

Welcome

Greetings, and welcome to the Spring edition of the Village News.

The news is 'there isn't much news'! Like the rest of the country, we are confined to barracks listening to the ever-repetitive TV reports, and pointless interviews with equally pointless politicians who don't seem to have a clue what they are talking about or what to do next...thus has it ever been, I suppose. At least we can wave goodbye to Donald Trump.

Like the rest of the nation, we were saddened to hear of the death of Captain Sir Tom Moore, a man who captured the heart of the nation and beyond with his cheerful words and 'can do' attitude.

This should be the time of year we see some sort of weather improvement. A little less snow and rainfall would be helpful to the garden and the ever-abundant bird life we enjoy. We have now reached 50 different species spotted in our garden, and are always on the lookout for new arrivals. As I look out, the snowdrops are adding some much-needed colour against the grey backdrop. Spring is just around the corner.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight a couple of great local businesses we've been supporting in Brampton recently. If you love tea, then I can recommend 'All Things Tea' www.allthingstea.net whose range is both extensive and inventive as any I've seen. For those looking to cut their plastics use, 'Sarah's Soapery' offer a varied and environmentally friendly range of soaps, shampoos, bath and shaving products, with online ordering at www.sarahssoapery.com. Both come with friendly, helpful and knowledgeable service. If you'd like to highlight a new local shop or business that has caught your attention recently, do drop us a line. We'd also welcome your review of favourite lockdown reading materials or new musical discoveries you've made.

One of the magazine's long-term supporters and all-round top man, Dave Robinson, has written a piece to make us aware of the issues in the buying of legally conforming fire wood. We've always used him for our wood purchases, and he has a great range of bird and animal foods for sale as well. The Hub also stocks his kindling and logs.

Please contact us at hallbankgatevillagenews@yahoo.com with any news, views or articles for the Summer issue, which will be hitting your doorstep in June. Deadline is **Saturday 15th May**.

Stay safe, healthy and sane. Tomorrow will be a better day.

Paul & Claire Skeates

Suspension of Public Worship continues...

The decision to cease public worship in our church buildings, including at Farlam and Talkin, was made when lockdown started at New Year. We review the situation month by month. However, we continue to offer online worship from the Lanercost Benefice and also occasional reflections by the vicar. We are also having informal Sunday morning services on Zoom, and anyone who'd like to join us is more than welcome.

Email edwardajohnsen@gmail.com for the link. The Zoom service runs from 10.30am to about 11.05am. There's a reading, a hymn, a short reflection, and some prayers. Around 40 have been participating each week.

All welcome!

Edward Johnsen

‘Irthing, Gelt & Eden Mission Community’ -

letter from Rev Stephen Robertson

‘Walking the Way’

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.” (Revelation 22:1&2)

In Genesis, we read how the river that flowed from Eden watered the garden. And in the final chapter of Revelation the river of the water of life flows through the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem.

Our rivers are vitally important geographical features, for drainage, irrigation, and for carrying nutrients. They are also vital to the world’s weather cycle. In short, where rivers don’t run, there is very little life.

“Irthing, Gelt and Eden” is the name chosen for our Mission Community. These three rivers wind their way through the part of northern Cumbria that makes up our Mission Community area.

The river Irthing flows through the parishes of Gilsland and Nether Denton and past the priory at Lanercost. Indeed, Lanercost priory stands where it stands because of its proximity to the river and to its constant supply of fresh water. The river Irthing then threads its way between Walton and Brampton and through Irthington, to where it is joined by the river Gelt.

The river Gelt originates in the fells above Cumrew and Castle Carrock. It threads its way through the parishes of Castle Carrock, Talkin and Hayton to where it joins the Irthing.

The river Eden comes up from the south of Cumbria. The parish of Cumwhitton lies in the beautiful and fertile Eden Valley to the east of the river Eden. When it reaches the parish of Crosby-on-Eden the Eden is joined by the Irthing. The unified river then flows into Carlisle and past the cathedral, the mother church of the Diocese of Carlisle.

Irthing, Gelt and Eden makes a great name for our Mission Community:

The rivers are important and well-known geographical features. They tell the rest of the county and diocese where our Mission Community is situated. They also remind us of God’s ongoing provision for all our needs.

The name emphasises unity. Just as our rivers flow into one, and then make their way towards the mother church in the centre of Carlisle, our Mission Community is made up of many congregations working and serving alongside one another to make Jesus known.

The rivers God has given help to irrigate and fertilise the land. Jesus can satisfy our spiritual thirst as well as our physical needs.

Jesus said: **“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”** (John 7:37)

As Christians in the Irthing, Gelt and Eden Mission Community may we be united in our desire to tell others the Good News of all that God has done for us in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

*Revd Stephen Robertson
Irthing, Gelt and Eden Mission Community Leader*

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Farlam Parish Council

As “lockdown” carries on, your Parish Council continues to meet virtually on the usual dates and times. The details about how to join the Zoom meetings are shown on the agenda, displayed on notice boards, or by emailing farlampc@hotmail.co.uk.

The annual report for 2020 – 21 will be published in the June village news but it was thought that parishioners may want to know that council business has continued with planning considerations, playground oversight, budgetary determinations and more. For various personal reasons we have also had some councillors step down so at the moment our numbers are depleted.

Is this a way you could contribute to your community?

Being a Farlam Parish Councillor is not onerous, with just six meetings per year on the second Wednesday evening of alternate months. Many employers, colleges and training bodies value such community engagement; being a Parish Councillor will enhance your CV!

Please consider whether you could help your community in this way. Anyone old enough to vote who lives or works in Farlam Parish is eligible to be a Parish Councillor. You can express an interest by emailing the Clerk at the above email address or speaking to one of the existing councillors – details on our website www.farlamparishcouncil.com.

Thank you.

Steve Bowles: Chair Farlam Parish Council

Tree Services

by David Alty

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THE EDEN, GELT AND EDEN TEAM MINISTRY

Team Rector: Revd Stephen Robertson (016977 41304)

Team Vicar: Revd Edward Johnsen (01228 670 248)

*The Team Rector has pastoral responsibility for the parishes of Brampton, Irthington, Crosby-on-Eden and Scaleby; the **Team Vicar has pastoral responsibility for the parishes of Farlam, Talkin, Hayton, Castle Carrock, Cumrew and Cumwhitton.** Please contact Edward for christenings and weddings enquiries.*

Revd Janice Murray (016977 46400) is resident in the parish of Farlam and as a retired priest is very involved in ministry here.

Churchwardens of St Thomas a Becket, Farlam Parish Church (in Kirkhouse):

Mr Timothy Arndt (016977 46942)

Mr Angus Murray (016977 46400)

For further details about what is going on in the benefice see the 'Benefice Page' in the Village News. **See also our church website: farlamparishchurch.co.uk**

Help Lines

Victim Support Including information and advice for those affected by domestic violence

0300 3033 797 / 0300 3033 979 or Email: cumbriaidsva@victimsupport.org.uk

Childline Counselling: 08001111

Samaritans: Free phone 116 123

Farm Community Network: 07002 32632

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Dave Robinson

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Farlam 100 Club

January Winners:

1st Prize £25: No.56 Margaret Maughan

2nd Prize £15: No.130 Ian Howatt

3rd Prize £10: No.51 Carol Jeffrey

February Winners:

1st Prize £25: No.60 Scott Fretwell

2nd Prize £15: No.40 Remy Stewart

3rd Prize £10: No.119 Hazel Johnston

(December winners were reported in Winter edition)

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Happenings at the Hub

During this current extended lockdown, there has been a lot of activity going on behind the scenes at the Hub. With Covid grants available specifically for building projects, we have rebuilt the store- room to create more space and to streamline the stock taking process. As part of this, as many of you will have been aware, the kitchen has been undergoing some refurbishment. The purpose of this has been to upgrade it to become a safer working environment to future proof the business against a crisis such as the one we have all been stoically enduring these last few months. By the time you read this, the work will have been completed and we will be in a stronger position to reopen the café when the time is right and it is safe to do so. We know the café is an important focal point for many and we look forward to welcoming you back as soon as we can.

In other news, we have brought new suppliers on stream to help us minimise any disruption in grocery supply and shortages during this crisis in order to continue to meet the needs of everyone in the community. Serving the needs of all is one of the Hub's core values. Thanks to the support of our loyal customers trade has continued to grow despite the challenges faced by everyone.

On a more artistic note, we are looking forward to reopening the gallery later in the Spring when allowed (fingers crossed) and have put together a fabulous exhibition programme with a diverse range of artists. We can't wait to have a buzz of creativity around the Hub again.

It's great to see early signs of Spring all around - better times are just round the corner.

F/B: <https://www.facebook.com/hallbankgatehub> **W:** <https://hallbankgatehub.org/>

E: enquiries@hallbankgatehub.org

Open: 9-4pm Mondays-Saturdays, 9-12 on Sundays. **Post Office:** Thursdays, 9.30-11.30am

Maureen Lawrie

Community Engagement Officer

'Music in the Air'

Thank you to Helen Hutchinson for the below update on our local classical music choir plans for 2021

"We are very much hoping to be able to give a concert in the evening of Saturday 26th June and afternoon of Sunday 27th June. Venues, programme, all tba but somewhere in Cumbria. The October 16th concert will definitely be at St John's Church, Keswick in the evening."

Brampton Consort are planning to repeat the Lady Anne Clifford concert with Max Loth-Hill, on Lady Anne's home territory, St Lawrence's Church in Appleby. This is planned for Sunday 19th September at 3 pm. Again, all provisional.

Keep up to date with all developments:

www.bramptonchamberchoir.org.uk

Fenceless Grazing

A new method of virtual fencing for livestock is being trialled in the North Pennines to find out what benefits it has for wildlife conservation and high nature value farming in the uplands.

The North Pennines AONB Partnership leads on the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme and is working in partnership with the RSPB on a project to manage grazing in a way that benefits threatened species of birds through a trial of GPS cattle collars on the RSPB Geltsdale reserve.

Mob, or 'pulse' grazing with low numbers of cattle is a long-established method of creating the ideal habitat for wildlife, allowing for areas to be grazed intensively for shorter periods until the desired habitat result is achieved. However, it requires flexibility to relocate animals, which is not always practical in areas without permanent fencing. One solution is virtual fencing, and this pioneering project will allow the grazing to be managed in a way that will have positive benefits for the important species of birds that can be found at Geltsdale. By managing the sward length of the vegetation at RSPB Geltsdale, threatened species such as the rare Black Grouse, Ring Ouzel and Golden Plover can thrive. It is a type of management which prevents overgrazing and allows for the natural revegetation of wilder habitats such as scrub, vital for the success of many upland species. Fencing in the uplands also leads to bird strikes, particularly for declining species such as Curlew and Black Grouse, and other upland birds such as short-eared owls.

This system uses a GPS collar and warning sounds to guide the animals where they can eat and roam. A virtual fence is drawn using a phone app and, when a cow nears the virtual fence boundary, a warning sound is given from the collar, worn around the cow's neck. If the cow continues towards the boundary, the animal will feel a short electrical pulse from the collar. The cattle are quick to learn that if they hear the sound they are getting close to the perimeter, so they move away.

A small herd of 19 highland cross cattle at Geltsdale were fitted with the collars and are now able to roam across the reserve. The virtual fencing is put in place following natural lines in the landscape, which cattle recognise as a boundary. If an area becomes overgrazed, the fence is relocated to protect the area.

The Nofence technology has been in use in Norway for 10 years and there are around 18000 collars in use on goats, sheep and cattle. Trials of the Nofence system in the UK have been led by the Scottish Rural College under review and licence from the Home Office. It is currently being used on a number of sites across England with approval from Natural England.

Kate Stacey - North Pennines AONB Partnership

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Halton-Lea-Gate Farm Opencast - An Update – December 2020

Residents of the Parish and surrounding area cannot fail to have noticed Halton-Lea-Gate Opencast. The operators recently appointed Duff and Phelps, who are now the administrators of the failed Halton-Lea-Gate opencast coal company, HM Project Developments Ltd, have released their latest report. The key points are:

- They sold the last 625 tonnes of coal for £25,000.
- The only creditors who may get some money back are the Chicago-based firm, ExWorks Capital which is 'committed to providing capital to small to middle market companies that are underserved by traditional financing sources.'
- The money owed to other creditors adds up to £5.5million. One wonders how such a relatively small undertaking could amass such large debts during the time that they were selling coal at £40 @ tonne.
- The administrators have kept four employees on the opencast to undertake routine tasks.
- The administrators will not re-start mining operations.
- The Environment Agency has served a notice of prosecution on the Company in respect of an alleged pollution offence.
- There is no mention in the report of any prosecution relating to the demolition of the Halton Lea Farmhouse.
- The 148 acres of the opencast site was valued at £1.7million but the administrators are getting a new valuation: most observers think that the £1.7million overvalues the site.
- The administrators have filed a confidential report to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the conduct of the directors who served HM Project Developments Ltd during the three years prior to the appointment of the administrators.
- ExWorks have guaranteed a bond for the restoration of the site for an amount up to £653,000. Restoration works are expected to start shortly.
- One of the creditors is Care Pharmacy which is currently owed £2,400,000 but the administrators anticipate that Care Pharmacy will receive nothing.
- The administrators asked two recent directors to make a Statement of Affairs about the insolvency but no statements have been received. Seventeen different shareholders were listed in HM Project Developments Ltd books and records.
- Time costs incurred by the administrators so far amount to £477,361. ExWorks is in effect funding the administrators' remuneration.
- The staff of the administrators charge hourly fees depending on the staff level: Managing director: £750 @ hour; Manager: £500 @ hour; Senior: £375 @ hour; Assistant: £160 @ hour. So far, the total of £477,361 has been incurred representing 1,123 hours at an average of £425 @ hour.
- There is no mention in the report of the £70,000 that was due to be allocated for the benefit of local people, based on a charge of 50p a tonne of coal extracted.
- The next administrators' report is expected in May 2021.
- Local people look forward to the restoration of the site and the return of peace for the Halton-Lea-Gate neighbours.

On the positive side, Northumberland County Council's first priority is to secure the proper restoration of the site, we understand this will be to agricultural land, and they assure they are making progress on this. An update to the Parish Councils will be provided shortly on this matter. Northumberland County Council have also been liaising with the Environment Agency and we believe they are currently following through with legal action; further updates are promised.

New DEFRA legislation on the sale of firewood.

Many of you will be aware that DEFRA are introducing “**The Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuels Standards) (England) Regulations 2020**”, which will come into effect on 01/05/21 covering solid fuels for fires and stoves. It is aimed at reducing pollution levels. It covers both wood-based fuels and coal.

As we are a wood fuels supplier it is firewood and wood briquettes, I am going to talk about here.

Firstly, the important thing is that the legislation is about what can be sold not what you can burn. As a retailer all firewood and briquettes I sell from that date must meet the new regulations. But if you cut down a tree in your garden and burn it that's not in the new regulations so you can still do so. I would advise you to store it somewhere dry for 18 – 24 months first though.

Basically, any firewood sold in quantities of less than 2 cubic meters must have a moisture content of less than 20%. It should be licensed by the “Ready to Burn” scheme from Woodsure. Every sale should have the license number (ours is ws272) and the Name of the license holder (Brampton Wood Fuels) There are several other licensed suppliers in the area as well. Very small suppliers who sell small amounts of logs have a further 12 months to comply with the regulations so a tree surgeon can sell logs he produces as part of his work without a license until 14/05/22.

Dry logs burn cleaner and more efficiently. They produce less Carbon emissions and much less particulates. Logs will burn cleaner and provide better heat. It will also reduce soot in chimneys and to some degree stop glass stove doors getting smoked up.

Wood briquettes will also have to be licensed under the same scheme and all that we sell will do so by May.

Finally, to qualify for the Ready To Burn certificate we have to prove that all fuel comes from a sustainable source so it isn't contributing to overall deforestation. We also have to carry out random quality checks on receiving fuel, during storage and on sale to ensure the fuel meets the Ready to Burn standard for moisture content.

Put simply this legislation is to reduce emissions reduce deforestation and guarantee quality to the end user. It will provide good fuels that burn properly and efficiently and so be better value as you will use less for the same energy output as none is wasted. It will reduce how often you need your chimney cleaned and reduce smoke and pollution.

For more detailed info please visit these 2 websites.

<https://woodsurre.co.uk/>

www.readytoburn.co.uk

Dave Robinson

Brampton Wood Fuels



Green Croft Arts

Hi, I am Amanda Drago and along with my husband Kit Haigh, run Green Croft Arts offering arts, cultural and wellbeing activities from our base in Gilsland. As the pandemic struck all our touring activities to theatres, galleries and schools ceased as well my face to face yoga classes at Hallbankgate, Alston and Gilsland.

Like many others I took my classes online and for the last year I have been offering a weekly programme of yoga and movement classes via Zoom. My yoga journey began in my 20 year career as a professional dancer and teacher. I have taught dance to all ages and from beginners to advanced, including students starting their own vocational dance training at Dance City's Centre for Advanced Training programme and Northumbria University.

I have an inclusive teaching style which means I help people adapt movement sequences and yoga poses to fit their bodies which helps them to feel more confident. I offer weekly classes in Hatha Yoga (slow and steady), Vinyasa Flow (fast and dynamic), Chair Yoga (seated yoga) and Adult Ballet so there is something for everyone whatever your ability and experience. If you are new to yoga or things are tight then I also offer a **FREE** weekly Hatha Flow class on Sunday morning between 10.00 - 11.00am.

You can find more information on the classes and how to book on our website www.greencroftonthewall.com as well as our latest arts project Collision & Conflict, a geolocated sound walk along Hadrian's Wall (starting at Walltown Country Park) launching Easter. Using ECHOES: an interactive GPS-triggered sound app, the collision and conflict of the landscape will unfold through music, sound, storytelling and spoken word from 9 commissioned artists. We have designed this project for lockdown enabling households and bubbles living locally to enjoy whilst on their walk.

If you have any queries I am happy to have a chat on the phone 016977 47828 or you can email me on amanda@greencroftonthewall.com

