

Sedgefield News

logo

By the villagers for the villagers of Sedgefield, Bradbury & Mordon
December 2003

Here we go a-carolling, upon the village green...

On Friday 19th December, to the accompaniment of Fishburn Band, once again the villagers of Sedgefield will gather on the green outside St Edmund's Church, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Singers have probably sung carols locally for 200 years and more, & the present custom has been part of our Sedgefield Churches Together agenda for 35 years.

Our carols are simply a musical form of prayer, so let us remember, especially this Christmas, the urgent need for peace in our world.

As your Ministers, we pray that all who live in this area will have a Happy Christmas in their celebration of Christ's birth.

*Revds. Martin King
John Bower
Adele Pelham
John Caden*



See the December Diary on page 11

for a whole host of festive dates - Church services, Christmas concerts, Panto and all your favourite clubs & societies, getting ready to put on the seasonal style!



Don't forget the fireworks!

Be out on the Village Green at the stroke of Midnight on the 31st, to see the New Year in , amongst friends, neighbours & people you may not have seen since this time last year!

*...and the merriest of Merry Christmases to you all,
from the team that brings you Sedgefield News*

White Tailed Sea Eagles, Sherman Traps and Shrew Poo Tubes!

Steve Ashton from Sedgefield, who works for Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, reports on his visit to Estonia this summer as a member of an international expedition. The team was made up of four teachers/educators from the UK (on fellowships from 3M Environmental Awards for teachers): 1 Australian, 2 Americans and 2 leaders from the University of Brighton.

They were working on the Baltic Island Vormsi in West Estonia, as part of an Earthwatch Baltic Island Wetlands

It was 6.30am, dew still heavy on the ground and we were off to check the small mammal traps. We had baited the Sherman traps the night before with a mixture of oats, apple and carrot and there was an expectant air - hoping we had caught something. We had 100 traps to check and reset systematically, because if one was missed and it had caught something then the animal might die. The aim of this part of the project was to monitor what small mammal species inhabited the wet grassland on the shores of the Baltic, to see how a reduction in grazing was affecting the population. My third trap...it had gone off and as I picked it up it was feeling heavy. I called Dawn, the mammal expert, over and yes, we had caught something. She was excited because it was a striped mouse - the first one this week. The rodent was processed efficiently and quickly to ensure that stress was minimal. It was weighed, measured and sexed and then given a small haircut so that we could recognise it if we caught it again! During the ten days we checked over 1000 such traps and caught a range of species including Bank Vole, Yellow Necked Mouse and even a Water Vole.

Apart from monitoring the small mammal population, we were doing vegetation surveys, identifying the plants found on the coastal grassland. Cattle from Soviet farm communes once grazed the land and as a result, they had become important meadows with high biodiversity. Since the withdrawal of these farms and a subsequent reduction in grazing, the plant population has changed and the meadows are being taken over by competitive grasses and becoming less biodiverse. The aim of this project was to produce vegetation maps of these areas, to be used by managers of the West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve

(WEABR) to target their resources. We spent most afternoons under the blazing sun identifying the plants in quadrats and noting them down: species such as Glasswort, Blue sesleria, Sea milkwort and the highlight of the trip - Fen and Military Orchid. When not working we had the opportunity to see some of the other Estonian wildlife and had excellent views of White Tailed Sea Eagles feeding in the Baltic, caught glimpses of a Corncrake and heard sounds of Cranes flying over. The final highlight was to empty the Shrew poo tubes we had set up - small tubes closed at one end and baited with a tasty mixture. The idea is that shrews visit the tubes, feed and then leave a deposit behind - from the poo it is possible to identify what species it is! Information from the project is collated back in the UK and passed on to WEABR. They use it to prioritise work done in the area.

So how does this fit into my role at Tees Valley Wildlife Trust? As part of the 3M sponsorship, on their return, fellows use their experiences in various ways. Estonia and Vormsi may be very different to say, Coatham Marsh, but they do have similar problems. How to manage a site for wildlife and people? How to graze areas to ensure the meadows stay species rich and how to encourage visitors? The Trust benefits immensely from such visits and seeing how others solve problems. Perhaps the next step is to twin Coatham Marsh in Redcar with Matsalu in Estonia! I would like to thank Earthwatch and 3M for allowing me this opportunity to see the other side of the world and to experience something I may never have had the chance to do on my own. Earthwatch Institute promotes sustainable conservation of our natural environment & cultural heritage by creating partnerships among scientists, general public, educators and businesses. In 2004 Earthwatch are repeating awards for teachers and environmental educators. More details can be obtained on 01865 318850, e-mail community@earthwatch.org.uk or on their website www.earthwatch.org

Dickensian Christmas Farmers' Market

*with carol singing, holly & mistletoe,
seasonal fare & more.*

***Sunday 14th December -
9:30am to 1:30pm***

Local traders always welcome.

Please contact Lynda Page on 621273 for details.

Ex Lyrics Youth Choir
members who would like to join in the Carol Singing at the Christmas Farmers Market would be ***more than welcome*** - we would ***love*** to see you

If you can, come to a rehearsal on Friday 12th - usual place & time.

Sedgefield Development Partnership

Directory Reminder

The deadline for all Charities, Not-for-profit Organisations & Voluntary Groups to be entered into the Sedgefield Directory is 5th December.

Phone 629011

Can You Get Bobby Charlton?

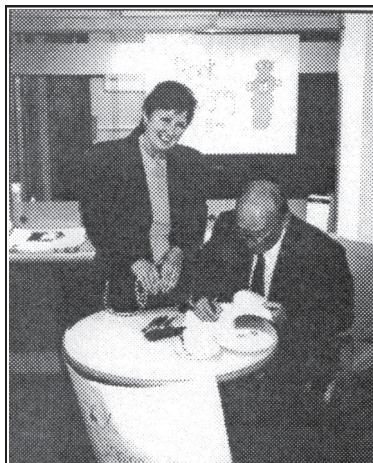
A year ago you may have been tempted to read "One Dead Ref and a Box of Kippers", the book by Sedgefield author Steven Chaytor, which traced the careers of the seventy two men born in the Sedgefield district who played League football between the war and the Millennium. Well there's a follow up book out this Christmas, which recounts the true story of the amazing India tour undertaken by Crook Town in 1976.

It involves an astonishing trip to Calcutta and Darjeeling, two World Cup stars (hence the title), six guest professionals, a World Cup referee, the Indian President, paparazzi, Indian media, crowds of 100,000, the West Bengal government, the army, the Indian national team and a journey to the top of the world – or thereabouts.

Essentially it's the story of how a team used to performing before sixty people became national celebrities for weeks, playing before massive crowds in Eden Gardens, a famous Test Cricket ground. Amazing things can happen to ordinary people and two such people were Sedgefield born and raised Gordon Jones and Graham Richardson.

"Can You Get Bobby Charlton?" is Steven's second solo outing and is available from Kipper Publications for £9.99. You can buy it from outlets in Sedgefield; branches of Ottakars and WH Smith or contact kipperpublish@aol.com or ring **621737** for details on ordering direct.

...& Hospital History launched..



Bob Abley signing the book for Rita Blakey, retired Radiographer from the old Sedgefield General

A good crowd turned up for the Community Hospital Open Day at which Bob Abley's book, "Sedgefield Hospital", was launched. Many of those present had been on the staff of the old

Community Hospital - the

General, and some were from as far back as the "Emergency" Hospital.

After an introduction from Sedgefield PCT Chief Executive Nigel Porter and a welcome from Kath Vasey, Head of Nursing, Bob Abley settled down to signing the many copies of his book which were sold that day. Copies can still be purchased from the community hospital c/o Kath Vasey.

After refreshments the visitors were invited to a guided tour of the new hospital. It was most impressive to view the equipment, which the staff of the older versions of the hospital would have given their eye-teeth to have had, viz modern, computerised X-ray, Ultra-Sound Scanner and the well-equipped Physio Department. On the sad side, it is a pity that the hospital was not built bigger - it only has 42 beds, as the need for more is being felt throughout the NHS.

Community Safety *with contributions from Neighbourhood Watch, Sedgefield Police, Road Safety Group, & the Primary Care Trust*

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch



Laying of Wreaths at the Armistice Day Parade

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2003

Minutes of Previous Meeting Approved

There were no matters arising

Treasurer's Report was provided as a separate account.

Secretaries Report gave a summary of correspondence issued and received since last meeting, amongst which was letter to Chief Constable following his talk. Also letters to John Robinson re. stall for next years Mediaeval Fayre, to Village sergeant re. use of room in police Station for NHW Exec. Meetings, and to Community Hospital re Tapes for the Blind.

Representatives Reports.

Village Constable circulated copies of "Reported Crimes in Sedgefield" (see PC Todd's column)

Crime Prevention Officer reported briefly on "Operation dark" - the initiative to reduce burglaries that increase as a result of the dark nights. He also said that anyone wishing to purchase "light timers" (£1.50 each) or energy efficient lamps should contact him, or Sarah Norman on 01325 742755. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Sarah Norman confirmed her support for the above.

Community Force Officer Tim Spearey had sent his apologies for absence. No further business. Meeting Closed

NHW Annual General Meeting

There were no changes to the Management, and as there were no nominations other than the incumbents, they were all returned unopposed. The Exec. Committee was strengthened by the addition of one new member, Phyllis Hillerby.

PC Todd reports

The Industrial Estate and Net Park have both been the target of thieves recently. Tools, computer equipment and a generator have all been stolen. Within the village itself, damage and litter in the Doctor's Surgery area is still a problem.

On a lighter note I would like to thank the local chap who came to my assistance the other day and provided me with a dog lead to remove a stubborn sheep from Durham road. This was much to the amusement of other road users - it took a lot of persuasion to coax the animal to the side of the road, where the owner eventually came to collect it!

Until next time, Keith.

Road Safety Panel

With the co-operation of the Town Council we are hoping to pursue the problem of the A689 junction, as well as other important road safety issues within the village. Watch this column.

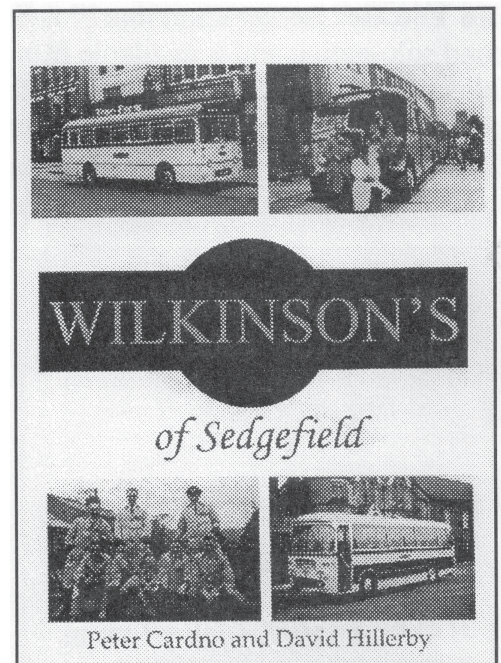
We would also like to express our thanks and appreciation to Brenda Cain who has retired from the position of the secretary of this panel.

Thank you for a job well done, Brenda!

...and while we're on the subject of roads & transport.....

"Wilkinson's of Sedgefield"

It's here - well almost! The book is at the printers. It's a bit later than expected, but we hope to launch it early in December. Watch out for notices round the village and in the local papers.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Please note that after 21st November 2003, the £5 note showing a portrait of GEORGE STEPHENSON is no longer legal tender. Any notes of this issue must be submitted to a bank for exchange.

Partnership news

Joining the dots..

Question: What do you get when you join together the Community Appraisal, the Lifelong Learning Project, a Learning Resource Centre, Sedgefield First Responders, Sedgefield News, the Organisations Directory and the Citizen of the Year award?

Answer: Sedgefield Development Partnership.

These are all projects under the umbrella of the Partnership, carried out either with partner organizations or directly.

Even more projects are in the pipeline.

New Board Members

The Partnership is run by volunteers from the community, elected by members of the community. At the Annual General Meeting held on the 18th November in Ceddesfeld Hall, the four Directors due to retire were all re-elected by the members present. Two new Directors were also elected. The Board members now are:

New Directors: Paul Elwell and Gloria Wills

Re-elected Directors: Roger Clubley, Nick Haberfield, Becky Rowe, and Dan Mold

Directors due to retire in 2004: Clare Hammond, Simon Nott, John Parkinson and John Tomlinson.

New Membership arrangements:

Membership of the Partnership is now renewable annually.

Becoming a member is the best way to make sure you have an input to the Partnership.

For details of benefits and membership charges, see next month's Sedgefield News, or call Simon on 629011.

SDP - creating wealth in your community & keeping it here

Recipe - Christmas Chutney

Ingredients for about 6lbs

2lbs tomatoes, 1 aubergine, 1 green & 3 red peppers (about 2lbs)

1.5lbs peeled & finely chopped onions

4 fat garlic cloves

12oz granulated sugar

1/2 pint white wine vinegar

1 dst spn salt

1 tsp paprika

2tsp cayenne pepper

Method Peel tomatoes by placing in boiling water for a few seconds.

Chop tomatoes, aubergine & seeded peppers and put in a large, heavy based pan with onions & crushed garlic. Bring to boil. Cover, lower heat and simmer for about an hour- stirring occasionally. Tip in sugar, vinegar, salt, paprika & cayenne & bring to boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar has dissolved. Continue to boil gently for 30 mins. or so, until surplus liquid has evaporated and mixture takes on a chunky, chutney consistency.

Ladle into clean jars & top with paper jam pot covers whilst still hot. Mature for a month - if you get the chance!

Delicious with turkey and cold meats.

Nice for a home-made Xmas present, maybe with the recipe tied to the jar.

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch Monthly Crime Figures

	Last year 10/10- 10/11	10/9 - 10/10 2003	2003 to Date
Youths causing annoyance	nil	nil	5
Burglary; non dwelling	1	4	14
Burglary; dwelling	3	nil	9
Crime; drugs	nil	nil	3
Theft from motor vehicles	2	2	6
Theft of motor vehicles	2	nil	4
Taking & driving away	nil	nil	nil
Vehicle interference	2	nil	4
Assaults	nil	nil	8
Criminal damage	nil	2	18
Theft	2	1	23
TOTAL	12	9	94

DO YOU HAVE A MOTIVE?

People volunteer for many different reasons, whether it's to gain new skills, improve their CV, make new friends or help others.

Sedgefield Borough Volunteer Bureau

holds information on
over 150 volunteering opportunities, from
Administration to Youth Work.

So, whatever your motive
come and see us at the

Main Office in Newton Aycliffe

Block 2, First Floor, St Cuthbert's House,
Mon - Thurs. 9.30am - 4.30pm

or at one of the Satellite Offices -

Spennymoor Community Learning:

Every Friday from 10am-4pm

Newton Aycliffe Learning Shop,

Aycliffe Industrial Park:

1st & 3rd Monday of each month 2pm - 4pm

If you would like to talk to someone,
but can't make these venues, please call

Sharon Vasey on 01325 313930

for an appointment to suit you.

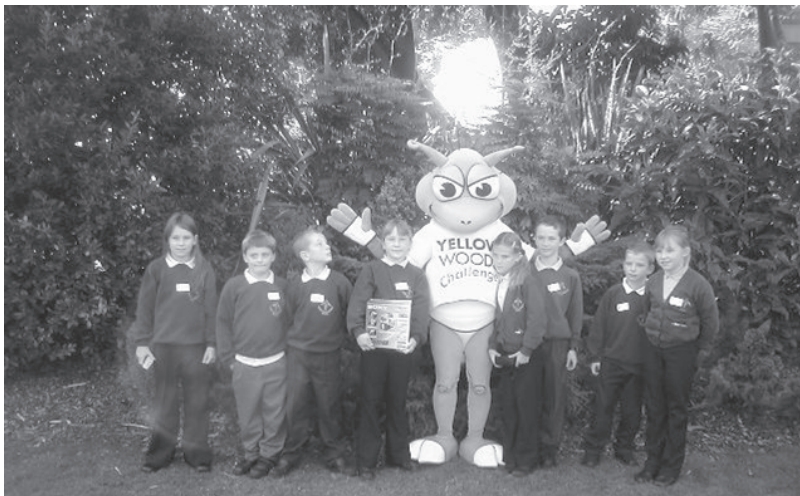
Big Green Success Stories from Sedgefield Schools

“Wallace & Grommet and the big yellow books”

Not the latest from Nick Parks, but a tale of success for the keen green pupils of Hardwick School, ten of whom made a trip to London on November 17th to receive an award from Yellow Pages (in connection with Woodland Trust). Earlier in the year, many children had been involved with collecting old Yellow Pages to recycle, and using the yellow books, the junior children made several sculptures. Photographs of the sculptures were sent in to a competition and everyone was delighted to hear

that their model of Wallace and Grommet had won second prize. Neil Buchanan from the BBC Art Attack children’s programme judged the competition. The children made the journey by train and went on to a special ceremony at London Zoo, where they were presented with a certificate, a digital video recorder and a framed photograph of woodland. They also heard that an area of woodland in Ouston, County Durham has been dedicated to the school. All the winners enjoyed a delicious meal

and were able to spend the afternoon at the zoo. It was a fantastic day! The children who remained at school didn’t miss out on the fun either; they enjoyed a show by Martin the Magician to celebrate. The Hardwick pupils were thrilled to receive such a super prize and have also learnt a lot about the importance of the recycling of paper and the protection of woodland. They will definitely be collecting old Yellow Pages again in the New Year!



It's Gymtastic!

The Community College officially opened its brand new gym on November 1st, and a pleasant workout environment has been created, with 17 stations and music channels. Money was raised through sports college status, to ensure that a facility has been created for both students and community use. It is probably one of the best in the area. With trained fitness instructors on hand to help you to set a programme suitable to your needs, you are sure to lose those few extra pounds or to regain the level of fitness you want.

Gymtastic is for anyone from the community aged 15 or above, though because of its shared use with the Community College it will be open to the community from 5:30 to 9:30 Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm at weekends. Memberships are available either monthly through standing order or on a pay as you go system.



The Sedgefield Slayers

games club was set up after the summer Bitesize sessions with Gamesworkshop, on the Lord of the Rings fantasy war game. Meeting on Sunday afternoons in the Parish Hall from 2 to 4pm, the young members do battle with the forces of the Dark Lord Sauron; Goblins, Urak Hai and the rest, as well as against imperial high elves from War-hammer 40K.

The games use a wide range of skills like modelling, painting, & strategy, even languages. The club has visited the Gamesworkshop to learn how to model trees, walls and rock formations. The club is part of a large network of clubs based on fantasy Wargaming.

More Magic at Community College - our Top Green School!



Martin the Magician, whose show has been a reward for the environmentally aware pupils of both school & college

Magic was in store for pupils at Sedgefield Community College, when they won **two** top awards in the Clean School Challenge competition 2003 which was organised by Sedgefield Borough Council's Local Agenda 21 Team. Magician, Martin Duffy brought "magic with a message" to pupils who were treated to his acclaimed Environmental Magic Show.

Featuring a live magic rabbit, and lots of good clean fun, his show encouraged pupils to think about waste reduction, biodiversity, energy conservation and other environmental issues whilst being entertained – magic! In a scene about recycling aluminium they witnessed an empty flattened pop can magically reform, reseal and refill itself

The show served as a warm up to the main business of the day - the presentation of the prestigious Clean School Challenge Awards for "Cleanest School in

Sedgefield Borough 2003".

As first prize winners in the secondary school category, pupils received a "School Grounds Makeover" worth over £2,000, *plus* £400 to spend on materials, from the Local Agenda 21 & Countryside Teams and a Leisure Services Arts Development grant. What's more, the college has outshone other secondary schools and gained the award for "Most Improved Secondary School", winning £200 cash to spend on a sustainability project.

Judges were enthusiastic about the college's sparkling performance in terms of caring for the environment, ensuring it is litter-free, and so improving it for wildlife, recreation and learning. Pupils and staff carry out many environmental and sustainability initiatives and have achieved international "Eco School Green Flag" status. The recognition of their achievements must go a long way towards encouraging pupils to continue to think imaginatively around these vital issues. They deserve the whole community's congratulations and support.

The Clean School Challenge is an annual competition open to all schools in the Borough. Almost three quarters of all schools in the Borough will take part in the new round of the competition that will run between October 2003 and July 2004. Participating schools have the chance to win prizes including trips away, cash towards sustainability or environmental projects and school grounds improvements.

Witches & Wizards, nil : Humans, 500!

Adults at the Halloween event in Hardwick Park were so well protected by children of all ages that not one was turned into a frog or a spider! The witches & wizards have gone back to their towers and caves with a warning that they could be looking for a new manager.

The evening was thick with bats, (though all tethered and cut from card with great care & concentration) and similar care had been taken by countryside staff with their display of pumpkin lanterns. Badge making proved so popular it's a wonder neither the machine nor its attendants melted, and candlelight brought enchantment to the serpentine lake as dozens of colourful craft were set afloat and born along bearing a steady candle flame, by the gentlest of breezes.

The apple bobbing challenge attracted a good many participants who afforded much entertainment to onlookers - thankfully they all left with the same number of teeth they had arrived with - and the storyteller added enchantment to the evening air. Lots of children entered the fancy dress competition, in a scary array of masks, claws and witches with broomsticks. It was so much fun that Countryside staff are already looking forward to next year's event but for now they would like to thank all who helped publicise the event, especially Sedgefield News. Finally, do please check out the Diary Page for our December event. You wouldn't want to miss it! *Richard; Voluntary Countryside Ranger, Hardwick Park.*



Twinning - A Musical Interlude

Anyone in or around Ceddesfeld Hall on the evening of October 21st must have been aware that some brilliant musicians were visiting Sedgefield. In fact they were witnessing the impromptu farewell evening for two male voice choirs from Brünen and Mehrhoog and a brass band from Loikum - villages which form part of our twin community of Hamminkeln in Germany. 70 musicians and supporters had arrived in Sedgefield at 2.30pm on October 18th, having travelled overnight from Germany and settled into accommodation at Ushaw College, Durham. They were welcomed with refreshments provided by the Lyric Singers and had a chance to relax before going to St Edmund's to set the stage for that evening's concert. There was time for a guided walk round Sedgefield before returning to church for a "warm-up". The concert was well attended and of excellent quality with a wide range of musical styles. Afterwards, Sedgefield Twinning Association hosted a meal for the guests in the Parish Hall, and a very enjoyable evening was had by all, particularly when they burst into song again. Their repertoire included well-known English folksongs, so everyone could join in. After relaxing on Sunday morning they returned to Sedgefield to "warm up" for an ecumenical service held in their honour. All the Sedgefield churches were represented and particular thanks must go to Rev. Martin King and Rev. Adèle Kelham, who devised the bilingual service and preached the sermon in German. Again, the music was excellent and after refreshments the musicians split up into groups to visit various Sedgefield hostelrys, providing musical entertainment wherever they went.

Monday was a day off, for a trip first to York and then over the moors to Whitby. By the time they got there it was nearly dark, but they were keen to experience as much as they could in a short visit! On Tuesday, Allan Fenwick, Chairman of Durham County Council, welcomed them to a reception at



County Hall, before they moved on to the Cathedral to give another short concert. Then to Durham Market Place, where the Brass Band played for an hour, but they didn't want to leave without a last get-together, so it was back to Ceddesfeld Hall for that rousing finale!

For most of the group it was their first visit to Sedgefield. We hope it won't be the last, so it's good to report that they were very impressed by the friendliness of our villagers and the warmth of their welcome.

Also, we hope more Sedgefield people will want to visit Germany and experience for themselves the amazing bond of friendship that has developed over the years. Whenever we go to Hamminkeln we receive star treatment, so we were glad to be able to reciprocate. For more information about Twinning, talk to any committee member or call Keith or Nancy Wells on 620467.

Sedgefield Social Club

Draught and Cask Condition Ales

**Excellent Entertainment for
Christmas and New Years Eve**

Enjoy the festive season at your
recently refurbished
Social Club

MORDON VILLAGE HALL

**Winter Birthday? Here's the perfect solution for
your child's Party.....**

The hall has space for up to 50 children,
ideal for games, dancing & play.

Fully equipped kitchen; easy access (no steps)
and parking on the village green

Fees from only £12.50 per hour
Music and Disco Facilities (at extra fee)

**For further details or to make your booking call
Fiona on 01740 620634**

Changes at Lifelong Learning project

Life within the Lifelong Learning project has changed on a daily basis this last month. When the project began, its aim was to identify learning needs and as a result, facilitate and co-ordinate learning opportunities within Sedgefield, Bradbury and Mordon. The work was soon to justify the need for such a project.

Recent cooperation between our project and Durham County Council's Adult & Community Learning has led to the creation of a full time Adult and Community Learning based at Sedgefield Community College. Bob Harris has been appointed to the post and although he is no longer employed by SDP's Lifelong Learning project, he will work closely with us.

We feel that to have identified a need which is now provided for by the Local Authority, should be seen as a successful outcome for the project so far.

So what now for our Lifelong Learning project? The plan for the coming months was to provide a set of computers and internet access for groups or 'one to one' use, for both informal and accredited learning. However, it has been put on hold because the Town Council has informed us that space within the Advice & Information Centre can no longer be used for learning.

So if you are one of our learners waiting for the computer courses provided by East Durham & Houghall College to re-start, there will be a delay whilst we seek alternative accommodation.

We are actively looking for other premises and hope to have something to report next month. We also expect to appoint someone to work in partnership with Bob in his new role.

We continually update our database of people interested in learning - anything from 2 hour

taster sessions to 10 week or year long courses. Subjects provided to date include languages, computer training, aromatherapy, art, golf and a young people's fantasy gaming club.

If you would like any information on learning opportunities or would like to be added to our database as a potential learner or tutor, please contact Simon on 629011.

December DIARY

Announcements on this page are **free**
to non-commercial organisations.
Advertising rates apply to others

Local church services over Christmas

Friday 19th 6.15pm Carols on the Green

Bradbury Methodist Church

Sunday 21st 10am Service

Sedgefield Methodist Church

Friday 12th 7pm Civic Carol Service

Sunday 21st 10am Junior Church Carol Service
and 6pm Carol Service

Sedgefield, St John Fisher

Sunday 21st Advent 4 10.30am and 6pm Mass

Christmas Eve 10am Mass, with confession afterwards

7.30pm Christmas Carols & 8pm Christmas Vigil Mass

Christmas Day 9am and 10.30am Mass (no Evening Mass)

Friday 26th 10am Mass

Sedgefield, St Edmund's

Sunday 21st 10.45am Nine Lessons & Carols
& 4pm Christingle

Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

Christmas Day 8am Holy Communion

& 10.45am Short Family Service followed by Holy
Communion. As usual, children may bring a favourite
toy and leave after about 20 minutes.

Sedgefield Racecourse

Racing fixtures for the month are
December 9th - 1st race 12.50pm
& Boxing Day - 1st race at 1pm

Sedgefield Family History Group

Monday 15th December

at 7.45pm at Ceddesfeld Hall

"A Victorian Christmas"

followed by mulled wine & mince pies
New members always welcome

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club

Members' Night

Tuesday 16th December at 7.30pm

in the Parish Hall *All welcome*

W.I. Market - Winter Dates

We are open on Friday 5th December,
closed December 12th, open again on
December 19th then closed until
the first Friday in February 2004

Local History Society

Monday December 1st

at 7.45 pm in Ceddesfeld Hall

Durham Historian & Archivist

David Butler will talk about

Guests of Queen Victoria

Further details from

Judith Edgoose on 620244

Guests and new members welcome

Sedgefield Garden Society Christmas Party

a Faith Supper with entertainment

on Tuesday 2nd December

at 7.30pm in Ceddesfeld Hall

*Come and enjoy a glass of
mulled wine & a mince pie*

Sedgefield W.I.

Peter Barron, on

"Dad at Large"

at 7.15pm in the Parish Hall on

Wednesday December 3rd

Competition for members -

A Humorous Newspaper Cutting

Visitors Welcome: Entrance £1

Sedgefield Lyric Singers & Youth Choir

wish you all

"A Merry Christmas in Song"

in the Parish Hall at 7.30pm on

Friday 5th & Saturday 6th Dec

Tickets £4 or £3 concessions from
'Selections' or

Audrey Lofthouse, tel: 620625

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch

The next meeting will be held on

Tuesday 9th December at 7pm

in the Fletcher Room,

Parish Hall

Everyone welcome!

Clubbers' Ball

for young people aged 11 - 17

in the back room of **The Hope Inn**

on December 22nd

Ticket Only Event

organised by Durham County

Youth work team

Call Bob Harris, on 621097

Sedgefield Players

present

their Christmas Panto -

Jack and the Bean Stalk
by John Morley

in the Parish Hall at 7pm

Tues to Fri 27th to 30th Dec

plus 2pm matinee on Thurs 28th

Tickets £5 Concessions £4.50

from Selections, members
or ring 620091

Make it a Countryside Christmas

with the

Durham Countryside Rangers
on

Saturday 13th December
at Broompark Picnic Site

half mile from Stonebridge
on the B6302 to Ushaw Moor -
(it will be well signposted)

Contact the rangers in the park, or
see the Guided Walk leaflet
available from your library.

Your Letters

Tales from Old Beacon Lane

The letters in the November issue on road safety management make interesting reading; we are all concerned about such matters; even more so when one hears on the grape vine that the only way a roundabout or traffic lights will be provided is if there is a large housing development built there. Sounds a bit like blackmail to me – what price people's lives?

The story following also involves County Highways Department. One day in August I took my usual walk along Old Beacon Lane and met a young lady with a magnificent grey horse and large horsebox (not a gypsy or traveller). She asked if she was in the Beacon Lane, as she was waiting to meet people from the County Highways Dept. She explained that the British Horse Society wanted an underpass on the A689 to enable riders to cross safely to cycle paths and bridle-ways (not a snowballs chance in h--- I thought). But County Highways were going to show that it was safe to cross at the wooden 'coral' crossing, by making a video of a horse using it.

The young lady found it difficult to understand why she had to bring the horse all the way from Preston (Lancs) on such a hot day, when there were surely plenty of horses locally. I asked if she would be riding the horse; she said no, but she knew the person who was going to ride him, could ride adequately as they had already been to Preston for a riding lesson. So it seems that County Highways had sent someone to Preston for a riding lesson and had transported a horse from Preston to Sedgefield to make a video of it safely crossing the A689.

"I don't believe it" you may say,

and if someone had just told me the tale I might feel the same, but I did get the story from the horse's mouth, so to speak! To be on the safe side I asked a Borough Councillor to check it out and in particular to find out how much this exercise cost and who paid for it. The Councillor verified that it had indeed happened and he requested a report for County Highways. On further enquiry, he still awaits the report 3 months later. Can anyone else provide answers? Are we tax payers paying for such exploits?

Julia Bowles

It may be cold outside but...

Once again the dark nights are here and soon the cold will be felt by the elderly and vulnerable.

If like me, you can't stand the cold, but being on a pension, have to be careful with the gas & electric, you might like to benefit from an experience of mine.

At an exhibition held recently at County Hall, I was made aware of a scheme called Staywarm, which is only available to the over 60's. It lets you use as much electricity and gas as you want, and in return, you sign up to a fixed payment, weekly, fortnightly or monthly, for the year. Payment can be made by cheque, cash or Direct Debit.

Staywarm - no frills, no bills, no worries.

For details phone 08001 694694

Ken Saiger

For inclusion in the January issue, send copy before December 10th please to

snews.sdp@sedgefield.net

or to Sedgefield News,

Advice and Information Centre, Front St, Sedgefield, TS21 3AS,

or telephone 629011

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher.

St. William's School

I feel compelled to write to air a personal grievance re the Town Council's discrimination of St. William's R.C.V.A. Primary School, Trimdon. About one third of our pupils live in or near Sedgefield, so imagine how galling it is to see the Mayor of Sedgefield, Councillor Maddison, beaming out from the pages of the Northern Echo surrounded by pupils at Rectory Row school, many of whom are friends of our pupils. The Council has promoted an anti-litter poster competition in the village's two primary schools but no mention is made of St. William's. Sedgefield parents, who make a conscious decision to have their children educated in a faith school, do not waive their right to be considered as Sedgefield villagers by making that choice. Being excluded alienates a whole tranche of youngsters who live in here.

In recent years, St. William's has been in the Mediaeval Fayre float procession, had a charity stall and taken part in the annual tub planting on the village green (best tub this year!) Though invited to take part in the lantern-making session on Nov 1st, yet again, our school's name did not appear in the article advertising the event in your magazine.

Neighbourhood Watch's Young Citizen Awards ignore St. William's too. It seems that if the Town Council wants something doing they are happy to accommodate us. Other-wise, we seem to be regarded as second class citizens. Chairman of our Governors, Father Caden MBE, has had a long and distinguished presence here, serving for almost four decades in education, health, twinning and community association matters, as well as its spiritual needs. It is insulting to him to treat our pupils so shabbily, by failing to acknowledge the part they might play in looking after our village. They live in Sedgefield too. Town Council, please include St. William's in next year's events calendar. This is 2003, not the Dark Ages! *Name & address supplied*

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