



Sedgefield NEWS

April 2015



Farmer takes his ease at 100

Born in Sunderland, son of a sea-going engineer and a sometime laundry and shop worker, George Edgoose celebrated his 100th birthday with family, friends and fellow residents at the nursing home in Stockton, where he now lives.

His father left the sea in 1908 to work for Doxford's shipyard, building destroyers, and later started a market garden, which set George – around 7 years old at the time - off on a regime of plantcare, which was to continue until well into his 90s. More of that later.

George and Greta Edgoose, married in 1942 and bought Todd's House Farm, Sedgefield, in 1953, after the death of her father and the subsequent sale of their market gardening business in Easington.

At Todd's House, there was a great deal of hard work to be done to bring the house and buildings up to standard for a family and a Tuberculin tested herd.

The learning curve was fast and soon the couple were sharing the work of a mixed farm, milking, looking after calves, pigs and hens, a few ducks for Christmas – but never sheep - long story!

The vegetable production continued but now it was mainly potatoes and turnips, on a field scale – selling to a wholesaler near Darlington. The emphasis changed after they sold a field to Buxtead Chickens, George managing the poultry unit for a number of years, alongside the farm.

By the time they sold the cows in 1968 the farm was all grass, they were milking about 15 cows and keeping heifer calves to increase cow numbers but had stopped keeping other livestock.

The work of the farm gradually passed to the next generation in the late 70s, but George started a kitchen garden after "retiring". It became legendary amongst family and friends – there was always a surplus! This went on until he was well into his 80s, when the work became too hard, but he continued the upkeep of the front garden, his skill and enthusiasm for flowers making an impact on the visual appeal of the Todds' House Farm B&B and holiday cottage business. He only condescended to have a walking frame after he had fallen over while watering the plants, on condition that he would be able to use it to go on watering plants, which he did!

The telegram from the Queen is a proud symbol of a target that George was as determined to reach as any of his long, hardworking life!

Arts excellence award for college

Sedgefield Community College is proud to announce that the quality of its Arts and Cultural provision has recently been recognised by the Arts Council England, through the award of Artsmark status. This award is at the 'gold standard', which recognises the highest possible standard and is reserved for only those organisations demonstrating exceptional practice. Achieving this status is thoroughly deserved and goes some way to recognise the efforts of a dedicated team of staff, who have created an environment rich in opportunities for students to experience and excel in the arts.

Working hard for Comic Relief

On both Saturday the 28th February and the 7th March we held a cake sale on the drive of Lucy's Grandma and Grandad at Aingarth, West Park Lane. We had baked the night before to prepare for the sale. A huge thankyou to everyone who passed by and bought our cakes and biscuits. Special thanks to our teacher Mr Steel and our school friends Lara Hope and Hayley Watson for coming along and supporting us. We raised a fantastic amount of £117.31 for Comic Relief.

Lucy Howell and Maddie Hand aged 10. (pictured on page 3)

The deadline for May is Wednesday 15th April

Send News & adverts to sedgefieldnews@hotmail.com 07572 502 904 55 White House Drive, TS21 3BU
Diary items to eventssedgefieldnews@outlook.co.uk / 17 The Lane Sport to chrisjlines@aol.com

The Trusty *Updates from Sedgefield Development Trust*

Advertising - a new way to pay

After much thought, we have decided to move to an upfront payment scheme for advertising in Sedgefield News, so this month, new advertisers as well as some regulars will have received an invoice from PayPal. You can pay by PayPal, bank transfer, credit card, cheque or cash. The difference is that we will ask to be paid before we commit the advert to print. There will be a short period for advertisers to catch up on previous payments but by the May edition we hope that the system will be working fully. This has benefits for both parties, and there should no longer be any confusion about whether payment is made and advertising can go ahead.

Residents continue to reduce energy costs

The Sedgefield Energy Switch initiative continues to gather momentum. We have now come to the end of the second registration period, with people continuing to register their interest in the scheme. Since the commencement of the initiative last August, 350 people have registered, with 50% finding the savings attractive enough to switch to an alternative tariff or supplier. The average saving that people have made is over £200 per year and in all, residents of Sedgefield have now saved themselves almost £35,000.

The feedback received from people has been very encouraging; not only the level of savings but also how easy and hassle free the process is. As a result of this positive feedback, the Sedgefield Development Trust has decided to continue with the initiative throughout this year, to allow more people to benefit from the scheme. We will advertise details throughout the year in future issues of the News, at local events, via posters in public areas, on the Sedgefield Website and don't forget, if you have benefited already please spread the word and tell your friends.

Registration is very simple and can be done in one of two ways:

1. If you are happy to register on line yourself, go to **www.sedgefieldweb.co.uk** Simply click on the 'REGISTER NOW' button below and follow the link.
2. If you prefer to register and receive information through the post, or need any assistance, please call the Sedgefield Development Trust Helpline on **07980 134 594** Registering for Sedgefield Energy Switch commits you to absolutely nothing. Once registration closes, there is a tendering process, after which you will receive a personal offer. You then simply choose to accept or not.

Key dates for the next Sedgefield Energy Switch

- Launch and registration opens 24th March. Registration closes 18th May
- Auction will take place on 19th May with offers issued by 29th May
- Offer acceptance and scheme closure, 29th June

The Sedgefield Plan

Shaping the future of our area

Since our last bulletin a great deal has happened that has a direct impact on The Sedgefield Plan. The inspector's critical interim report on Durham County Council's Local Plan came as a big surprise to all of us and as you will know has been the subject of protest by DCC and developers and a debate in Westminster Hall that focussed on inspector and not the evidential basis for the DCC plan.

As you know it has been difficult to reconcile the need to 'broadly comply' with DCC's draft local Plan with the wishes of the community which have been so clearly expressed throughout the project in surveys, public meetings and discussions, since the interim report there is no longer a draft local plan to comply with.

The report is very specific in regard to Sedgefield, it has vindicated the community's stance on housing numbers, brownfield sites and the need to disperse the new allocation among neighbouring communities. The steering group now has the job of amending the plan to incorporate the inspector's specific assertions that the saved policies of the now defunct Sedgefield District Council, are the documents to which planning policy will revert.

With the help of Planning Aid, we have also had a planning QC carry out a 'health check' on The Sedgefield Plan. He has made some constructive criticisms of the document as it stands and makes the point that if we incorporate the structural changes that he has suggested along with changes to the phrasing of some of the policies, he can see no reason that it could not pass inspection. This is very good news for a team of lay volunteers who have worked on this project for 18 months, put in close to 4000 hours and written 20,000 words as a service to the community,

Musically talented?

A number of years ago we at Sedgefield Methodist Church placed a short item in the Sedgefield News seeking a willing volunteer to help provide musical accompaniment during the Sunday service. Music plays an important part in the worship of the church and we were delighted when Jim Briggs responded and offered to join our small team of musicians. Jim not only came to help, but as a talented musician he actively joined in and became a member of our church, contributing to the worship and social life of the congregation. Sadly Jim died early in March and he will be greatly missed by the whole of our congregation. As we only have one other musician we again find ourselves in the position where we need additional help. We have three excellent instruments, a clavichord, an electronic organ and a piano. Perhaps you have given this kind of support to another church in the past or maybe this would be something new. Why not visit us one Sunday morning at 10am and make yourself known. We will be delighted to meet you.

We would also like to hear from you if you play other instruments. Music makes such an important contribution to worship in the church, and our musicians are very much appreciated. It would be great to form a musical group to contribute to our worship.

If you would like to help or require more information please contact *David Glass (Tel 621618)*

Sedgefield Plan continued

supported by our excellent professional advisors, Fairhurst.

It is imperative that The Sedgefield Plan is submitted to DCC for inspection and subsequent approval as quickly as possible, because an 'emergent plan' provides the protection we seek.

However, before this can happen we need to carry out a statutory consultation with a number of neighbouring local authorities, utilities, and Government departments.

The town council is leading on this and has the matter in hand. Once this is done the plan will then be completed and can be submitted for inspection and hopefully approved. Following this you will get your chance to vote for it in a referendum. once complete, the plan will be available for all to see at **www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk** - which is well worth a visit.

Steve's Nature Diary *The natural world month by month*

With spring in full flow it won't be long before the bulk of the migrant birds will be arriving from their winter haunts ready to make use of the longer hours of daylight that they can find in the UK. One of the first to arrive is the Sand Martin which breeds in some of the local quarries and spends a lot of time feeding in the countryside around Sedgfield including on the many insects that can be found over the lake at Hardwick Park. They are the smallest European hirundines (martins and swallows), with dark brown upper parts and dark under wings contrasting with otherwise pale under parts divided by a distinctive dark chest bar. They nest in holes and have taken to artificial Sand Martin banks like the ones at Coatham Marsh, Low Barns and Saltholme. Another martin which can be seen flying around in April is the House Martin and it really disappoints me when I see that house holders have hung ribbons/plastic bags and tape to discourage them from building nests on their houses. House Martins fly all the way back from Africa to build a new nest or reuse a nest from last year which may need repairing. The nest is made of pellets of mud mixed with grass, lined with feathers and vegetable fibre. A new nest is completed in one to two weeks, while repairs to an existing one normally takes only a few days. Populations of House Martins have been in decline since the 1970's and they are an amber species of concern. Another hirundine which is on the amber list is the Swallow which also arrives back in April. Swallows are found in areas where there is a ready and accessible supply of small insects. They are particularly fond of open pasture with access to water and quiet farm buildings. All these species are nature pest controllers eating up to 850 insects a day. The final species in this group, similar to the swallows and martins but in a different family, is the Swift. This is a superb flier and even sleeps on the wing! You really know spring is here when you are sat in the garden and a flock of these aerial hunters go screaming past.

Lucy, Maddie & a stall loaded for comic relief story, p.1



Ceddesfeld Hall *SA*

Home of Sedgfield Community Assoc. There are several special events to look forward to, starting with the Easter Picnic on Easter Monday 6th April. At 1.45pm, the May Queen and attendants are selected and from 2 pm, an Easter Egg Hunt for under 12s begins in the grounds. There are prizes for all decorated and dyed eggs and Easter bonnets.

A Magna Carta/Mediaeval Fayre Dinner is to be held on Saturday 25th April. The evening starts with a drinks reception at 7pm, followed by a 5 course meal. Music is provided by the very talented, local singing group, Lirica. Tickets are £18 and can be obtained from the Town Council Offices or from Pat or Wendy. May 16th brings Mediaeval Fair to the Village Green, filling it with stalls and special events for all. Ceddesfeld bar and special activities in the grounds, add to the occasion. As you can imagine, the lead up to the day is busy, with lots to organise and collections to be made. Volunteers to man stalls and help with collection in the run up to the day are most welcome.

Looking ahead to June 20th, Sedgfield Day will bring local folk together to celebrate community life and sample the various sports, games, arts and crafts activities available to residents. It's another family day, not to be missed.

On 26th & 27th June, Sedgfield Lyric Singers will be performing their summer concert. The choir sing a varied range of music and meet at Ceddesfeld every Friday evening from 7.30 pm until 9.00 pm. New members are always welcome to come along or for further information call Rob on 01740 623332. For more information contact Wendy on 01740 620206, Pat on 01740 620607 or visit our website on www.sedgfieldsca.org.uk

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Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crime Watch

February Panel Meeting

PCSO Gavin Rutter attended for Durham Police. He reported on crimes since December and gave a review of Police activities during this period. There were **24 crimes in total**, the majority being **garage burglaries on Winterton Estate**. Most of these burglaries are linked to two suspects from Middlesbrough who will attend court shortly.

Winterton residents have complained to Police about a lack of feedback on these crimes but also about a general lack of crime information through the Voice Connect system. This Neighbourhood Watch group feels the Police have neglected this avenue of communication leading to a drop in interest from Sedgefield's public.

PCSO Rutter accepted this viewpoint and undertook to discuss the matter with his Sergeant, with a view to rectifying the matter. He did, however, point out a number of social media links on the Police website where such information might be found. The chairman suggested that many Sedgefield residents are unfamiliar with the use of such media.

PCSO Rutter has since reported on some current problems with the Voice Messaging System which should be rectified soon.

A resident who has asked for Crime Prevention assistance a number of times has still not received this. The meeting was informed that there are only two Crime Prevention Officers in Durham Police Force!

Another major residents' concern was the **continued** traffic safety and nuisance problems on Durham Road and Salters Lane. PCSO Rutter made particular note of parking and speeding issues.

Residents can telephone 101 to inform Police of any suspicious vehicles or persons causing concern, helping to make our village & our homes even safer. For Health related assistance telephone 111

Next meeting: Tuesday 14th April

Drugs recovery programmes work, says PCC.

Durham PCC, Ron Hogg recently attended a drugs recovery event with the DART team at Durham Prison, and was introduced to some of the Drugs and Alcohol Recovery Team's successful clients, who told of their experiences with the team. The team has a range of strategies to support prisoners with substance misuse issues. The event brought together prison based teams with organisations offering similar support services in the community, such as Lifeline and Turning Point. Current and former members of these programmes used the forum to share experiences of their recovery journey, while the professionals made the most of the opportunity to share ideas on a range of recovery models.

Underlining his support for the work, the commissioner suggested *"an open debate on our drugs policy"* and *"the need to move towards a recovery-based approach."* He also proposed that evidence from Portugal and the USA demonstrates that new approaches to this problem *"do not boost drug use and could save millions of pounds if users were treated for addiction rather than sent to prison."*

Plans made to honour Sedgefield's WW1 fallen

Sedgefield Local History Society, in collaboration with Sedgefield Veterans, are putting plans in place to plan to commemorate all 42 Sedgefield men who lost their lives in World War I.

Following the tradition established by the Veterans, marking the repatriation of service personnel lost in Afghanistan, a brief ceremony will take place to mark the sacrifice of each man on the day he lost his life 100 years ago.

The first will be held on Saturday April 25, honouring the memory of Robert Ruddick. Shortly afterwards, on May 7th, we will remember William Affleck Anderson, who died on the Lusitania. Everyone is welcome to attend, from 10.45am at the Veterans' flag. We are very grateful to those people whose research and family knowledge has yielded more information on James Weir Gibbin, Richard McDonald and Alfred Coates, as well as Robert Ruddick, our first to fall.

If you have any details, photos or stories regarding any of our valiant 42, please get in touch on 620091 or email norma@neal.myzen.co.uk.

Police numbers

Local Police 101

CPO Duncan Gill **01325 742714**
Parking Shop **0191 3846633**

CAB Adviceline numbers

From land line: 08444 111 444
From a mobile: 0300 330 06 50
TYPETALK: 08444 111 445

PC Todd's report

In late December 2014 Winterton Estate became the target for thieves with a number of garages broken into. It is believed these same thieves returned in early January 2015 but this time a vigilant resident observed their nocturnal activities and called the police. This quick thinking allowed the police to close in on the unsuspecting criminals. After a short chase out of the estate their vehicle failed to negotiate a bend and crashed into a field. A male and female from the Middlesbrough area were arrested and stolen property recovered from their vehicle. Let's hope the Criminal Justice system gives them what they deserve!

Other crimes reported include a garage burglary in Maple Grove, a shed burglary in Cunningham Court and a works van suffered from scratches to its paintwork while parked in Beaumont Court.

Pub Watch

At a meeting held recently in the Nag's Head, 3 persons were handed warning letters regarding an incident in the Black Lion pub. Unacceptable or violent behaviour will not be tolerated in any pub or club in Sedgefield village. Action will be taken against offenders.

Until next time, Keith

NETpark aims to be 'global powerhouse'

A memorandum of understanding has been signed between Business Durham, Durham University and CPI, major players in the existing success of NETPark and heavily involved in outlining a plan to turn the establishment into a "global powerhouse". Managing director of Business Durham Simon Goon said: "It will be home to hundreds of companies and thousands of people, all working to unleash the potential of materials by integrating them into products which address our most significant societal challenges. These include a new biosensor to detect infection remotely, a new way of storing renewable energy, uncovering the secrets of the universe, or even securing our data to help us feel more comfortable in the world."

Business Durham manages NETPark on behalf of Durham County Council, while Durham University has several spin-out companies on site. CPI, an internationally recognised technology innovation centre, has invested in and secured three national centres for NETPark: Healthcare Photonics, Formulation and Printable Electronics.

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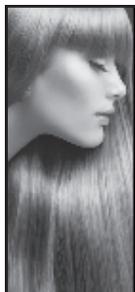
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WHAT'S ON IN APRIL?

with Events Editor,
Paul Anderson

Wednesday 1st

Sedgefield W.I. "Woollybacks of Stanhope" Lynne Dent, Sedgefield Parish Hall at 7.15pm. Members' competition is a knitted hat. Visitors are always welcome.

Saturday 4th

Quiz Night Sedgefield Cricket Club 8pm Presented by John Bryant

Sunday 5th

Sedgefield Farmers' Market on the village green, from 8.30am to 12.30pm

Thursday 9th

Sedgefield Show Meeting at 8pm in the Nag's Head. 'Grand National Draw'

Friday 10th

Sedgefield Country Market Parish Hall 10-11.30am. Cakes, produce, crafts, cards and plants for sale. A perfect opportunity to enjoy a tea or coffee and cake while meeting friends, whilst a warm welcome awaits everyone

Sedgefield and District U3A (instead of Good Friday) Sedgefield Parish Hall at 2pm. Roger Barrell 'Shell Shock'. Members Free - Guests £3 at the door Everyone welcome. For further information call Brenda on 01740 629574

Live Music Night Sedgefield Cricket Club 7.45 pm

Headlining: Izzy Burns Band. Also featuring Sonic Fruits, Keith Morrison & John Wrightson Band. Admission £10 including buffet. Tel 621347 for more info.

Monday 13th

Methodist Wives and Friends Gordon Henderson - Roman Medicine

Local History Speakers Ceddesfeld Hall at 7.45pm. Dr John Banham: Backhouse and Co. Darlington - Quaker Bankers

Tuesday 14th

Neighbourhood Watch Panel Meeting Fletcher room, Parish Hall 7pm.

Ladies' Club Ceddesfeld Hall. Dorothy's Well, with Jim O'Connor

Wednesday 15th

Afternoon Tea in memory of Joyce Lowe 2.30pm in Ceddesfeld Hall. Proceeds to the British Red Cross North East. Tickets are £10 pp from Ann Carr 01740 629070 or from Sedgefield Post Office

Saturday 18th

Coffee Morning in aid of 1st Sedgefield Guides. 10 - 11.30am in the Methodist Church Hall. Coffee, home-made cakes and book sale

Monday 20th

Meditation group The Welcome Room at St Edmund's. 7 - 7:30pm. All welcome for a short time of reflection.

Sedgefield Family History Group (Branch of Cleveland FHS). 7.15 at Ceddesfeld Hall (Please note new start time). "Chester where are you?" A Great Uncle who was born in Ripon and ended up in Canada. Visit www.sedgefieldfamilyhistory.org.uk or telephone 620367

Tuesday 21st

Ferryhill, Sedgefield and District Flower Club Scottish National Demonstrator Kate Kerr "Au Naturelle" Parish Hall 7.30pm. Various stalls and a raffle. Tickets available at Jayne Fashions, Town Council Offices or contact Flower Club Secretary on: 07533 752870.

Monday 27th

Methodist Wives and Friends Chris Lloyd ;150 years of Darlington Market

Looking ahead...

Sedgefield in Bloom Dance Night with The Old School Band. Saturday May 9th in the Parish Hall. Tickets £9 to include pie and pea supper, available from the Town Council offices. Bring your own drinks and glasses.

Ray's Charity Ride Out Saturday 23rd May, 10am Westgate Road Newcastle, then onto The Manor House, Ferryhill 12pm, for a family day of fun with a BBQ, Tombola, Raffle, face painting & plenty of other activities all for £5.00. Raising Money for Alzheimer's North East and Auckland Park Hospital.

Sedgefield Village Veterans

Will not be holding their monthly Coffee Morning this month as their usual morning falls on Good Friday.
Back as normal in May

The Mayor & Mayoress of Sedgefield & Inner Wheel Club of Sedgefield invite you to a
Charity Breakfast

with Mel & Ann Carr
10am – 1pm on
Sunday 26th April at
3 The Square, Sedgefield

A new dementia support group
New Pathways Together

Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre,
(opposite Tesco)

Every Wednesday from
11am - 12 noon

If you are interested in attending or taking a relative or friend, please contact Dorothy Bowman on
01325 308094 for more details.



Easter events at Ceddesfeld Hall

are detailed on page 3,
along with news of a special

Magna Carta - Mediaeval Fayre Dinner on Saturday 25th April

Bishop Auckland Music Society

Summer Concerts

at Auckland Castle: Bishop Auckland

A series of concerts starting with
Music for Violin and Piano
by Bach, Beethoven, Dvorak & Rozsa
performed by
Jennifer Pike and Peter Limonov

Friday 10th April at 7.30pm
in The Throne Room

Tickets for individual concerts are £12.50
Ages 18 & under welcome free-of-charge

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Treasurer, Brian Varley, 11 Dene Hall
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Tel 01388 606075
Payment via BACS also welcomed

Sedgefield Library Opening Hours

Wed 9.30am-12.30pm Thurs 10am-6pm Fri 1pm - 7pm Sat 9.30am-12.30pm

Easter Times: Closed Friday 3rd April until re-opening on Wednesday 8th

Telephone 03000 269521

Sedgefield Farmers' Market

Local Folk band, Ceddesfolk provide the musical backdrop to April's Farmers' Market, as they did at the successful re-launch a year ago. This should set the tone for the May Day market next month, when some of them will play for Maypole dancing, performed by local children. All very English Village Green, so join us on the Green for a sociable Sunday morning!

The market is held on the first Sunday of every month, and free Community Stalls are available for local groups, clubs, charities and other organisations who wish to promote themselves to the market customers. If you would like to take up the offer of a stall, please call Olwen Downs on 07717721874.

Paul's pick of the month...

When people talk about cities that never sleep, such as London or New York, I think, what a place to live, but hang on a minute - Sedgefield is a village that barely nods off itself! There is pretty much something to do everyday.

I was a bit stuck for choice for my first 'official visit' to an event as Editor in March, so I decided that I would go to the *first* organization who contacted me directly, and that was 'Sedgefield Country Market'.

On a bit of a drizzly dull morning, my son and I took a stroll to the Parish Hall to see what was going down. What struck me first was how popular it was. I was going to struggle to get a seat to enjoy my freshly brewed cuppa and nice piece of homemade cake. The stalls were selling great handmade crafts, one belonged to my wonderful neighbour, Doris. There were some tasty looking preserves, and I kept walking past a corned beef pie (which I was sure had my name on it). Unfortunately, my 2yr old son took it upon himself to run madly around the main stalls so, before any real damage was done, hunger satisfied, we departed.

I must say, it was a real pleasure to attend such a lovely community occasion. Pop in next time and have a little peruse, have a brew and, buy yourself a lovely little treat. You won't be disappointed.

Next Sedgefield Country Market: Friday 10th April. 10-11.30am

Regular Events, Meetings and Get-togethers

Acoustic Evenings 1st Fri & 4th Wed. Ceddesfeld Hall 8.30pm All welcome.

Bereavement Support Group 3 - 5pm. Thursday, St. Edmund's Church

Bridge Club Ceddesfeld Hall Sunday & Tuesday 7.30pm Beginners ✓ Call 620434

CAB Fortnightly Advice Sessions Wed 10am-3pm Advice & Information Centre

Café @St Catherine's Friendly chat & Fishburn gossip! Fridays 9.30-12.00

Ceddesfeld Hall Art Group Small friendly group 10am-12.00 Thursdays

Ceddesfeld Hall Pre-School Mon, Wed, Friam; Children 2+years. 620934

Community College Bowls Mon 4-8pm. Carpet/Short Mat, Coaching, 623198

Craft Club Swinhoe Room, Ceddesfeld Hall, 2nd & 4th Tues 7.30-10pm Tel: 620656

Eddies@4 Sundays For 2-6 year olds. 4pm, Welcome Room, St Edmund's. 621125

Fishburn Art Group Youth & Community Centre, Butterwick rd. Monday 9.30am-12

Fishburn Taekwondo Tues & Thurs 6pm, Youth & Community Centre. 07743455065

Lyrics Choirs Fridays in Ceddesfeld Hall. SLYC 6pm Adults 7.30pm. All welcome.

NECP Concertina Workshop 2nd & 4th Sun 1pm in Ceddesfeld Hall. 01642 588197

New Generation Church Every Sunday 11am at the Parish Hall. All welcome.

Rotary Club of Sedgefield Wed 7.30pm Bob 07831270892 / Mel 07530315331

Round Table 1st, 3rd & 5th Thursdays. New members welcome. Carl 07775644598

S'field Art Group Tuesday 6.30-8.30pm Methodist Church Hall. Tuition, all welcome

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Sports UPDATE

with Sports Editor, Chris Lines
Email: chrisjlines@aol.com

Spring finally appears to be arriving, though I suspect that there's not much of a spring in the step of those in the England cricket camp at the moment. After another dismal World Cup, everyone involved with the national team will be fervently hoping that the imminent tour to the West Indies will be an opportunity to find some confidence and form and start winning cricket matches again. It was great to see that two Durham County Cricket Club players made it into the squad, including a return for Ben Stokes and a first senior call up for Mark Wood. Here's hoping that they can both play a big role in regaining some credibility for the England team, ahead of another Ashes summer. Here in Sedgefield, there's plenty of positive sporting news to report, so I had better get on with that.

Pentathlon

I have reported on the success of two talented young Sedgefield pentathletes before, and the good news is that Hannah Featherstone and Sadie Abel continue to make great progress in the sport. Both girls recently represented Great Britain in an international event in Solihull, up against competitors from Ireland, Germany, Portugal, Greece, Sweden, Spain and Egypt. Hannah won the gold medal in the Youth B girls competition and Sadie also delivered a great performance. Congratulations to Hannah and Sadie and I look forward to sharing more great pentathlon news soon.

Judo

Another young lady from Sedgefield is making amazing progress in her chosen sport. 12 year old Mia Tierney recently won a gold medal in judo at the British Schools Championships. Representing Sedgefield Community College, Mia scored the maximum total a contestant can achieve in every round and stormed to the title in the under 52kg category. Well done to Mia for such a dominant set of performances. Expect to see more about her exploits on these pages in the near future!

Badminton

If you are interested in playing badminton in Sedgefield, please call 622711.

Rugby Union

Players from Sedgefield District RUFC were recently given a once in a life time opportunity to play a league game at Kingston Park, the home of the Newcastle Falcons. With fans in tow, the team took to the pitch to play Haughton Rugby Club. It was a daunting experience for the players and although the game did not go Sedgefield's way everyone had an amazing experience, enjoyed by players and supporters alike.

In general terms, the club is back on track after recording a few wins and competing well with the top teams. New players are starting to shine with many making a big impact on the field. The club is now off the bottom of the table and aiming to end the season on a high note by winning its remaining games. After that, attention will turn to an end of season tour and the end of season ball, which are currently being organised. More details and tickets will be available soon.

Training is held every Thursday starting at 7:30pm, on the 3G pitch at the community college, and every Tuesday at Mainsforth Boxing club at 7pm. Sedgefield District RUFC's AGM is also due soon and the club would love to have new members on the committee. At the moment, many of the players are on the committee which means that focusing on the game can be a struggle. Looking further ahead, the new look 30 man squad will be looking for a top four finish next season, which will please loyal supporters, and a family fun rugby day is also in the pipeline. Go to the Facebook page or www.pitchero.com/clubs/sedgefielddistrictrugbyclub for more information.

Athletics

The outdoor road racing and track and field season is about to start. For senior and junior members of Sedgefield Harriers, it's going to be a busy few weeks. The ever popular Hartlepool Marina 5 on 29th March will be followed by the North Tyneside 10k on 5th April and then the Anne Marie Readshaw track and field meeting in Sildon on 12th April. And that's just the start. Harriers have recorded some excellent results over the winter in cross country running and indoor track and field events, so expectations are high in the club of a successful summer ahead. Watch this space. As well as sending competitors to many other events, Sedgefield Harriers will be hosting one of its own in April. The Neptune Relays has grown into one of the region's most popular club relay races and last year attracted a record entry of 120 teams of four, with each person completing a leg of approximately 1.7 miles. This year's event will be held on the evening of Wednesday 22nd April, in Hardwick Park, starting at 6:45pm. Teams made up of club or non-club runners are welcome and prizes will be awarded in a wide range of junior and senior categories. For full details visit www.sedgefieldharriers.co.uk, email ean.p@sedgefieldharriers.co.uk, or call Ean Parsons on 07771 828 568.

Sedgefield parkrun

Sedgefield parkrun has just celebrated its third birthday. Since it made its debut, the event has delivered the following impressive statistics (these are up until the day before the third birthday run):

2,910 different runners representing 158 different clubs: (of course many park-runners aren't members of any club)

198 members of Sedgefield Harriers have run at least one Sedgefield parkrun

An average of 112 runners have completed each parkrun (a figure that continues to rise)

A total of 8,449 hours of running done in 17,793 individual runs

3,636 personal bests recorded

Total distance run of 88,965km.

Of course, the stats don't even paint half the picture of: the friendships that have started and flourished due to Sedgefield parkrun; the amazing volunteers who turn up every week to make the events possible; the nervous first time runners who have gone on from parkrun to take part in longer road races and join clubs (but still come back to parkrun every week); the hundreds of people who have visited Hardwick Park for the first time thanks to parkrun; and the people of all ages – from six to over 70 - who run together and who encourage each other every step of the way. Everyone involved has contributed to this and made Sedgefield parkrun the phenomenon that it has become. Congratulations to everyone involved and in particular to the event's founding parkrun director Jane Spink.

That's all for this month. As always, please send any sports news to chrisjlines@aol.com.

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Your Letters

The Norman Willis Memorial Trophy 2014

I have handed over this trophy, bought by his former employers, Sedgefield Town Council and Sedgefield in Bloom, for the last three years, but in 2014 the Civic Trust failed to invite me to present it or to invite me to be present at the event, to see someone else award the trophy. Letters to the Civic Trust asking who was awarded the trophy have met with no response.

So, to whoever is the current holder, you will be the last person to be presented with this trophy, and I would be appreciative if you could let me know so that I can congratulate you in person on behalf of my husband.

Roslyn Willis

Sad to announce the closure of the Youth Cafe

Sedgefield Area Churches Together wish to thank Phil and Lynne Toshach for all their encouragement and support over the past nine months. Without their commitment to make this a viable project we could not have taken it as far as we did. Research was done, including approaching young people, to find out what was needed for them in Sedgefield. The result: a safe place for them to meet and spend time with their friends. Toshach's became the venue for this new project and it got off to a good start resulting in the opening times being extended.

Sadly the cafe then started to become a place for a few of the young people to exchange alcohol and a focus for the wider region to do this undercover. As a result it was felt that there was no option but to close the Friday evening Youth cafe. The problem still remains of how we try to protect our young people and to give them an alternative to the dominating lifestyle of alcohol and drugs. What a blessing that we have so many out of school clubs and sporting facilities run by volunteers to give a healthy focus for the young. But what a pity this additional project did not have a more successful outcome.

Where do we go from here? How do we support the young people in an effective way?

Chris Mills. Representing SACT

From the Mayor and Town Council

A big thank you to everyone who supported the Mayor's Civic Ball on Friday 6th March, by way of attending and supporting with donations and prizes. The amount raised was in the region of £2800 towards the Mayor's charities – local groups and organizations in Sedgefield and Parkinson UK Durham and Teesside.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who gave so generously.

Fun at the Golden Lion

DIDO wish to thank Margaret Cooper at the Golden Lion for putting on a fabulous meal deal for over fifty members in February. You can see what a great time they were having! Margaret is a long standing supporter of DIDO and has made several donations to our funds, so thank you once again for your kindness; it is much appreciated.

Our appreciation also goes to Linda and Phil, of Number Four Tea Shop, for their generous contribution to our Christmas Party and donation to funds. Without you all we could not continue to provide this much needed project.

Mother Teresa said, "The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved." Projects like ours try to ensure that this never happens to our members.

On April 13th we'll have a Fashion Show by Bon Marche, featuring our very own 'models' so watch this space!

DIDO, a project of Sedgefield Development Trust, meets once a month in the Parish Hall, and new members are welcome. For details, please call Gloria on 622447 or Margaret on 622684.



Festival to take place in July

Sedgefield residents may or may not know of a weekend music festival taking place at a SECRET LOCATION close to Sedgefield on July 18/19th, to feature underground techno, house, funk and soul. Brilliant, I hear many shout including local businesses.

Alas it is not all good news. Ticket price includes entry to the festival and two nights camping. Gates open at 10am on Saturday, July 18th 2015 and all guests must leave the site by midday on Monday, July 20th 2015. Unfortunately there are no pass outs or re-entry during the festival so local businesses are unlikely to prosper.

The fact that the location is secret is a little bit worrying, but unfortunately neither the local police or Durham County Council will disclose the location, the police saying "The location is being kept secret as the organiser wishes to reduce the numbers of non-paying trespassers turning up at the event. This is not the responsibility of the police but that of the organiser of the event. The organiser has asked me not to divulge the location of the event. The organiser's exact responsibility in terms of notification of event details is an issue that the council may be able to help you with but in any event it is not a police matter."

Durham County Council also said; "It is not within the Safety Advisory Group remit to publicise events or to make public the location of 'secret' events." So there we have it. Perhaps I might suggest that if you do have any concerns regarding the location of this festival that you also contact the local police, Durham County Council or even Mr Phil Wilson MP. There is also a PACT meeting at the Parish Hall on Tuesday 14th April at 7pm when any concerns could be raised. Personally, I am not against such events but I do feel that local residents MUST be consulted about such events so that any potential problems can be solved before they arise.

Stephen Gilmore

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