

# *Whinstone Times*

*Community magazine for Embleton and Christon Bank*



March/April 2020

Edition No. 66



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# Editorial

Welcome to the 66th issue of the Whinstone Times. Back editions are available on the internet and can be accessed from our community website, [www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk](http://www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk)

The Andra Barton article by James Rose in our last edition generated considerable interest and you will see that the mystery deepens the more we discover.

The cover picture reminds us of sunnier times and shows Beekeeping expert Professor John Horbrough from Warkworth whose talk on beekeeping is advertised in this issue.

We continue to highlight careers of local people, this time we have interviewed David Pilgrim who worked as a Ship's Engineer on Oil Tankers for many years and is now a Marine Consultant. If you or someone you know in Embleton has an interesting job, why not let us know? In Issue 62 we commenced the series with the life of James Porteous, a Ranger on The Farnes (you may remember our front cover with an Arctic Tern perched on his hat) James has now secured full time work as a National Trust Ranger on the Northumberland coast, well done James!

**Plant Sale:** We have decided to combine our plant sale and table top sale this year on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May 10pm - 1pm, exact details to follow.

**Michael Doherty: An Apology:** In our last edition we wrongly attributed the article referring to Affordable Housing in Craster to Neil Doherty instead of Michael Doherty. We would like to apologise and emphasise that Michael's article was written specifically because of his family's long connections with the area.

The Whinstone Times welcomes both letters and articles from our readers and any ideas you have for your local community magazine. Please send articles, letters, advertising or any enquiries to the Editors at [whinstone.times@gmail.com](mailto:whinstone.times@gmail.com) or tel Jan Ainsley 01665 576019.

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

**The deadline for the next edition is Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April.**

**The editors reserve the right to alter or reject material. The views expressed are those of the contributors.**

## A Life at Sea

## The Ship's Engineer

We have been very fortunate to talk to David Pilgrim who now lives in Embleton but spent 30 years as a Ship's Engineer, all on oil tankers.

**How did you train to become a Ship's Engineer?** I actually served my time as a ship's draughtsman at Vickers Armstrong's shipyard on the Tyne.

**Did you always want to go to sea?** No, but I always wanted to be connected with ships. During my time in the drawing office I felt there were better prospects at sea.

**Was there a family tradition of going to sea?** Very much so. Both my grandfathers were seafarers. My great grandfather was a seaman on an expedition to the Arctic in the 1850's in search of Sir John Franklin's missing expedition. My parents both worked in the admin side of the ship repair industry and two of my mother's brothers were Chief Engineers at sea.

**Did you have to attend training on land at college?** Yes, although all my practical training was at sea, I went to the Marine School at South Shields for the academic side of things.

**What was your career path?** I joined the Merchant Navy as an "unclassified" Junior Engineer and worked my way up through the ranks to Chief Engineer. Because of my drawing office apprenticeship I had to do extra sea-time before I could sit my examination for Second Engineer, but after that I was on the same footing as all other entrants and I obtained my First Class Certificate of Competency just over 9 years after first going to sea.

**How long were you a Ship's Engineer?** Just over 30 years. The ship I was sailing on was being scrapped and I was given to opportunity to take redundancy, so it was a good time to go.

**Briefly what did you do? Were you down below or on the bridge?**

Virtually all my working time was spent in the engine room, or on deck or in tanks repairing mechanical items. As a watchkeeping engineer I was responsible for the operation of the machinery whilst on watch. As Second Engineer I was responsible to the Chief Engineer for the management and safety of the engine room staff and the maintenance of all the ship's machinery, and as Chief Engineer I was responsible to the Captain and the Company for the safe and efficient operation of the vessel's machinery and the welfare of the engine room staff. I was also the vessel's Safety Officer. As for the bridge, well once I was Chief, I was able to spend more time up there. Most Captains thought I was a frustrated navigator.

## **Now to Oil Tankers**

**How long were the tankers you sailed on?** The biggest ones were 1,143 feet long. (348.5 metres)

**What was the safe stopping distance from full speed?** Well if you just



stopped the engine and left the rudder amidships, depending on the speed at the time, the vessel would run on for several miles before coming to a stop. However, by executing what was known as a Williamson Turn (Google it!) you could bring the ship back to the point where the manoeuvre was started.

**Did you ever lose all power, what happens?** Oh yes. A Blackout. The nemesis of all Chief Engineers. All the lights go out. All the alarms go off. There is much running around but depending on the cause of the problem, we usually managed to get the lights back on after a few seconds and the ship moving again after 10 - 15 minutes.

**Did you ever have crew taken ill or involved in accidents?** Yes, we had seafarers airlifted off the ship because of illness or accidents. Safety was always a high priority and we spent a lot of time and effort in training and raising safety awareness to minimise accidents, but it was a high-risk occupation, and things can go wrong, sometimes with tragic consequences.

**How many people crew a tanker?** Well it varied depending upon the size of the ship and the era. When I first went to sea, the crew of a 26,000-tonne ship was around 45, by the mid '70's we were operating a 250,000-tonne ship with around 30 men. When I retired, we had a crew of 19 on a 100,000-tonne ship which was operating a busy schedule in the North Sea.

**Did you ever have crew that could not speak English?** No, but we did have some Geordies and Scots on board!

**Can you describe a storm to us?** I have been in some big storms, but sometimes the biggest problems occur on what appears to be a lovely day, and I well remember the enormous swells we experienced off the South African coast on one occasion when the ship just fell into a big hole in the sea and came to an abrupt halt. The wave actually broke on top of the wheelhouse which was flooded and the damage on deck was incredible, with the mast bent and machinery and pipelines ripped off the deck.

**You see pictures of tankers moored offshore; can you get to land in those situations?** Not normally, unless you're lucky enough to be paying off and going home. The last ship I was on worked exclusively in the North Sea and I often paid off from the anchorage at Teesbay, coming ashore in the pilot cutter.

**How long were you at sea and how much at home?** Officers had contracts for 3-month trips, so I did 3 months on and about 6 weeks off. Sometimes you had to do an extra month, especially at Christmas as everyone wanted to be home then.

### **The Future**

**Has the legislation changed for cleaning the tanks etc since we have become more aware of pollution?** Well, we have always been very conscious of the pollution side of things and legislation has become progressively more stringent with regards to the permitted levels of oil which can be discharged into the sea. Essentially now no ships are allowed to discharge water with an oil content of more than 15 ppm (parts per million) and in some areas, the discharge of oily water is completely banned.

**Has the new attitude to fossil fuels changed the volume of oil shipped?** Apparently not. World demand for oil is still increasing and is in the region of 100 million barrels per day. That's 16,000,000,000 litres/day

**Is there any plan for tankers to be wind or solar powered?** There are some small battery powered ships, and some hybrids as well, mostly ferries in Norway. Trials have been carried out with sails for tankers, but it may be some time before it becomes a reality. At present the shipping industry is focussed on reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions and there is progress in using cleaner LNG rather than oil for fuel.

**I remember living near Fawley Refinery in Hants and the smell of oil was all pervasive, have you had to live with that when you dock?** Not really nowadays, as the industry has worked hard to reduce the amount of VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds) which are vented to atmosphere. Ships have "closed loaded" for many years now and the gas forced out of the cargo tanks as the cargo comes in, is piped ashore for processing. When discharging the cargo, tanks are closed to the atmosphere and as the cargo is pumped out, the space is filled with inert gas (treated flue gas from the ship's boilers or an inert gas generator) which also eliminates the possibility of an explosive atmosphere in the vessel's cargo tanks.

## **Your Present Role**

**I gather your role has changed now. What do you do?** After leaving the sea, I continued working as a consultant for my previous employer, mainly on offshore projects for the oil industry in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea. Later I was involved in the conversion of an oil tanker for offshore loading in the UK sector, and I also did some work on a project for the Gulf of Mexico which came about as a result of the Deepwater Horizon disaster. Recently work has been a little less exciting and I now sit at home, read pages and pages of documents, and carry out structural reviews of tankers to determine if they are in an acceptable condition to carry my client's cargoes.

**We are indebted to David for providing such a fascinating insight into a life at sea. If you are interested in a career at sea [careersatsea.org](http://careersatsea.org) is a useful starting point.**

## **Parish Council Notes**

**January 2020**

Sarah Winlow from the AONB attended to inform the PC that a dwelling review was to be carried out in coastal villages within the AONB by the end of February. This would identify the number of permanent residences, holiday lets and/or second homes and business premises. This was last carried out in 2014 and concluded that 68% of all homes in Embleton were permanent residences. The PC agreed to compile the data for the AONB, which will be included in their latest management plan.

A meeting is to be sought with our local MP to discuss the issue of small business rates. This will be attended by other local PC's.

Work on the new footpath at the corner on Station Rd is scheduled to start w/c 10<sup>th</sup> February. The traffic scheme for Christon Bank has been partially installed, with 2 of the 3 chicanes completed. The installation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> chicane and the 30mph signs is awaited. The drop-in session for residents to review the proposed traffic scheme for Embleton had indicated full support for a 20mph zone outside the school and a 30mph limit on the road to Dunstan Steads. The proposed installation of rumble strips was not supported, and it was agreed to drop this element of the scheme. Several other issues were raised which will be reviewed with NCC.

The meeting agreed to write to the executors of the late Kay Seymour-Walker to express concerns over the Grade 1 Embleton Tower which is beginning to deteriorate and to request an update on the plans for the building.

Following the resignation of Georgina Armstrong, a vacancy has arisen for a new councillor. Insufficient requests for an election had been received by NCC so the vacancy will be filled by the co-option process.

Following the end of the consultation period the independent examiner is expected to commence his review of our Neighbourhood Plan in mid-February. Work in the quarry has been suspended over the winter months although Coast Care are continuing to clear some areas. A problem with overflow water causing flooding in nearby fields has been reported and is being investigated.

The renovations on the cemetery house are expected to start shortly, and the house should be available through the Homefinder scheme in the summer.

A resident has raised the issue of the weeds growing out of the wall on Station Rd which are obstructing the footpath and causing damage to the wall. NCC will be contacted to establish who is responsible for managing this and about the state of the footpath between Merton Cottages and Station Road.

## **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](http://www.northumberlandparishes.uk/embleton) OR the

Embleton Parish Council Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/embletonparishcouncil/](http://www.facebook.com/embletonparishcouncil/)

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

### **Whinstone Times Advertising Rates**

The cost per issue is **£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 editions.

## Dog Mess in the Quarry

Chris German

There have been several articles in this magazine in the past 18 months or so concerning the problem of dog excrement not being picked up. Whilst the situation in the rest of Embleton appears to have improved the same cannot be said for the quarry. I, like many others, walk my dog in the quarry and appreciate having such an area immediately on the doorstep. In the last couple of months there has been an increase in the amount of dog mess being left by irresponsible owners. In the past couple of weeks, I have bagged and removed nearly 20 lots of dog mess, mainly from the sides of the main path between the two entrances at Quakers Row and Whinstone View.



The quarry is a designated wildlife site and an asset to the local community, not a dog toilet. Apart from the unsightly element of mounds of excrement it also gets on unsuspecting people's footwear with the usual problems of how to remove it. The quarry is also used by children riding their bicycles and generally enjoying the outdoors; I don't imagine their parents would be best pleased if they came home covered in it. I believe the school has also expressed an interest in using the quarry as an outside classroom, clearly, they will not be able to do so if it is littered with dog waste.

To try and prompt these irresponsible owners to clear up after their dog the Parish Council is purchasing a new waste bin for the entrance off Whinstone View and placing notices and doggy waste bags at both entrances. I hope this will encourage people to pick up after their dog, however if it doesn't then the Parish Council will be forced to take action to ensure the culprits are caught and prosecuted. I hope we don't have to go down this route.

## Creighton/Mandell Place Update Mark Bridgeman

As at the start of February, the first 5 houses have been handed over. The access to completed houses is through Creighton Place, while access for the building site remains from Station Road and will do so until the project is complete. The wet weather before Christmas has caused some delays in the schedule and the last of the houses are now due to be complete in April. Repairs to the field and the planting in the field will start in the spring.

# County Councillor Wendy Pattison's report

[wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk)

Tel. 07779 983072 and Facebook - Cllr Wendy Pattison



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**Climate Change:** Northumberland County Council is taking the next step in its climate change commitment and is asking the public to play their part. Last summer the council declared a 'climate emergency' - vowing to half its carbon footprint by 2025 and make Northumberland carbon neutral by 2030. Since 2010 the council has reduced its carbon emissions by a third and the area is now ranked as one of the greenest in the country. However, it is acknowledged it has a significant role to play in further reducing greenhouse gas emissions and cutting its carbon footprint. The council is already assessing a number of innovative schemes e.g. micro hydro electricity generation, solar car ports and heat from mine water as a heat source. In addition, it is looking to expand its household waste recycling, create more footpaths and cycle tracks and increase the number of electric vehicle charging points.

## **Hundreds of New Trees to be planted**

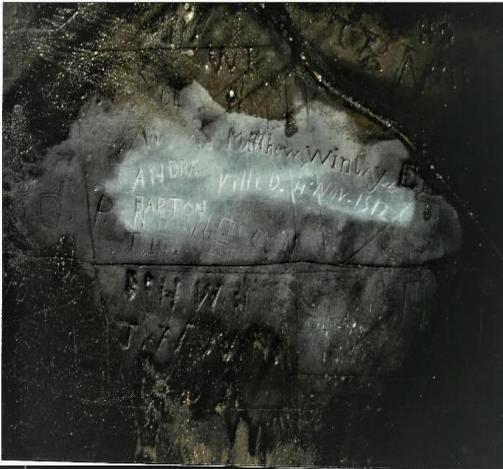
More than 600 new trees are to be planted across Northumberland - making the county greener and cleaner. The council has been successful in its bid to the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund - securing £265,000 for a new two-year tree planting programme, these tree will be planted in urban areas.



## Andra Barton

Of all the articles that have appeared in the Whinstone Times James Rose's story about Sir Andrew Barton has had by far the greatest response from readers of the magazine, especially concerning the famous Andra Barton Rock. Six people tell us they have seen the rock - one lady remembers taking a rubbing of the inscription, using greaseproof paper, in the late 1940s and the last reported sighting we have is September 2019.

We are told that the rock is to the north of where the burn runs into the sea near the golf course and is quite far out towards the Emblestone. It is only visible during exceptionally low tides and even then it is difficult to find. The next time that the tide will be very, very low will be the Spring tides in mid-September and mid-October.



There are many other names on the rock as well as Andra Barton's. An entry in a book from the 1930s that we have been shown, states that when the rock was visible in 1915 the dates decipherable were 1840, 1841, 1851, 1883, 1903, 1913 and 1915. Later names are said to be of young men who constructed the antitank defences when it was feared that Hitler's army might invade via Embleton Bay during the Second World War. Matthew

Winlay, a pupil at Embleton School whose name and the date 1840 are on the rock, later wrote to a local paper saying that he had been shown the rock as an Embleton schoolboy and the rumour was that it was the schoolmaster who had carved Andra Barton's name there! Who knows?

Many thanks to everyone who has contacted us and a special thanks to Judy Robson whose photograph we have reproduced here.

**Editor's Note:** It is very hard to do justice to the photographs and brass rubbings in a magazine of this size, there are now larger examples on our community website [www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk](http://www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk)

## Good News from the Creighton Hall

Some twelve months ago the Managers of the Hall decided to have a critical look at the fabric and fittings of the building. We already knew that there were problems relating to the condition of the roof. This was confirmed in an independent structural engineer's report, which provided us with an action plan for short term action, i.e. immediately, and long term (10-15 years).

We were also aware, having visited many other village halls, that our chairs were long past their 'sell-by date' and we knew they needed replacing.

The lighting in the main hall was causing major problems, as some of the tubes were now defunct, and trying to change them without scaffolding was virtually impossible. The answer to this problem was LED lights, long lasting and much cheaper to run.

The problem for all these refurbishments was money, which we didn't have.

One of the Managers, Jean Lawrence set about with great gusto, persistence and vigour to apply for grants and her success belies the old adage that you can't get blood out of a stone, and as a result of her efforts grants have been acquired so that we can proceed

- Community Chest (NCC) has provided 75% of the cash needed to provide 112 fully padded chairs.
- The National Lottery Community Fund grant will pay for roof repairs as well as the long-needed extraction unit for the gas cooker.
- The trustees of the Northumberland Estate Community Fund Grant will provide money to pay for the LED lighting.

We are truly grateful for everyone's generosity.

Now we have got the 'bit between our teeth', we are looking to redecorate the Hall and refurbish the toilets, watch this space! Don't forget that the Hall is available to book for parties, weddings, sleepovers and many other events.

## Creighton Hall 100 Club.

The annual Grand Draw was held on the 21st December 2019.

This year's £100 winner was Kay Moody with No. 124.

To join/re-join pay your £10 at Embleton Post Office by Friday March 2<sup>nd</sup>

## Dear Beachcomber

I read with interest your article in the Whinstone Times, as I also regard myself as a Beachcomber and by chance walk the stretch of beach you highlight about five times a week throughout the year.

I realise you have chosen our beach deliberately, but I would say it is a particularly bad example to choose. If you have studied the beach as closely as I have done, you will note there is more beach litter in the winter when there are fewer people on the beach. I would maintain that the litter nearly all comes by sea, for example, the little children's straws you mentioned that fooled me too, are cotton buds. Tyres tend to have been ships fenders or weights to tie down lobster pots, offcuts of rope fishermen throw in and anglers fishing line.

I am also very worried when you imply that litter picking on beaches does no more than raise awareness. Please don't unwittingly put people off, we need beach litter removed. The Marine Conservation Society are scientifically studying beach litter, I join their survey each year, some people report back to them much more frequently. The National Trust, Coast Care, Litter Heroes and people like myself regularly pick litter.

In conclusion, I maintain that Embleton beach is a clean beach and only needs a few people like myself to collect the litter each day. I do not see your doomsday scenario. The answer like the problem is multinational, to aim to make items that may end in the sea biodegradable. In the meantime, we need our army of people who collect and record beach litter.

## Volunteer Opportunities

## Coast Care



By now most of you will probably know of Coast Care or seen our volunteers at work along the Coast, or in Embleton Quarry. Coast Care is an environmental initiative working within the Northumberland Coast AONB. Our aim is to engage people with the natural and built environment by providing volunteer

opportunities that help to protect it.

We're always looking for new opportunities for our volunteers. Coast Care is well known for its beach cleans, but we also run practical conservation tasks such as vegetation management and maintaining pathways, as well as wildlife survey sessions where we train our volunteers to survey hedgerows, bats, birds, pollinators and much more.

**To find out more contact:** Emma Witcutt Coast Care Volunteer Centre, Seahouses Hub 07816 603953 [www.coast-care.co.uk](http://www.coast-care.co.uk)



## Embleton Primary School News

### Beach School: Tabitha Newman: Age 11

Beach school is an opportunity for kids to go down to the beach every Friday. There they learn normal subjects like maths, english and science but with the help of the sea and the sand. Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January was quite exciting. We got ready and walked down to the beach in pairs and had Worship by the Waves. This is where we have worship, but we can do more, like collecting things to help explain the story. We then all headed down to the beach in our classes. We are learning about an artist called Claude Monet. He painted lots of very famous paintings and he also painted the same place at different types of day and the year. So, every Friday we paint at the same place but at different times of the day. We finished our watercolours and got into our trainers. We then did our beach circuits which is where we try to beat our own scores and when we go back to school, we put it in a line graph to see how we've improved. Then it was lunch where we go up to the Golf Club and have either pizza and chips, chicken goujons and chips or sausage rolls and chips. Today it was pizza and chips. We then headed down to the wall (which is a large sand dune) to do drama. The wind was so violent we had to head back to the beach to finish our drama. We then got 15 minutes to play. My friends buried me, and we made a museum around me and said I was Tutankhamun. We then all headed up to school and got ready to go home.

### The Generosity of Local People

Milly Emmerson has written to remind us of the outstanding generosity of local people over the last year. One group Milly mentions in particular: Eileen, Ian, Dawn and James (Cocka), held two major fundraisers over the last twelve months in memory of people from Embleton. They raised £743 for The British Heart Foundation, in memory of Robin Emmerson and Adam Moody, with a raffle at the Grey's Inn. The same group organised an August Bank Holiday barbeque in memory of Evie-Rose Cowan and achieved a staggering £1,833 for the North East Air Ambulance.

Milly also drew attention to the crowd funding efforts of Gary Woodburn that made it possible for his wife Olivia to have a life-saving operation in Spain. People responded generously and Olivia is now recuperating in the UK.



We would also like to recognise the numerous other fundraising events that take place across our parish each year, such as the activities at the Blink Bonny in Christon Bank. There are too many separate groups and events to list here but such selfless work contributes to a strong and vibrant local community. So, a BIG thank you to those who volunteer their time to make it all happen, and to the people who support the events and donate so generously.

## Messy Church

**Rev Alison Hardy**

Messy Church is a new way of doing and being Church together. It is designed to appeal to all ages and is very informal and friendly. Our Messy Church at Holy Trinity, Embleton, has been going for about 18 months and is open to all.



We meet every two months on Saturday mornings from 10.30am until noon. Each Messy Church follows the same pattern, a time of craft activities based on the theme of the day, then a simple act of worship with a Bible story, songs and short prayers, then we share a very informal

lunch together in the parish room. Messy Church is for everyone, not just for children. We all join in together.

The next Messy Church sessions are on:

Saturday March 28 Messy Joseph

Saturday May 30 Messy Holy Spirit

Why not come and see? We'd love to welcome you. The only rule is that children must be accompanied by at least one adult.

## Embleton Village Children's Party Debbie Lockwood

Following the Embleton Village Children's Christmas Party on Wednesday 18th



December, we would like to kindly thank everyone for attending and hope you all had a wonderful time. We would especially like to thank Mike Lockwood, of Lock-Fix Northumberland for sponsoring the event. Shelagh Coxon and the Creighton Memorial Hall Committee for providing

the use of the venue. Janet Murphy, Joan Little, Christine Hunter and Charles, Sara McGow and staff of Embleton Primary School. Thank you also to GG Entertainment and Morrisons

In January the new Government introduced an Agricultural Bill to Parliament - the first since 1947. This new Bill, and the country leaving the EU, means this is a very significant moment for the future of the countryside. Farmers will no longer receive 'area-based payments' for maintaining their land in good condition, instead over the next 7 years 'public money for public goods' will be the driving force. Farmers will be paid for protecting and improving water and



air quality, maintaining and encouraging healthy soil, planting trees and improving hedgerows, improving livestock diets, using less man-made nitrogen fertilizer and a huge number of other environmental benefits, plus improving access and education. Part of the Government's process in establishing this framework is engaging with farmers on how to test out concepts. We are taking part, along

with 56 other farms along this coastal strip (between Bamburgh and Howick), in testing out how we can work together, in a cluster, to deliver large scale benefits and share ideas, knowledge and practices. We are aiming to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better shape than we found it - in line with the Government's '25 Year Environment Plan'.

On the farm in the last month we have been ploughing some of the overwinter stubble, where the fields are in a dry enough condition. Grass will be sown in some fields on our seven- year rotation, and spring beans in other fields, which are a very good nitrogen fixing crop. We have been working in the woods also, thinning out trees to allow more light in, leaving space for the best trees to continue growing, and providing wood for the biomass boilers. When a wood is felled new trees are planted which makes this a carbon neutral operation. We have just invested in a new 'forwarder', a timber trailer with a mini crane, which will pull behind the tractor to pick up the logs efficiently. My late father-in-law would be very pleased with that, and the new Government thinking behind what farming can provide in the future.

## Trinity Tots Playgroup

Eleanor Wood

This January Trinity Tots Playgroup celebrated our 3rd birthday. We had a lovely party, lots of fun & this delicious cake. We would like to thank everyone for all the support & help we receive. Trinity Tots run every Thursday 10:00-12:00, in the Parish Rooms, Embleton for children (and parents/carers) of all ages, including school-age during the holidays. We usually have themed activities each week, some group outings, lots of fun, good chat and always snacks (and tea & cake for the grown-ups). Please get in touch, come along or see our Facebook Group, if you'd like to find out more.



## Embleton Guides

Monica Cornall

Embleton Guides have been fundraising for koalas and other wildlife injured in the Australian bush fires. They held a film night at the Creighton Hall (The Greatest Showman) and raised £90. This has been donated to the Healesville Sanctuary in Victoria, Australia which has been flying injured koalas into their vet hospital. We also have been doing some First Aid Training with the paramedics from Howick Coastguards, including CPR, burns, bleeds, choking, allergies and some rather excellent bandaging. Embleton Guides meets weekly in the village and is for girls aged 10 to 14. If you have a child interested in joining, they are welcome to come along to a few meetings to try it out. Ring Monica 01665 576890.

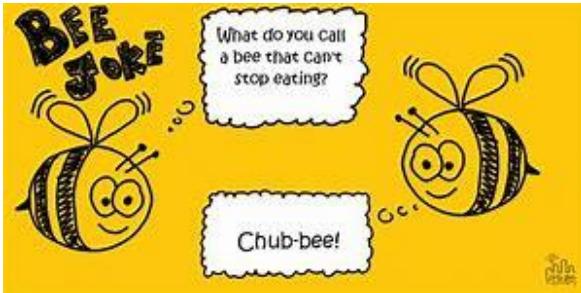
## Public Consultation on plan for the Northumberland Coast

Consultation has opened on an important plan that will help to shape the future of the Northumberland Coast. Local people are being asked to provide comments on the draft Management Plan for the Area of Natural Beauty (AONB). The draft plan, covering 2020-2024 has been prepared by the AONB Partnership. The Consultation is open for six weeks from **Monday 20th Jan until Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**. People can comment via AONB website at [www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org/management-plan](http://www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org/management-plan). Further information see [www.landscapesforlife.org.uk](http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk)

## 'The A to Z of Bees'

A talk by Professor John Horbrough Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March at Howick Village Hall, NE66 3LE

Professor John Horbrough from Warkworth has over 60 years' experience of beekeeping. His fascinating talk will include a brief history of beekeeping to show how we have arrived at where we are in our relationship with bees and



other pollinators, the impact of changes in farming practice over the last 60 years and the effect of climate change. There will be a Q & A session and the opportunity to 'taste the difference' in honeycombs produced at different hive

locations. Proceeds will go towards a new heating system for the village hall and a donation to the Beekeepers Association. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start (Tea and coffee will be available).

To reserve a place contact;-John 01665-576413 Audrey 01665-577797 [johnroper1@btinternet.com](mailto:johnroper1@btinternet.com) or [rob\\_aud@btinternet.com](mailto:rob_aud@btinternet.com)

## Embleton Carpet Bowls Club.

**John F Wallis**

What has the new year in mind for us? What members of the Carpet Bowls Club know is that on Tuesday and Thursday evenings until April they will enjoy a time full of enjoyment, good humour and banter.

In the last issue, we asked "has the tide turned"? Answer "not sure". We only played one match which we lost. During January and February we had our pairs and triples competitions, so watch this space. We were sad to hear that Marian Craig who with her late husband Jim has been a member for over twenty years is moving to join her family in Leeds. She will be missed but we all wish her well. The first of this season's membership competitions took place in Dec, and Judith Hazelwood was the winner with Brenda Robson being runner up. Well played ladies.

## Nature Notes - December/January

Peter Brown

Where are all the finches? Tits everywhere but no finches. Where are all the sparrows? Rooks everywhere but no sparrows. I wonder if you had the same experience on RSPB Garden Watch day at the end of January. We would love to know. It is a long time since we have seen Greenfinches and our usual (but



*Treecreper*

generally more unusual) Siskins. We never get House Sparrows but often Tree Sparrows, but they have disappeared too. To compensate, there were some firsts: a pair of beautiful Nuthatches (only seen individually before) and, as if they knew it was a special day, a pair of Treecreepers. They were not doing their usual creeping up trees but walking on a wall looking awkward with their three-pronged claws and bow-legged gait, tiny little creatures with a white breast and a beak as long as their heads.

Elsewhere, rare sightings include another Hobby hunting near Craster and a Siberian Chiffchaff at Newton, spotted by a visiting twitcher, a Goldcrest was seen near the Creighton Hall and flocks of between fifty and a hundred curlews have been frequent visitors to the fields next to Sea Lane, often accompanied by equally distinctive-sounding Oystercatchers. Around twenty Fieldfares, the large cousin of the Thrush, were also there in the middle of January. Towards the end of January, tiny jellyfish sometimes called Sea

Gooseberries were seen on the sand in the bay. Well spotted! A red squirrel was seen in Greyfields as well as around Shirewater but a grey was dancing on the bridge over the River Aln on the way to Alnwick: not for long...Visitors to Embleton in mid January.



*Nuthatch*

spotted 20+ Tree Sparrows in the quarry and Golden Eye, Gadwall, Tufted Ducks, a Little Grebe, and a good number of Shovelers, as well as the usual Coots and Mallards on the quarry

lake. It is also reported that the swans are still here feeding on the oil seed rape north of Embleton, usually 26 whoopers and always 2 mute swans. An incredible 27 collar doves were seen, sitting on the wires at the farm by the golf club. Puffins have been reported and sadly one had met its end and was being consumed by a crow on Embleton beach.

The latest National Trust State of Nature Report makes depressing reading, with a reported decline in the average abundance of nature of 13% since the 1970s and with a fall in numbers in 41% of the species studied. The full report

can be found at [nbn.org.uk/state-of-nature2019](http://nbn.org.uk/state-of-nature2019). What would Greta say? What would Donald say?! Suggestions please!

Please send any sightings, reports or articles to:  
[naturenotes.whinstonetimes@gmail.com](mailto:naturenotes.whinstonetimes@gmail.com)

## The Golden Guide for the Over 50's

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## What's on March

- 3<sup>rd</sup> **Embleton Women's Club**: Social afternoon 2p.m. Parish Room
- 5<sup>th</sup> **Craster W.I.**: Enjoyable Crafts by Ruth. 7.15 Craster Memorial Hall
- 6<sup>th</sup> **Film Night**: 6.30pm Howick Village Hall NE66 3LE  
[JohnRoper1@btinternet.com](mailto:JohnRoper1@btinternet.com)
- 9<sup>th</sup> **Embleton Flower Club**: demo by Julia Loudon A world full of interest.  
Creighton Hall 7.30p.m. Members Free, visitors £5.
- 10<sup>th</sup> **Drop-in Meeting**: with Tony Brown re Embleton Surgery 2.30-4p.m. in  
the Women's Room at Creighton Hall.
- 10<sup>th</sup> **Embleton W.I.**: Avril Meakin -local historian. Parish Room 2p.m.
- 11<sup>TH</sup> **The A-Z of Bees**: Prof Horbrough, 7.30 Howick Village Hall NE66 3LE
- 16<sup>th</sup> **Craster Hist Soc**: 'Bamburgh Ossary' by Jessica Turner
- 25<sup>th</sup> **Seahouses Hist Soc** "The Lifeboats of Holy Island" by Linda Bankier
- 29<sup>th</sup> **Film Night** 6pm Howick Village Hall NE66 3LE  
[JohnRoper1@btinternet.com](mailto:JohnRoper1@btinternet.com)

From the start of March Embleton School will be selling raffle tickets for a Grand Easter Raffle. Donations of prizes most welcome at the School.

## What's on in April

- 2<sup>nd</sup> **Craster W.I.**: A Day in the Life of a Paramedic by David Waters
- 5<sup>th</sup> **Live music Howick Village Hall**: Martin Stephenson and The Daintees. £13 per head (Age 16 and over ) 7p.m. start. Bring your own drinks. Must pre-book contact John Roper 07905696555 or [johnroper1@btinternet.com](mailto:johnroper1@btinternet.com)
- 6<sup>th</sup> **Embleton Flower Club**: Practical evening, arrangement to include 'eggs - chocolate or not' 7p.m. Creighton Hall TBC
- 7<sup>th</sup> **Embleton Women's Club**: -Outing
- 8<sup>th</sup> **Embleton W.I.**: Brenda Dinsdale -The Life of a Jewish Lady 2p.m. Parish Room.
- 17<sup>th</sup> **Film Night 6.30pm Howick Village Hall NE66 3LE**  
[JohnRoper1@btinternet.com](mailto:JohnRoper1@btinternet.com)
- 20<sup>th</sup> **Craster Hist Soc**: Richard Hall The Alnwick Lions Club and Newspapers for the Blind.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> **Seahouses Hist Soc**: Avril Meakin "Howicks' 7 tales of the unexpected"

## 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

## Creighton Hall User Groups contact details

**Carpet bowls** (Tues/Thurs) contact Bill MacDonald 01665 600830

**Line Dance** (Wed) contact Elizabeth Henderson 01665 576154

**Flower Club** (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month) Shelagh Coxon 01665 **576791**

**Snooker Club** contact Dougie Hogg 01665 575221

**Pilates** Tuesday mornings Contact Traci Robertson 07415254647.

**Badminton** (3 Mondays per month) contact Bobby Greenley 07834262911

**Further Information contact: Shelagh Coxon 01665 576791**

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