARDENING

During the bleak winter months a garden needs something to add cheer and brightness – so what more topical plant than a holly or *Ilex*. This Yuletide plant may well have had its name derived from the word “holy”. The traditional cottage garden favourite is the *Ilex aquifolium* but the Highclere hollies are certainly worth considering. These originated from Highclere Castle in Hampshire apparently and one of the best is *Ilex altaclarensis* “Camelliifolia”. This soon makes a handsome evergreen pyramid full of shiny red berries (providing there’s a male pollinator close by.)

The reputation for being slow growing may be a little unfair. It’s generally understood that the more variegated or the more prickly the leaf the slower the growth so something like the hedgehog holly or *Ilex aquifolium* “Ferox” needs extreme patience. Mind you it does make the most impossible hedge to get through

Because hollies have small, thick spiny leaves they’re excellent at resisting wind, so any position in fairly fertile soil will suite. Variegated ferns do better in sun but most will tolerate dappled shade. Avoid moving a holly, and never chop one down, folklore says that this will bring about extremely bad luck.

There are two other outstanding Highclere hollies “Lawsoniana” and “Golden King” (which despite its name is female). Both produce rich bright red berries amongst lovely cream, gold and lemon variegated leaves – a real tonic on a winter’s day.

Probably the most favourite ferns of *aquifolium* are “Handsworth New Silver” and “Argentea Marginata”, growing into tall dense columns and as their names suggest, having pretty silver/cream-tipped leaves. Again both are good berry producers.

Oddly enough the variety “Golden Queen” is male so no berries but its slow habit does ensure a handsome dense variegated tree which looks stunning against blue conifers or evergreens.

The native holly “J. C. van Tol” is prickly free so is quite a quick grower, plus it’s hermaphrodite and will produce masses of deep red berries without the need of a pollinator. Unfortunately these are also popular with birds so maybe the yellow berries of “Bacciflora” may last a bit longer.

“Laurifolia Aurea” has pink berries to start with which deepen to red eventually and “Monstrosa” has most unusual twisty delicate leaves growing in all directions – another good one for a hedge but no berries unfortunately.

Lastly the variety “Pyramidalis Fructu Lutea” is worth considering. It makes a good specimen tree being upright, has lovely yellow berries against plainish deep green leaves.

Christmas isn’t Christmas without some holly somewhere. They can bring colour and cheer into the gloomy dark days, whether inside or out so:

Happy gardening & happy Christmas

Peduncle

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