

Whinstone Times

Community Magazine for Embleton and
Christon Bank



November/December 2022

Edition No. 82

THE GREYS INN

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Welcome to the 82nd edition of the Whinstone Times.

The seasons are in transition. As summer passes with the gathering of the harvest, Autumn heralds the wintering to come. Living in rural and coastal villages such as Embleton & Christon Bank this change in the seasons perhaps feels more tangible. It is certainly reflected in contributions for this edition, with dark aurora-lit skies over the quarry and resting shorebirds returning to our beaches finding space on these pages.

As in the natural world around us, so too is there change within village life. The children return to the school building soon, following completion of the extension. Jo and Grace Robertson introduce themselves as the next owners of the village shop on p.9, sharing their vision for its future.

While fireworks, bonfires, and Christmas may bring light and warmth, the winter months can feel long, cold and for some, lonely. The media is full with news of chaos and a looming energy crisis. On p.22 you'll find a soup lunch initiative aimed at sharing warmth and friendship. Page 6 holds advice on where to turn for tips to help Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Thanks, as always, to everyone for their support for the WT.

Please send articles and ideas for content or fundraising to:

whinstone.times@gmail.com or telephone Jan Ainsley, 01665 576019.

Please send any items for 'What's On' to Shelagh Coxon, 01665 576791

or: gorshel1@outlook.com.

The deadline for material for the next edition is Monday 5th December

N.B. The editors reserve the right to alter or reject material and the views expressed within these covers are solely those of the contributors.

Earlier editions are available online at the Embleton community

website: www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk/publish.html

Advertising Rates Per Issue: £15 for a quarter page, **£30** for a half page and **£50** for a full page. A discount of 5% is applied for 3 editions and 10% for 6.

Letter to the Editor vis a vis Spitalford Cemetery

Andrew Chillingsworth, EJBC

In the last edition of the Whinstone Times an article was produced about Spitalford Cemetery, which requires some clarification.

The graveyard is owned jointly by three Parish Councils: Craster, Newton by the Sea and Embleton. The individual graves are owned by the families of those “at rest”. It is their responsibility to keep the graves clean and tidy.

Sadly, many are unable to do so. In these cases, the EJBC (the Embleton Joint Burial Committee), made up of elected councillors from the three parishes, must decide what to do to keep the graveyard safe and tidy. A regular site check is completed by external, licenced, and experienced professionals.

It may look to the casual eye that a tree growing near a headstone should be cut down to make the graveyard tidier, but any such removal needs to be completed by qualified monumental masons, who understand what can and what must not be done. The EJBC is currently working with such a company to do this correctly.

Whilst the EJBC welcomes the establishment of Friends of Spitalford Cemetery group, we have a duty to ensure such a body is properly constituted, with its own chair and organising committee and is covered by Insurance. The EJBC also needs to work with the friends’ group to understand just what they can do and when it can be done, with any working parties having written authorisation to complete a fixed scope of work.

The EJBC has written to the newly formed Friends group, to ascertain who the officers are, and how they can work with us. At the time of writing, we have not received a reply.

Correspondence via the WT on this subject is now closed.

The Editors ask that all future correspondence about Spitalford Cemetery be directed to the EJBC: ejbcepc@outlook.com or the Friends of Spitalford group: friendsofspitalfieldcemetery@gmail.com

County Councillor Wendy Pattison’s report for Embleton Parish



E-mail: wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel. 07779 983072

Facebook – Cllr Wendy Pattison

Northumberland Line and A1 dualling acceleration welcomed

The Department for Transport announced on 23rd September that the A1 dualling programme between Morpeth and Ellingham and the Northumberland Line will be accelerated as fast as possible.

Council Leader, Councillor Glen Sanderson, said: “I am extremely pleased ...that government is listening and investing in our infrastructure. It will open so many opportunities for the county... and will go a long way in supporting future generations. It will provide a real incentive for... (investment)... and create greater opportunities for those already here.”

With work already underway, the Northumberland Line will bring passenger trains back into service between Ashington and Newcastle – stimulating and supporting economic growth, regeneration, and community development.



The dualling of the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham will in addition provide vital infrastructure to help deliver the region’s aspirations for population and economic growth. It will create much needed additional capacity, with better connectivity for people and business, safer journeys for all and further strengthen links between England and Scotland, as well as encourage tourism, according to Cllr Sanderson.

‘Warm Hubs’ have been created by Community Action Northumberland (CAN) as places within the local community where people can find a safe, warm, and friendly environment in which to socialise, enjoy refreshments, seek information, advice and find company.

With 40.7% of the population of Northumberland living in rural areas, 20% being over the age of 65, rural isolation presents a significant barrier to reaching those most in need. This project works with rural communities through anchors such as parish councils and village halls – these buildings providing a natural access point. The scheme is very flexible, each Warm Hub being run by local people for local people – ensuring the scheme best meets the needs of their own community.

CAN staff are available to offer ongoing advice and support on a range of issues, including funding. Contact: christinenicholls@ca-north.org.uk or phone 07827 403837 for more information. (For info on Embleton’s own Warm Hub – see p.21(eds)).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

One in four people in the UK experienced Mental Health issues in the last year. There are lots of things we can do to protect ourselves and prevent problems escalating, just as we do with our physical health. Here are some suggested resources:

Every mind matters have great tips on how to look after your Mental Health, help you feel more in control, deal with stress and anxiety, boost your mood and help you sleep. Go to www.nhs.uk - Dealing with life's challenges - Every Mind Matters.

Northumberland County Council Wellbeing team can work with you on a range of lifestyle issues to assist in improving health and finances.

Visit their specialist pages about wellbeing with free resources from everything from stopping smoking to ageing well and training for health.

Northumberland's Tourism Sector in post-COVID Rebound

The annual STEAM report on the economic impact of tourism in Northumberland reveals a strong bounce back from 2020 in respect to visits, expenditure, and employment. Here are some key findings:

-The value of the visitor economy doubled in 2021 compared to 2020, driven by an increase in spend by staying visitors.

-Overall visitor satisfaction levels were high, with 100% of visitors saying they were made to feel welcome and 99% would recommend Northumberland as a destination to visit.

-The number of people directly employed in tourism is still 15% lower than in 2019. A 2022 employment survey highlighted that recruitment was limiting growth of operations.



Co-ordinated by Visit Northumberland, the new Destination Management Plan for Northumberland has been crafted with the tourism sector, to ensure the economy continues to bounce back.

During 2020 and 2021, grants from Northumberland County Council enabled many businesses to survive, with marketing campaigns from Visit Northumberland encouraging visitor return. Andrew Fox, Visit Northumberland Chair said, "It has been a difficult few years... We are delighted the dedication and determination from everyone involved in Northumberland's tourism industry is driving...recovery... but we still have some way to go to return to pre-pandemic record levels."

Please note there are no Parish Council notes for this edition. Please see p.19 for more information.

A Recipe for Autumn

Chocolate Apple Betty

Ingredients Serves 4-6

1kg Bramley apples, peeled and cored
30g butter
125g soft white breadcrumbs
100g light soft brown sugar
100g dark chocolate, roughly chopped
75g butter, melted
3 heaped tbsp golden syrup

Method

Cut the apples into large chunks, put them in a pan and toss with the butter and a couple of tablespoons of water over a moderate heat.

When the apples start to soften but are still keeping their shape, tip them into a 1.5 litre baking dish.

Mix the crumbs, sugar and chocolate and cover the apples loosely.

Melt the butter with the golden syrup in a small saucepan, then pour it over the crumbs. Bake in an oven preheated to 190°C for 35 mins, till the apple is soft and the crumbs are golden and crisp.



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Embleton Village Shop and Post Office - A New Chapter

As people may already know, Beth has taken the decision that it is time to sell Moody's Londis. We would like to thank Beth, Denis, Kay, Christine and Shirley for all their efforts in keeping this vital village asset open throughout the most challenging of times. Everybody wishes Beth all the best in whatever she does next.

We'd now like to introduce ourselves. We are Jo and Grace Robertson, and along with our husbands and our brother-in-law, hope to officially take over at the end of October.



Any change to such an important part of the village can be an anxious time, but please be assured that we will be retaining the Post Office and a village shop. To avoid any prolonged closure of the business, we will be hitting the ground running with the help of Christine and Shirley, so please bear with us whilst we find our feet.

We have very exciting plans for a refurbishment, restock and rebrand in 2023, when we hope to take advantage of both Grace's cookery skills, and some wonderful local produce. You can keep abreast of our progress and plans in store, within the Whinstone Times, and on social media.

Please follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates:
[@embletonvillageshop](#).

We look forward to seeing you all soon - Jo and Grace

Space for Shorebirds

Katherine Dunsford

In a challenging year for coastal wildlife, we are pleased that nesting shorebirds had a successful season! 13 ringed plover chicks and 1 oystercatcher chick fledged from our nest protection sites - a fantastic result for the birds and a huge improvement on last year.

The nest site at the Skaith burn on Embleton Beach supported the oystercatcher chick. Two pairs of ringed plovers attempted to nest here, but due to adverse weather and predation, were unsuccessful. One pair moved up the beach towards Low Newton. The new site was busy, with people and dogs walking close to their nest. Despite the odds and by creating a safe space around their nest, they went on to successfully raise two chicks!



Two ringed plover chicks with their parent

It's a team effort to help ringed plovers breed successfully. With the Northumberland Coast busier than ever, it is unlikely they could have done it without protected areas around their nests. Thank you to the National Trust for permission and support throughout the season and the wonderful volunteers from Coast Care. Support residents and visitors have shown was incredible; ringed plovers would not have had the success they did without beach users giving them space to raise their young. A final thanks to pupils at Vincent Edwards Primary School for designing signs to inform visitors about the need to give space to the nesting birds.



Since the end of the nesting season, rangers have been out talking to beach users about the thousands of shorebirds which have returned from their breeding grounds to call Northumberland home. The population of most shorebird species is declining. It is our responsibility to help protect them, ensure they survive the winter and remain in good condition to return to their breeding grounds next May.



The population of purple sandpiper has declined nationally by 50% over the past 25 years



A group at a Shorebirds for Beginners event at Beadnell

For tips on how to identify different species, we run Shorebirds for Beginners guided walks and bird watches at various locations. Details will be published on our website and social media pages. Find us at www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk and on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. If you see our wildlife rangers out on the coast, do stop to say hello! Thank you again for giving Space for Shorebirds.



Song for Autumn

A poem by Mary Oliver

In the deep fall
don't you imagine the leaves think how
comfortable it will be to touch
the earth instead of the
nothingness of air and the endless
freshets of wind?
And don't you think
the trees themselves, especially those with mossy,
warm caves, begin to think
of the birds that will come – six, a dozen – to sleep
inside their bodies?
And don't you hear
the goldenrod whispering
goodbye,
the everlasting being crowned with
the first tufts of snow?
The pond vanishes,
and the white field over
which the fox runs so quickly
brings its blue shadows.
And the wind pumps its bellows.
And at evening especially,
the piled firewood shifts a little,
longing to be on its way.



Nature Notes August/September Peter Brown - of squalls, squirrels, and squashes

August broke all records: the driest and the hottest. Rain again fell on 8th September, that momentous day for the royal family and the nation. Rain cleared up for much of the rest of September up to a few days of squally and persistent rain at the end of the month.

There were few exciting sightings reported. Deer were seen in gardens, the Embleton Burn kingfisher was seen a few times, and at Morton House a kestrel hovered and dived for prey; unusual for a garden.

Rita was surprised to see a grey squirrel on her lawn.

There were also greys reported at Howick and not one sighting of a red. Worrying times.

Most potentially exciting, was the sighting of a huge bird of prey at Preston Tower and Christon Bank. It had a whitish



head and brown plumage – or golden plumage? Golden eagles have been released in southern Scotland, so maybe this was one. That really would be news! Any more information, anyone?

The dry, hot weather meant some species have been lingering before migrating. I missed the last day for our house martins but swallows certainly stayed late. For some resident creatures, such as hedgehogs, there is not enough cold weather to encourage them to hibernate so they will still be awake at the end of the season with little food to find.

Some trees have kept their leaves longer into early Autumn, but others experienced a ‘false Autumn’, dropping leaves early to retain moisture. Anyone visiting the South East in August would have been surprised by the huge piles of crisp fallen leaves as if it was October.

And squashes? Well, it was a bumper year apparently. And blackberries, plums and apples were weeks earlier than usual. ‘The time is out of joint’. Indeed!

Embleton Firework Display - Saturday 5th November 2022

Embleton's bonfire & firework display will be held this year on Saturday 5th November 2022. The fire will be lit around 6-6:15pm with fireworks at approximately 6.30pm.

The display can be watched safely from the pavement on either side of WT Stead Road near the playpark & Blue Bell Inn.

The Exmoor ponies have been returned to the Quarry Nature Reserve for the winter.

If you add to the bonfire pile in the field, please stick to natural products & garden waste only - no metal, glass, plastics, tyres, mattresses, or sofas to go on the fire please.

Thanks go to the Fireworks Committee & volunteers, who do a great job of arranging the display in advance and put in a huge effort on the night. Donations are very welcome and can be made in cash at Embleton Village Shop or in the donation buckets on the night.



Embleton School News

Bags2School Collection

Wednesday 9th November - 8:30-9am

Creighton Hall. If anyone has any clothes, soft toys, shoes, bags, towels, curtains to donate

these can be bagged and taken along to the Creighton Hall on the morning of 9th November between 8:30-9am. A full list of items that can be donated can be found here: www.bag2school.com/what-we-collect

Morrisons, Alnwick Fundraising Bag Pack

Saturday 10th December – 9am-5pm. The PFA are looking for volunteers to spare an hour of time to help pack bags in Morrisons. If anyone can man a till for an hour, then please get in touch with Melissa Gilroy at school: admin@vincedwards.northumberland.sch.uk/ 01665 576612.

The September 100 Club Winners:

No. 66 - Lizzie Hoskins - £50

No.15 - Orlando Bridgeman - £25

The children will be returning to Embleton Primary School after the October half term holiday. On 28th October at 1pm the school will be open for anyone who would like to see the 'new look' school.



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After an early and dry harvest (the earliest and driest for many years) the ground was so hard that we had to wait for rain before considering sowing autumn crops. Normally the problem is around the ground being too wet and this year we were complaining about it being too dry! We were able to sow some grass in fields around Embleton, which had benefitted from the warm, wet weather in September.



More than 9 months after Storm Arwen we have at last got a ‘timber harvester’ on to the estate to start clearing up some of the mess. We have lost probably 10 – 15% of all the trees here, either blown over or snapped. You may have seen the harvester operating - with its grab and huge chainsaw it can cut a fallen or standing tree into exact, computerized-sized logs in seconds. A team of men would have taken weeks to

complete what can now be done in a day. A second machine is gathering up the timber and stacking it on the side of fields next to roads ready to be collected by timber wagons to be sold to the sawmills, for firewood processing, or chipping. So far, a thousand tonnes have been gathered up. The plan is that this will continue until it becomes too wet, and then we will re-start in the spring.

The big fencing project is ongoing, as we put fences on either side of the old hedges or in places where new hedges will go, as part of the Government’s Countryside Stewardship Scheme. The hedge plants and trees will go in during the winter when they are dormant. We have had to pollard some of the old hedge plants, cutting them down to 2ft, hoping they will re-grow from the base in amongst the new plants.

Help for Farmers, by Farmers: Regenerative Agriculture Videos

Andi Chapple

UK farming is facing a perfect storm. Costs of inputs e.g., fertiliser, pesticide and fuel are soaring. The climate and weather patterns are changing and there is a new funding system for farmers to get used to.

You may have heard of ‘regenerative’ farming. It teaches us to see food production as integrated with nature and helps to build up local food systems. It can reduce inputs (and bring down costs), increase profitability and future-proof farm businesses. It suits upland livestock as well as market gardening and arable.

The Northern Real Farming Conference (NRFC) supports regenerative farming. With support from WWF-UK’s Land, Food and Farming Fund, we have made a series of videos to help farmers research the approach. Farmers share their experiences, offering concentrated practical advice on the profits and pitfalls of changing land management methods.



In ‘Three Regenerative Farming Projects’, Cumbrian farmers talk about how they have changed to ‘rotational grazing’ - moving stock every day or two to let grass regrow - and how they now don’t buy in feed or fertiliser and their farms are in profit.

In ‘Local Wool and Textile Production’, you can hear stories behind new Lake District tweeds - a British wool database for weavers, knitters and yarn making from sheep local to the shop. The videos are available at www.northernrealfarming.org/video-resources/ and they are worth a watch even if you don’t farm yourself! Do have a look and join our farmers’ network.

Revered Rileys in Embleton

Some friends, members of the Riley Register, enjoyed a fine weekend stay at the Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel in September when several of their much-loved old ladies, from all over England, stood out around the village green.



David Wilson spoke to the Whinstone Times to say how much his party were enjoying their visit to these parts (and the comfort of the DCH) as he enthused about their five treasures - a 1936 1.5 litre Kestrel; a 1934 1.5 litre 6 cyl Kestrel; a 1930 Mark 4 Tourer, a 1931 and a 1933 Monaco 9 Twin Cam crossflow 1087cc.

Our photograph shows their cars outside Cragside. David mentioned how impressed he and his chums were with the engineering wizardry of Lord Armstrong in evidence at the property. As admirers of the relatively advanced mechanical development of their own vehicles for their time, they were blown away by the great industrial magnate's prescient harnessing of renewable energy.

Embleton WI

Embleton WI meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2pm in the Parish room. We are always ready to welcome new members, so please come along and join us.

In September we had our 104th birthday party with members from five other WIs in the area joining us to celebrate.

Future meetings for 2022:

8th November - Craft Afternoon

13th December - Christmas flower arrangements: Francis Cook

It's been a busy summer. The Bioblitz in June, run by Northumberland Coast AONB, produced 215 records of species in 24 hours, some new to us, and gave everyone the opportunity to walk with experts for free! Who knew there were so many different bees and hoverflies buzzing among the flowers, or that children would find so many small creatures when pond-dipping? Walks exploring plants of various micro-habitats and identifying birdsong were popular. A visiting expert camped out in his car overnight to monitor moths, then held us spellbound with his knowledge. And how lovely to see children from Vincent Edwards School lending a hand! A fantastic event and one which we hope to repeat.

Thanks to the regional Environmental Records Information Centre, we were given a grant to buy five bat detectors. They're already in use and we aim to hold more bat walks in 2023. Look out for details!

Work on stabilising the Quarry House has begun with the help of an AONB grant. Wooden lintels are being replaced, capping stones have been placed on walls, with bat and bird niches protected and created.



The autumn nights bring brilliant displays in the heavens above the quarry. The new Embleton Quarry Aurora WhatsApp group alerts people when this amazing phenomenon appears. If you don't mind being woken in the

night, contact embletonquarry@gmail.com with your mobile number and name. By doing this, you consent to us storing your information.

Constant work managing the quarry goes on. Our ten-year management plan is available online. We're always grateful for new volunteers. Do get in touch: embletonquarry@gmail.com or talk to one of the volunteers.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Emergencies - Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard	999
Police (non-emergency)	101
Childline	0800 1111
Crime stoppers	0800 555 111
NHS non-emergency care	111
Northumberland C. C. County Hall	0345 600 6400
NCC Councillor for Longhoughton Ward – Wendy Pattison	07779 983072
Alnwick Medical Group	01665 656000
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	0344 811 8111
Samaritans	0845 790 9090
Silverline (advice for older people)	0800 470 8090
Traveline	0871 200 2233
C.A.B. Northumberland Adviceline	03444 111 444

Information

Copies of the Parish Council, Joint Burial Committee and the Quarry Working Group minutes can be found on the Parish Council website – northumberlandparishes.co.uk/embleton/documents

Planning Applications

The Parish Council would like to make sure that all parishioners are aware of current planning applications in the Parish so that they are able to review and comment on them. For a list of current planning applications please visit www.northumberlandparishes.uk/embleton OR the

Embleton Parish Council Facebook page
www.facebook.com/embletonparishcouncil/

These lists are updated weekly, and all planning applications are discussed at the monthly Parish Council meetings.

What's On in November 2022

1st Embleton Womens' Club 2p.m. Parish Room -Social afternoon

3rd Craster W.I Annual Meeting 7.15 p.m. in Memorial Hall pie & Peas supper. Please bring own crockery and cutlery.

8th Embleton W.I 2p.m. Parish Room - speaker TBA.

9th Blue Bag Collection for Embleton School. Please have all bags at **CREIGHTON HALL** by **9 a.m.** Use black bags for packing items as they no longer provide bags. Full details of what can be donated on www.bags2school.com/what-we-collect.

12th Craster Film Club 7p.m. in Memorial Hall

14th Embleton Flower Club Christmas Open Meeting 7.30p.m. Creighton Hall. Demonstration by Rachel Blakey -'Christmas' Members free, visitors £5

21st Craster History Group AGM at the Cottage Inn Dunstan.

25th Christmas bingo at Rennington Eyes down 7.00p.m.

** Tuesdays from 8th November, 12pm in Craster Memorial Hall - Soup lunch £2.50. Tea/Coffee & biscuits also available. All information from Jackie 571007

What's On in December 2022

2nd 12.30p.m. Craster W.I Christmas Celebration. Members & Invited Guests only.

3rd Rennington Christmas lights switch on 6.30p.m for 7p.m.

3rd Bingo at the Creighton eyes down 7.30p.m.

6th Embleton Womens' Club Christmas Lunch.

10th Bag pack at Morrisons in aid of Embleton School 9-5p.m. If you can volunteer for an hour, please contact Melissa Gilroy 01665 575612

10th Bingo at the Creighton Eyes down 7.30p.m.

12th Embleton Flower Club Christmas Workshop with Christine Ogle:

A Christmas Table Centre - full details in December Net.

13th Embleton W.I 2p.m. Parish Room. Demonstration by Frances Cook – A table decoration for Christmas.

17th Bingo at the Creighton Eyes down 7.30p.m.



You may already know that Mandell’s Coffee Pot runs on a Wednesday morning from 10am-12pm in the Parish Room serving delicious cakes and refreshments. The Parish Room will also open every Monday from 31st October 11am - 2pm serving a hot soup lunch.

As a member of the warm hub initiative, we received sponsorship from Community Action Northumberland and will use this to provide a hot nourishing meal in a warm environment.



As winter approaches and with news of increasing energy bills, soup lunches are intended to provide a delicious meal with the chance to meet and chat with friends, neighbours or even make new friends. Who can resist hot, tasty homemade soup with bread and butter?!

There is no charge, but a donation bowl will be available.



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With Autumn here, now is the perfect time to begin planning your dream garden ready for next summer!

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Providing inspiration as we go, we will work with you to help fine tune what you'd like to achieve from your garden, before delivering a unique design that meets your requirements and exceeds expectations. We specialise in working with discerning professionals who would like to invest in great design for their garden but perhaps lack the time or knowledge to do so themselves. We can create an inviting outdoor space that matches your lifestyle – helping you relax with family and friends and switch off from the pressures of modern life.

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