



Sedgefield NEWS

February 2014

Text/call 07572 502 904 :

email sedgefieldnews@hotmail.com

Our skies at night

We rushed out one night in mid January, hoping to see the Aurora Borealis, as hinted at in the weather forecast! It didn't happen this time but some of us were lucky enough to see something like this below ...

Many thanks to the kind and very informative astronomer who let us gaze at Jupiter through his telescope, inspiring a love of stargazing in one little girl!



But oh dear! Scientists are telling us that solar activity is on the wane and, as a result, the chances of seeing the Aurora Borealis in these parts will be very rare during the next 40 years! I suspect this won't have been our last rush to darker skies this winter!

Photo: astronomycentral.co.uk



Marc Wilson, winner of the Gerry Kearsley Memorial Trophy. Full report on page 11

Citizen of the Year 2013

The time has come to remember the extraordinary service that some of our fellow citizens willingly give to this community, and it is the start of a new era; this year the award will be presented at the Town Meeting in May rather than in December.

The Citizen of the Year award is made for 'exceptional contributions to Sedgefield', mainly focussing on the year just ended. If you think one of your friends or acquaintances deserves to be considered, please complete the nomination form that you will find inside this paper.

Lower energy bills - worth a little bit of effort!

I have been contacted by a number people interested in lower bills if Sedgefield Development Trust's collective purchasing project were to get off the ground, and that's great! But so far, no-one has shown any interest in helping us, and I'm afraid that unless that changes, the plan is unlikely to come to fruition. Other communities will have been able to give their residents access to cheaper gas and electricity bills, but we will not; a good idea will bite the dust.

Our projects (Sedgefield News, SedgefieldWeb, Days In Days Out) and those we are in partnership with others to run (the Farmers' Market, the Citizen of the Year Award) are much appreciated, but they do take up all the time that our current trustees and volunteers can give; in some cases, more than they can truly afford to give.

If we want these energy savings, it is up to us to make it happen, and just a few more people on board would make all the difference.

The process can be split into quite small tasks; possibly new people could give a hand with current projects, freeing others up to tackle the new one. We can do this but it is much more likely to succeed if the effort is shared.

Our AGM is coming up (the notice is below.) We would really love to see you there with your ideas and volunteering zeal! If are interested in our work, but can't make it to the AGM, please give me a ring.

Roger Clubley, Chairman, Sedgefield Development Trust. 01740 620609.

Sedgefield Development Trust Limited Notice of Annual General Meeting

This is to give notice that Sedgefield Development Trust Limited will hold its Annual General Meeting on Monday 10th February 2014 at 7.45 pm, in the Boardroom of the Parish Hall. The business part of the meeting will be short, leaving plenty of time for discussion afterwards.

This AGM is an open, public meeting. SDT is owned and controlled by the community. Any special or general resolutions proposed must be with the Company at its registered office, 7 Melgrove Way, Sedgefield, TS21 2JN, no later than 12 noon on Friday 7th February 2014.

All nominations for Directors must be with the Company Secretary by latest, noon Friday 7th February 2014.

Sedgefield Development Trust is a company limited by guarantee; Company Number: 4312745 and a registered charity, Charity Number: 1100806

"Sedgefield Convenience"

New store now **OPEN** on the corner of White House Drive

A new Off Licence & Grocery replaced our 'Sainsbury's Local' early in January but without a new frontage, people may not have realised it was open. New signs will be up this month.

Support needed for Sedgefield Scouts

Scouting in Sedgefield is so popular that the leaders are looking for help to provide greater activities for young people. Nationally, Scouting has over 30,000 youngsters waiting to join the movement and Sedgefield is no exception. 1st Sedgefield Scout Group has been in existence for nearly 50 years and is looking to expand its headquarters.

At the same time, they need additional adults to support the current team of experienced leaders. Geoff Tonks leads the Group and told us that he has an experienced team but they could do with some support to provide even more adventurous and challenging experiences. Ian Johnson is supporting Geoff to find the extra help. He stresses that volunteering can be flexible, that volunteers are well supported and that the volunteers seem to have much fun as the young people.

You can find out more from Ian Johnson on **0845 0944 084** or at the website: sedgefield@durhamscouts.org.uk

Christmas fun thanks to College youngsters

As part of a lunchtime enrichment club, seven Sedgefield Community College students from years 9 to 11 approached Keyfund, a Newcastle based charity, to support a community Christmas tea party that they wanted to hold at Homebryth House in Sedgefield. The students worked hard to ensure their presentation to Keyfund was of the highest quality, and even filmed themselves delivering the presentation so that in the event of one of their group being unable to attend, they could still go ahead with their funding bid. Community spirit shone through and they were granted the money, allowing the students to go ahead and organise the entire event, right down to the those important features that are needed at any Christmas party - mince pies and Santa hats! A fantastic time was had and all the residents received a personal Christmas message from one of the students. Residents who was unable to come to the lounge had their tea personally delivered to their room, so as not to miss out on the party.

Local nursery celebrates OFSTED success

Congratulations to everyone at Cherry Tree Children's Nursery in Sedgefield, whose efforts have been rewarded by an all round Outstanding after their recent OFSTED inspection - a major accolade and something of a rarity.

Christmas Trees, Robins, Snowmen, Puddings...

Not a seasonal lapse by the editor, but Sedgefield Sainsbury's team beginning their community work for 2014 by providing Trimdon Village Hall with a selection of colourful decorations which had been hung over the store's shop-floor at Christmas.

As well as being a delight for Trimdon, their donation helps Sainsbury's to maintain its commitment to 'No Waste to Landfill'. Zero waste to landfill was achieved at all stores in 2013.

Customers can recycle batteries, mixed paper and card, mixed cans, mixed glass and plastics throughout 2014 at the store's recycling centre, which complements existing kerbside collections. They can also support Oxfam by recycling clothing, DVDs and books at the recycling centre.

The Sedgefield Plan

I hope that you have completed and returned your comments in the Sedgefield Plan Community Survey that you received in January or online. The project is making very good progress and if you have not already done so, I urge you to visit our website, www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk. It is full of useful information such as meeting dates, events and a document database. We now move into the next and difficult phase which is to write the first draft of the plan, for which we would welcome as much input as possible. If there are writers with technical knowledge of planning in the community we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in engaging young people in the project so please get in touch. It's your future.

David Bowles OBE, Chairman, Steering Group

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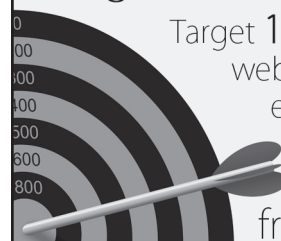
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A touch of 'Open All Hours' style!

Help us keep up the gold standard!

The Bloomers are on the lookout for a bike like this, though probably not as smart! We want to fill the basket with plants, paint the frame with the Sedgefield in Bloom name and 'park' it at the back corner of the Malton Terrace Herb Garden.

If you have an old bike, maybe in need of some TLC, and you would like to donate it to the Blooming cause, please give me a ring on 01740-620091 or email norma@neal.myzen.co.uk.

BodyLanguage

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Cricket Club Xmas Talent Show

Match report by Alexander Chaytor

House lights out, spotlight on, Carl Orff's rousing Oh Fortuna brings the audience to attention, and we're off! The first act on stage is The Look of Love by ABC, performed by members of the committee. Oh boy, did they have the look - just like the original and sounded brilliant too! Dance moves were tight, although someone was heard to say the "you have the look" move looked like a ship's crewman in the crow's nest in the dead of night scanning the horizon left to right on the lookout for icebergs. No icebergs here thank goodness and the ship was not about to sink. Quite the opposite - we were to stay afloat all night. The party had just begun.

The stats: kick off 7.45pm, finish about 12.30. 19 artists performed 18 spots. 31 tracks played and 5 newcomers in the line up.

Newcomers have been encouraged over the last 13 years - it's what keeps the show fresh, so where to start? Who can be singled out for a mention? The regulars were all there; Andrew Watson performed "That's what makes you beautiful" by One Direction; 5 boys in that band but that made no difference to Andrew. He completely owned the stage and filled out the performance in his usual style. 75 years young and Ella Thompson was there, performing Wouldn't it be Lovely from My Fair Lady. Full costume, basket and flowers, confidence and simply delightful.

We had Rappers Delight - eventually! We thought he had left the building but later on someone entered the building and it was Elvis, complete with Dodgy sideburns. All great stuff!

Who were the two dusty old men? Why had they been locked in a wardrobe since 1975 and what were they singing? Answers on a postcard please!

During the interval there was a rapturous 70th birthday song, but the gentleman not best pleased, remonstrating that youth was on his side. Sincerest apologies to him.

Anthony Kelly directly from the cruise ships performed late in the evening and was the crowd warmer for the grand finale that was to come - a medley by The Bee Gees performed by committee members. As ever they looked the part and 30 seconds into the medley everyone was up dancing, finishing the night off in a grand style.

A huge thanks to everyone who performed, and special thanks to Davie Pratt who supplied us with sound and lights.

Once again the committee resigned immediately after the show, showing signs of stress but after the usual debrief and particularly after finalising the charitable account it was agreed the show was a huge success and they reinstated themselves! You must stay calm gentleman - everything is generally alright on the night.

Two charities benefited this year, £255 to Cancer Research UK & £250 to the Great North Air Ambulance.

From the feedback received it would seem that this year was amongst the most successful to date thus making it more difficult for the organising committee to improve the show next year

Will it happen again next year? Of course it will. Will it be better? Let's wait and see.

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crime Watch Panel



At the Christmas meeting, Tuesday 3rd December, 2013 Police Community Liaison Officer Neil Langthorne informed members and residents that whilst there had been a slight rise in crime across the Aycliffe/Sedgefield/Trimdons policing area, this was predominantly Shop Lifting and Garage Drive-Offs (stealing fuel); unfortunately Sedgefield was the victim of most store thefts (then), one actually occurring 30mins before our meeting commenced!

PCSO Gavin Rutter reported on crimes occurring in the village over the previous 4 weeks – 10 in all reported, comprising thefts, abuse, attempted burglary and shop-lifting. There were also 7 reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour in those 4 weeks.

Tim Spearey for DCC Neighbourhood Wardens reported on 6 issues at Wykes Close related to nuisance and ASB, also fly tipping, and dog fouling (Kerr Crescent). Tim also reported of the littering issue outside the Black Lion and of ongoing activities to monitor this with a view to getting the problem resolved once and for all. Tim was asked by Alan Greener, from the Winterton estate, to follow up loose dog problems there; Chairman Ken Saiger asked for more efforts to be made by DCC against Fly Tipping.

The major issue from residents however was in regard to continued nuisance and not some little fear from mainly youth lead anti-social behaviour that occurs at weekend nights in the Wykes Close and Eden Drive areas; especially concerning is the number of persons involved. Chairman Ken Saiger asked Police to look into this, as things seem to be getting worse for residents. Gavin agreed to do so.

Chairman's Award 2013: Ken Saiger took Executive Member Alan Greener completely by surprise when he asked him to accept this award, made for all the work that Alan has carried out selflessly in the Winterton area, and for the drive and enthusiasm he displayed with his petition for crossings on the B1278 and at Salter's Lane, again for the benefit of others (the elderly and the young – school children) which sadly was not actioned or supported by DCC.

Meeting closed at 7.40pm with PACT priorities following & then a pleasant chat amongst all present, with a bit of Festive Cheer and a bite to eat; finally Chairman Ken Saiger wished everyone a safe, secure and pleasant Christmas and the best of health for 2014.

Next Meeting: 11th February, 7pm in the Fletcher Room, Parish Hall.

PC Todd

The start of the new year has brought a mixed bag of crimes committed in the village so far, with lead flashing stolen from the bay window of a house in Cragside and wheel trims taken from vehicles in Beacon Avenue and The Lane. Also a mobile phone was taken from a shop in Front Street whilst the member of staff was distracted; attempted theft of diesel from a factory unit on the industrial estate and money taken from a meter in the Hardwick country park. Sadly, a male remains seriously ill in hospital after an incident outside the Black Lion over the holidays. We are keen to speak with anyone who witnessed this incident and urge you to contact the police.

Pub Watch

A meeting was held recently at the Black Lion. Only one incident was discussed (as above) while we wait for the completion of the police investigation.

P.A.C.T. meeting

A meeting was held after a Neighbourhood watch meeting recently. It was agreed that the pact priority this month would remain the same i.e. Eden Drive and the duck pond area. A bit of respect for the residents please. *Until next time, Keith*

Sedgefield Residents' Forum Jottings from January 2014

The meeting reviewed the previous minutes and received some updates on issues although again none from County Councillors.

A report was given on the meeting held with Hardwick Hall re the next Hardwick Live event and noise issues. Suggestions to help resolve noise disturbance to some residents were put forward and we await information from Hardwick Hall as to the content of any further licence application.

There is still much anger from residents about the unnecessary new 'agricultural' entrance to East Park and associated costs. Further questions were asked regarding the legality of yellow lines and no parking being introduced to that entrance. We await a reply to the questions. (Since our enquiry the yellow lines and no parking sign have been removed – more expense on an unnecessary entrance).

A funding application has been submitted to enable the village to have its own speed monitoring sign which can be moved to different location in the village. This will hopefully cut down on speeding.

The Development Trust are taking forward the suggestion to establish a scheme whereby residents can come together to get cheaper gas and electricity tariffs – watch out for information and opportunity to sign up.

It was good to hear that many Sedgefield Groups had received funding from the AAP, well done to all.

In regard to the village Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) and the County Durham Plan (CDP) – the Forum contacted central government regarding the dilemma of our NHP having to comply with what the CDP says we should have by way of further development in the village; Government department advises the Forum that when the CDP goes before an Inspector is the time for us to make our final objections to the CDP if we have any. We are aware that many communities across the County are far from happy with the content of the CDP so there will be interesting times ahead. Obviously the results of the NHP questionnaire will clearly show the views of our residents.

There has been a varied response to the fact that there were no fireworks on the green on New Years Eve (hopefully there will be as much interest in the NHP as there has been on the lack of fireworks). A sensible suggestion seems to be for those who want them to organise a collection, maybe the pubs making a contribution to cover the cost of fireworks, insurance and marshalling. However, there will always be varied views on the impact of fireworks as well as the costs. Anyone interested in raising funds for next year can contact the Town Council.

The next Forum meeting will be on March 3rd, 7pm, Fletcher Room, Parish Hall. At that meeting we will have to discuss how it intends to respond to the Inspector in regard to the County Durham Plan so why not come along and give your views.

YOUR CHOICE?



sedgefieldweb.co.uk

On advertising

Bit of a cheeky message (above) from our website designer & manager! He didn't really expect me to use this particular ad, but guess what...

Sedgefield News can take it on the chin!

And, of course, he is right. Some business people don't seem to realise how different media catch different customers. Online is a whole new market and our website reaches out to people beyond the village. If you haven't tried online advertising, why not give it a go?

You'll never know if you don't try.

The Editor, Sedgefield News

More Letters

Stolen Flag disgrace

Sedgefield Village Veterans have been flying the Flag in Sedgefield without any problems for over 3 years, then along comes a low life and steals it (that was on 20th December). Perhaps their conscience was pricked or a relative or friend noticed what they had done and forced them to return it, which they did. Perhaps it was the same person who tried again on Friday 10th January, without success. Were you disturbed, I wonder?

Well, just to let you know, we and our friends will be watching for you.

We fly the Flag because we are proud to be British; to honour the Queen; to show respect to our Armed Forces and to honour the dead of all wars.

We had assumed that everyone shared our reasons, but were obviously mistaken. Some day, low life, your views may change, but I hope you are caught before then! *David Hillerby*

Please remember that when you write to Sedgefield News you must include a name and address. It is a great pity when we receive an interesting letter without contact details and are unable to print it. We will label it 'name & address supplied' if you do not want your name published. Editor

Diane Carr

B.Sc. (Hons). S.R.Ch., M.Ch.S.
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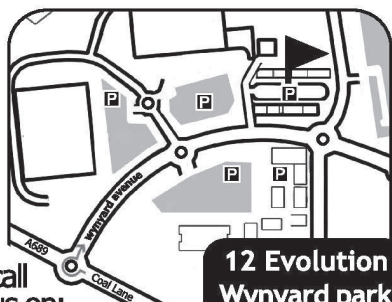
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Useful phone numbers

LOCAL POLICE 101

CPO Duncan Gill, 01325 742714

Community Liaison Officer Neil Langthorne, 01325 742755

Parking Shop, 0191 3846633

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Monday - Friday, 10am - 4pm 08444 111 444

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February Events Diary

Saturday 1st

Cricket Club Quiz Night presented by Chris Hancock. 8 pm start

Sunday 2nd

Sedgefield Farmers' Market from 9.30am on the Village Green

Monday 3rd

Local History Society Ceddesfeld Hall at 7.45pm. A.G.M. Don't flog it!

Sedgefield Methodist Wives & Friends Dorothy's Well project, Tanzania - and on Monday 17th: MWIB Charity: Dalit Women in India

Tuesday 4th

Chair-based Exercise Class Parish Hall 11am.

Wednesday 5th

Sedgefield WI 96th Birthday Dinner at Hardwick Hall

Friday 7th

Sedgefield Village Veterans Coffee Morning, Parish Hall, 10am. All welcome.

Sedgefield & District U3A 2pm, Parish Hall. 'The Life and Music of Cole Porter' by George Hetherington. Members free. Guests £3 at the door. For info call 629574

Monday 10th

Meditation Group St Edmund's Church. 7 - 7.30pm. All welcome.

Sedgefield Village Veterans AGM 7pm Ceddesfeld Hall. Contact 01429 882571

Tuesday 11th

Neighbourhood Watch Panel Meeting 7 pm Fletcher Room. All Welcome

Ladies' Club Darlington Covered Market. Talk by Chris Lloyd, Northern Echo
plus Ladies' Club AGM Tuesday 25th. Cheese & biscuits

Friday 14th

Live Music Night 7.45 pm at Sedgefield Cricket Club. Main guest - Flossie with Paul Donnelly. Also featuring Izzy Burns Band and John Wrightson Band. Admission £10, inc buffet. Tel 621347

Saturday 15th

Sedgefield Village Veterans Valentine's 1960's dance, Parish Hall, 7.30pm. Pie & peas, disco & singer. Bar. Fancy dress optional. All welcome. Tickets £8 from the Town Council, online at www.sedgefieldvillageveterans.co.uk. Enquiries 01429 882571

Sedgefield Family History Group (branch of Cleveland FHS). Ceddesfeld Hall 7.45pm. "Isaac's Tea Trail - North Pennines Heritage" by Roger Morris. For more info, go to www.sedgefieldfamilyhistory.org.uk or call 620367. Visitors always welcome

Tuesday 18th

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club Parish Hall at 7.30pm. Marjorie Moore from Ponteland on "Floral Finery".

Wednesday 19th

Folk: Kieran Halpin with Jimmy Smith: 8pm at Bishop Auckland Town Hall. Great songs, great singing and great stories

Friday 21st

Sedgefield in Bloom Coffee morning, Parish Hall, 10-11.30am Home baked cakes, book stall, gifts, crafts, raffle, tombola

Sunday 23rd

Snowdrop Walk Child Bereavement UK hold their annual walk and snowdrop planting in the beautiful surroundings of Hardwick Park. A special day set aside to remember babies and children who have died. Snowdrops will be available to purchase and volunteers on hand to help with planting.

Friday 28th

Macmillan Coffee Morning. 9.30am---11.30am in the Parish Hall. Come and join friends for coffee/ tea/scones and enjoy the company

Looking Ahead to March ...

Mayor's Annual Dinner & Dance Hardwick Hall Hotel, **Friday 7th March.** 4 course meal & dancing to live band, Audiocover. Tickets £28 from Town Council Office, telephone 01740 621273.

Regular meetings

New Generation Church

Service on Sundays, 11am, Parish Hall

NECP Concertina Workshop

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday at 1pm in Ceddesfeld Hall. Contact 01642 588197

Eddies@4

4pm, Welcome Room, St Edmund's. Informal service for 2-6 yr olds. 621125

Winterton Wayfarers

Walking Group - Weekly Sunday walks, 5 - 10 miles. Contact 620034 or 620434

Bridge Club

Sunday & Tuesday, 7.30pm, Ceddesfeld Hall. Beginners welcome. Jen 620434

Sedgefield Players

Parish Hall, 7.30pm Sundays & Weds. SPYS: 7-17 yrs Sunday 6.30pm. 620091

Sedgefield Playgroup

Methodist Church, Mon-Thurs 9:15-11:45. Spaces for 2+yrs. Call 620923

Fishburn Art Group

Youth & Community Centre, Butterwick Rd. 9.30am -12 noon, Mondays

Community College Bowls

Mons 6-8pm. Carpet Bowls/Short Mat Individual coaching. No age limit. 623198

Sedgefield Mags

1st Monday of month in Nag's head at 8pm. Contact 07966029434

Chair based exercise

for flexibility & independence; posture, muscles, joints, Tues 11am Parish Hall

Sedgefield Carpet Bowls

Ceddesfeld Hall. Tues & Thurs mornings 8.30-12 Beginners welcome. 622532

Sedgefield Pop In Club

for elderly & disabled. Ceddesfeld Hall Tues 9.30-12 Wed 10-12.30 Thur 1-3.30

Craft Club

Swinhoe Rm, Ceddesfeld Hall, 2nd/4th Tues 7.30-10pm. 620656. All welcome

CAB Advice Sessions

Sedgefield Advice & Information Centre Fortnightly Wednesdays 10am-1pm

Toddler Club

Wednesday term time 1.15 to 3pm, Ceddesfeld Hall. Joan Brennan, 622385.

Sedgefield Handbell Ringers

Wed 7.45pm Ceddesfeld Hall (Mon1st wk of m'th) Beginners welcome 621292

Rotary Club of Sedgefield

Wednesdays, 7.30pm. Contacts, Bob, 07831270892 - Mel, 07530315331

Sedgefield Acoustic Evenings.

Ceddesfeld Hall, 8.30pm 1st Fri & 4th Wed. Informal singaround, all welcome.

Round Table

1st, 3rd & 5th Thursdays. New members welcome. Contact Carl on 07775644598

Ceddesfeld Hall Art Group

Small friendly group 10am -12 Thursdays

Café@St Catherine's

Friendly chat & Fishburn gossip! Fridays 9.30am-12noon: Tea/coffee/ toast & chat

Lyrics Choirs

Fridays in Ceddesfeld Hall. SLYC 6pm Adults 7.30pm New members welcome.

Sedgefield Social Club

Events in February

Saturday 1st: Kevin King

Saturday 8th: Freddie Waters

Saturday 15th: Kris Howe

Saturday 22nd: Danny Ocean

Saturday 1st March: Will Marx

Cover charge £1.50 per person

Members & Guests Welcome

**Country Night, Monday 17th with
Brian Gibson. Cover charge, £3pp**

Concert Room available for functions.

Tel: 01740 620591 for bookings

Sedgefield Library

Tel: 03000 269521. Opening hours

Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Thursday 10am - 6:00pm

Friday 1pm - 7pm

Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Craft Club: Thursdays 13th & 27th

February from 10am - 12 noon

Saturday 1st March

Durham Wildlife Trust:

Wildlife gardening 9.30am-12.30pm.

Build a bee or butterfly craft for children.

Recycled pot making activity.

Great advice and information on

attracting wildlife to your garden

and building wildlife homes.

Sedgefield Cricket Club

Cricket Club Teas

We are looking for someone to supply tea (sandwiches, cakes, etc) for approx 30 people on Saturday afternoons, from April to September, with a budget of £75 per Saturday. We also have a commercial kitchen for anyone keen to cook burgers, etc to sell to the general public.

Please call David Icton for further details:

07790 335 202

Looking for a function room to hire for that special occasion? Look no further! The Cricket Club is ideal for hosting special occasions, including weddings. Prices start at £60. To book and view internal photographs, visit our website and click on Venue Hire or contact Bar Manager, Steve Grady on

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Thank you for shopping at Sainsbury's Sedgefield

Jake Graham (in shop uniform) and his team



A big year ahead for Jake

18 year old Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form student and Sainsbury's employee, Jake Graham, will leave Sedgefield later this year to volunteer in South Africa or Botswana for 12 months. He will be supporting underprivileged children and young people in the poorer areas of the country. Jake will be supported by a Trust which specialises in sending school leavers overseas for volunteer placements in Africa, Asia or the Americas.

Project Trust (charity no. SCO 25668), was founded in 1967 as an educational charity on the Hebridean Isle of Coll in North West Scotland. Since then over 6,000 volunteers have been sent overseas; annually, about 250 volunteers to 23 countries. Project Trust is widely respected as one of the most experienced and professional gap year organisations in Britain. In order to secure his place Jake needs to raise £5600 to cover his living expenses and support from the charity.

Two main fundraising events are planned. The first, on February 28th at Hardwick Hall features The Dust Town Dogs, Tom Fothergill, disco & professional photography studio supplying free prints, and a hot buffet. The ticket price is £20pp. John Adamson of Ramside Estates has very kindly sponsored this event.

The second is an attempt at the Yorkshire Three Peaks challenge, 25 miles in under 12 hours, on May 10th. The support for this has blown us away! We started with 8 walkers and now have 31 plus 6 support crew. It really has been a fantastic community effort and we are humbled by the help offered. Gordon Hindson raised nearly £300 in the Black Lion, which is fabulous. Sainsbury's have donated all energy drinks and snacks for the walkers as well as letting us do a bag pack instore, which raised a fabulous £430. None of us are avid walkers; we have started training but it isn't easy! It's a great reason to get fit and get outdoors. Jake is taking himself out of his comfort zone to help others at an age when most young people are embarking on university and careers, which is enough to get us up and out of our seats to help him achieve the amount needed. If you would like to sponsor any of the team you can do so using the link www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/JakeGraham3PeaksChallenge. Tickets are on sale for the Hardwick Hall event now. Call Dot on **07432505543**.

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Sedgefield Area Churches Together Quiet morning

SACT will hold a quiet morning at Sedgefield Methodist Church on Saturday 8th March from 10am, during which we will explore some of the symbols of Lent. There will be an opportunity for quiet reflection and discussion sessions, followed by ecumenical worship. A workshop for young people will explore the symbols of Lent and their meanings, using art.

Tea and coffee will be provided and a shared lunch starts at 12:30.

Everyone is welcome.

For further details please contact:

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Michael & Judith King: 610910,

Alex Wainwright: 07504592483,

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Sports UPDATE with Sports Editor CHRIS LINES

England's Ashes humiliation is almost complete. There have been very few reasons to be cheerful during the series in Australia and the touring team will return to these shores very chastened. One of the small number of positive aspects was the emergence of Durham player Ben Stokes, who demonstrated plenty of character and talent in the four Tests that he played and was the only England player to score a century during the series. It was also good to see Scott Borthwick get a chance at that level, following the sudden retirement of Graham Swann. Another product of the Durham Academy, Borthwick has emerged as a talented leg spin bowler and effective batsmen. His achievements with the ball at county level are particularly impressive, given that he plays his home games on pitches that have traditionally, and understandably, been prepared to assist faster bowlers. Both Stokes and Borthwick are young, confident and very talented. England's gain may well be Durham's loss during 2014, but their rise (and they are not the only new prospects) indicates that there is cause for optimism for the future of our national team.

As I type this, news has just broken of the death of Sir Chris Chataway. He was one of the athletes who paced Roger Bannister when he ran the first sub four minute mile, in May 1954. Sir Chris was also a world record holder himself, at 5,000m, and went on to have successful careers in media, business and politics. However, he will always be remembered for his role in one of world sport's most iconic moments. I think that it's safe to say that Britain's obsession with middle distance running that in time led to the golden era of Moorcroft, Foster, Coe, Ovett and Cram (and others), would not have taken hold had the Australian John Landy and his team beaten Bannister, Chataway and Chris Brasher in achieving the first sub four minute mile. As we look back on the wreckage of this latest Ashes tour, it's nice to remember that and tip our hats to Sir Chris Chataway for the role he played.

Squash

The annual Sedgefield Squash Club handicap competition was played during December and January.

The final was contested between Stephen Rowsby and Mark Atkinson. As he started the final, Mark was looking for a hat trick of Rowsby victories in the competition, having beaten Stephen's sister Emma and father Chris in earlier rounds.

Stephen was conceding a large handicap of minus 52 points per game, and therefore could not afford to make any mistakes. In the first game, Mark made steady progress, while Stephen had to play solidly but cautiously. As Mark looked comfortable to win the first game, Stephen rallied, bringing the scores to 14 all before an uncharacteristic unforced error handed the game to Mark. However in the second game, Stephen made a strong start, taking a few more risks, and posting 25 points in succession before Mark was able to answer. Mark slowly started to pull points back before Stephen edged the game 15-13.

The deciding game found Mark with little energy left in the tank, while Stephen's experience showed, continually moving Mark around the court and by the time he levelled the scores at 5-5, the result was no longer in doubt. Stephen won the final game 15-8, but not before a little burst of cheeky exhibition squash from both players to entertain the crowd.

With the final lasting a total of 75 minutes, both players should take credit for an energetic and entertaining match.



Squash Handicap finalists, Stephen Rowsby & Mark Atkinson

Rugby Union

Sedgefield District RUFC is enjoying an encouraging season. The team is currently sitting fifth place in the Division Three of the Northumberland/Durham section of the Northern Division, and has recorded a couple of thumping victories at the start of 2014. The most recent of these was a 53-5 win over Washington. Sedgefield was able to field a strong squad of 17, boosted by some new players. Washington resisted well at first, but after 15 minutes Sedgefield scored their first try and by half time they needed to score only one more to secure a bonus point. It was all one way traffic in the second half and the result was well deserved. Sedgefield are only three points behind the third place team in the league, with a game in hand. Look out for more news on the team's progress in future updates.

Junior Squash

The second round of the Inter-County Championships saw three Sedgefield juniors in action for Durham and Cleveland. Rob Pearce and Dan Toas represented the U19s, helping the county to reach the final for the second consecutive year by beating North Wales and Lancashire.

Dan produced the performance of the day against Lancashire's Max Wynne-Jones, winning 3-2 after being 0-2 down. Oliver Walls managed wins against Leicestershire and Merseyside for the U15s, who narrowly missed out on qualifying for the final.

The Pontefract Silver competition, held between Christmas and New Year, saw Oliver Walls achieve 9th place in the Boys U15s, losing only one match to Cole Becker from the USA. Dan Toas finished a creditable 23rd in the Boys U17s in his first Silver tournament.

The major event in the junior squash world, the British Junior Open, was held in Sheffield at the start of January. The event attracted over 420 players from 36 nations around the globe. Oliver Walls participated in the Boys U15s, and after a very tough first round draw against India's Adhitya Raghavan (who finished 4th), won four of his six games to finish 49th overall.

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Athletics

Sedgefield Harriers' annual winter handicap race was held on Sunday 12th January. The 6.1 miles race was for the Gerry Kearsley Memorial Trophy and once again it was generously sponsored by Peggy Kearsley. A field of 81 runners turned out for the senior event, which started and finished just outside Fishburn. Days of rain gave way to a dry, fine and cold morning, though the going underfoot was distinctly soft in places. The course offered a variety of terrains and a couple of challenging hills, plus the addition of a fallen tree to negotiate.

Competitors set off at one minute intervals, starting from a scratch handicap, through to Harrier Paul Weir and Gary Whatmore of Wetherby on a handicap of 23 minutes. There was much competition and many personal battles out on the course, as faster runners caught and went past some of the earlier starters.

Marc Wilson - of Sedgefield, but not attached to a club here - finished first in his debut competitive race, completing the tough course in 46 minutes and 14 seconds, and his name will be engraved on the Gerry Kearsley Memorial Trophy. Marc was followed by Paul Shepherd of Run Peterlee and David Johnson (unattached). The handicap worked well and a large number of runners were soon making their way up the hill to the finish, battling it out for placings.

Emerging junior Sedgefield Harriers, Sean Haycock and Hannah Featherstone, were the club's first man and woman home with fine runs of 40:25 and 47:08 respectively. The fastest man over the course was Paul Weir of Sedgefield Harriers in 38:15 and the fastest woman was another Harrier, Abie Hearmon, in 43:53. The club is very grateful to Peggy Kearsley for her continued sponsorship, and to all of the volunteers who made the event possible.

The senior winter handicap was preceded by a junior race which saw girls and boys up to the age of 10 tackle a shorter circular route. This race was held before the sun broke through the mist and clouds, so the conditions were even colder than for the adults. As usual, this race was also well supported, with some great running from the youngsters.



Junior Harriers warm up ahead of their winter handicap

Back to cricket for the final item this month, and news that Sedgefield Cricket Club has started indoor net sessions for seniors and indoor coaching for juniors. To find out more details or how to get involved in the club, email sedgefieldcricketclub@hotmail.co.uk. That's all for this update. As always, send any sports news to chrisjlines@aocl.com.

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Your Letters

Grrrrr!

Much is said and done in the name of protecting our beautiful village, its vibrant interactive community, its heritage and environment. Many people have very strong views on the various facets that impact or threaten our daily lives, or the surrounding countryside, wind farms, large housing developments, traffic or noise pollution.

I wonder if anyone has noticed over recent months the latest insidious horror foisted upon an unwilling public by our elected representatives at County Hall who struggle to cope with an ever widening budget deficit? I refer to the virulent pummelling we are receiving at the hands of "The County Traffic Wardens", who descend at random periods and prey upon the unwary shopper, the funeral attendee, or many parents who attended the recent "Snowman Parade".

I am not defending those who park dangerously on bus stops, school entrances or within the "zigzags", but I do rally at the persecution of the likes of the elderly couple, both registered disabled who came to enjoy our village following major surgery, parked in the appropriate bay displaying both disabled badges one on top of another unfortunately the top one was out of date by ten days and they received a penalty, never to return to Sedgefield due to the distress suffered. The care worker whom I timed at eight minutes popping into the Co-op between calls for a few things for her next client, and got a ticket for her trouble, or the Warden who makes up their own rules moving a car off the single yellow line and then walking past a County gully emptying wagon who wasn't working, but was parked up for over an hour on the same yellow line whilst the crew had lunch!

We are not a metropolis, where is the wisdom of such unprecedented action in our village? It is driving away trade, who will employ the wardens when there are no traders to pay the Business Rates? Which Councillors will step forward to assist the employer in deciding which staff to lay off?

Sedgefield is not alone in this complaint, but its unabated continuance will forever change the business amenity for all its residents!

Phil Smith

Sporting funds

Sedgefield Village Games committee came into being in celebration of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games and to mark the Olympic Torch coming to Sedgefield on a memorable day in 2012. There were three weeks of community sports and activities involving clubs, schools and organisations which were well supported and it felt there was something special going on among the sports clubs in Sedgefield. Sedgefield is rich in sports clubs and sporting accomplishments and has always been proud of its success in producing sports stars in many sports and activities.

With some money left in the kitty Sedgefield Village Games committee decided to take the organisation into the future as a 2012 legacy initiative with the aim of supporting sports clubs and individuals. The hope is that we will give a helping hand to sports people and clubs from Sedgefield which will make a difference and help them achieve success and in so doing produce positive role models who we can be proud of. You never know, we may even have a golden post box in Sedgefield one day.

Sedgefield Village Games has been successful in making a case for further funding from the Area Action Partnership after presenting our case at the funding event in Sedgefield Community College. Consequently, there are now funds available for clubs and individuals to help with coaching, equipment, individual bursaries and any other way in which we can support sport in the Sedgefield community. The Sedgefield Village Games committee will welcome applications from organisations and individuals.

For more information visit www.sedgefieldgames.com.

Ean Parsons, Chair, Sedgefield Village Games

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