

Season's Greetings from Sedgefield News

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Produced by volunteers for the villagers of Sedgefield, Bradbury & Mordon

December 2005



ON THE VILLAGE GREEN IN DECEMBER

Sedgefield Farmers' Christmas Market

is on Sunday 11th December from 9.30am - 1.30pm
Santa has promised to pop in on his sleigh and there will be Seasonal Entertainment, including a Children's Choir. With mince pies and mulled wine, courtesy of the Town Council, and stallholders pulling out all the stops to provide you with the best of produce for your feasting, what better way to spend a winter's morning?

Carols around the Christmas Tree

Organised by the Round Table
Get together at 6:15pm on Friday 16th December
to sing all your favourite Carols

New Year's Eve Fireworks

See in the New Year with old friends and new!

Sedgefield's Big Win

Yes - if you haven't heard already, Sedgefield won £50,000 from the People's Millions, for re-generation work on the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. Now the work begins!

But first, a great big thank you from those who worked on the bid to everyone who helped to get the vote out - and especially to all of you who actually took the time to vote.

Thanks also to the children of Sedgefield Primary School, who added a certain sparkle to the broadcast. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves, especially at the 'coaching' session with the Tyne Tees crew.

Planning for the work continues, and Durham Wildlife Trust have visited the grounds to advise on conservation issues.

A common misunderstanding about the funding for the project is addressed on the letters page.
Editor

'Beastly' win for Sedgefield's young poet



Congratulations to 11 year old Tim Jasper of Sedgefield, who won the honour of helping to switch on Darlington's Christmas Lights this year. Tim (below and left) won with one of his poems, telling in no more than 50 words why he would like to be the Beast in this year's pantomime.

Along with Jade Zoe Chapman from Darlington who won the Prize for Junior Beauty, Tim helped the Grumbleweeds at the ceremonial switch on.

Prizes include a box for a performance of Beauty and the Beast, this year's pantomime at Darlington Civic Theatre.



OH YES THEY DO!

Sedgefield Players do it again.

Our home-grown pantomime this year is Mother Goose. Find details for this and other Seasonal entertainments in our Diary on page 11 and online at www.sedgefieldweb.co.uk

If you would like your society or event to feature in Sedgefield News or on SedgefieldWeb please do get in touch.

Email snews@sedgefieldweb.co.uk
Phone 01740 629011

Write to Sedgefield News at 58
Front Street, TS21 2AQ

Adult Learning News

A short update from Education in the Community

We've had a good term, with 12 courses running in Sedgefield. Thank you to our learners and tutors, who are all doing a fine job!

Since it is now time for me to look towards the January term, I thought it would be good practice to ask for your comments on the learning we provide and also for ideas on new courses that I could develop for the next term. We can provide learning on almost any subject; we have tutors who cover topics such as Reiki, Sugar Craft, Salsa, Patchwork & Quilting, Card Craft, Cooking for Pleasure, as well as all of the courses already running; the list goes on.

Please give me a call on **623585** and tell me what you would like to learn. I look forward to hearing from you.

Rana Coates, Adult Community Learning Development

IT help: Drop-in times at the Zone...

Mondays from 9.30 - 11.30am and

Wednesdays from 9.30 - 12 noon

...and over the Festive Season

Mondays 19th & 26th December & 2nd January CLOSED

Wednesday 21st December 9.30am - 12 noon

Wednesdays 28th January and 4th January - CLOSED

Wednesday 11th January 9.30am - 12 noon

Coming up in 2006

E Citizenship (IT foundation level, E-mail, the Internet) - giving people confidence to access the on-line world

Foundation Course in Counselling - an introduction to the skills, knowledge & self-awareness required

Genealogy on Computer - discover online sources and develop your knowledge of genealogy

More Digital Photography Courses

To express interest in any of the above, contact Carol Smith or Maggie Jackson at Sedgefield Learning Borough on **01740 657493** or email carolferryhill@yahoo.co.uk

Paralegal Training

A Taster Session is scheduled for Tuesday January 17th for one hour at 10am at the Zone, and a **10 Week**

Foundation Course beginning sometime in the New Year.

To enrol for Paralegal Training, please contact Jackie Young on 01429 420302, email jyoung.hdt@btconnect.com

New kids on the block



Meet 'Lirica'- Joanne, Rob, Meg, Helen, Caroline, Emma, Kirsten (plus Katy, missing from the photo but very much part of the team) taking a break from rehearsing their Christmas offering.

They are the latest in the Lyrics' stable of singing sensations, formed as a result of getting together with the Youth Choir at their reunion concert in September. Lirica (Italian for lyrics) are with one exception, returnees who just couldn't let go after they caught the singing bug again and after just a few rehearsals, they have had their first outing, at the **Mayor's Charity Music Night** in November. A vibrant bunch, they will surely entertain us in style for years to come.

Jazz also featured on the bill that night. Andy and Claire announced that they are to be known henceforth as 'Stolen Standards'. They went down a storm with jazz greats from the repertoire of Billie Holiday and others. Stolen Standards often feature on the bill at the Cricket Club Music Nights and are well worth catching.

It wouldn't be a show in Sedgefield without the ever popular John Wrightson Band, and John, Joan and Jane were there, playing and singing for all they were worth. They have given so much of their time over the years to raising funds and raising the roof at various venues! Their popularity is richly deserved.

Around £200 was raised during a very happy evening, for the Mayor's chosen charities, Breakthrough Breast Cancer and the Butterwick Day Hospice at Sedgefield Community Hospital.

Santa visits Co-op again

Kevin Cook tells us that Santa will be at the store from 1st December until Christmas Eve, raising money for the Intensive Care Baby Unit at North Tees Hospital.

Last year £3,000 was raised for the unit and Kevin is hoping that the generous folk of Sedgefield will do at least as well again

Sedgefield speaks out

A very positive message came out of the well attended meeting on November 7th about the future of the Parish Hall and there was real opposition to the Town Council's proposal to considerably extend Ceddesfeld Hall. Almost 100 people heard Norma Neal, Chairman of Sedgefield Players, open the meeting with a short résumé of the history of the Parish Hall's problems, caused by noise nuisance to the neighbours, and the Town Council's refusal to debate the matter with the public.

Points were raised by a wide cross-section of people from the village, including local businessmen and voluntary organisations. Audrey Flanagan of the WI said that the proposed extension to Ceddesfeld Hall is too small for their use and parking is totally inadequate. Walter Howell of Sedgefield Players stated that groups such as the Players, the Lyric Singers and their youth sections, need a performance venue the size of the Parish Hall. Derek Lofthouse agreed that the proposed Ceddesfeld Hall extension is unsuitable for such a large group as the Lyrics. Sandy Clubley pointed to the opportunities the Parish Hall has given to children over the years, many of whom return to the village with their own children who deserve similar opportunities. Along with many others, she felt it important to support both venues, because the needs of our growing population cannot be satisfied by one venue. Villagers were adamant that the Town Council does not have the right to sell the Parish Hall and must be made aware that we want to keep this very important part of our heritage in the centre of the village. A survey done some time ago said that the noise problem which caused the present situation could be much improved and it was also stated that a rebuild could be totally soundproof.

The planning meeting to consider the proposed extension to Ceddesfeld Hall will take place on Friday December 9th at 10 am.

Four objectors have agreed to speak on four different areas of concern, but others indicated their intention to go along in support. It was also agreed that notes taken at this meeting and details of the almost 1000 signature petition, should be sent to the Town Council with a covering letter requesting a reply and action. Proposed extensions and alterations to Ceddesfeld Hall and neighbouring properties have been refused permission in the past and Sedgefield Borough Council has previously said that an extension to Ceddesfeld Hall would not be allowed unless there was no other option. Objections to the proposed extension include noise, parking problems, loss of trees and the character of the Grade 2 listed building.

However, the wider concern of the meeting was that the function of a 'Community' Hall could not be fulfilled on the Ceddesfeld site. People wish to leave the Town Council in no doubt as to the strength of feeling generated by their attitude towards OUR Parish Hall.

Other problems resulting from the Disability Act could be solved at both Ceddesfeld and the Parish Hall by incorporating lifts into both buildings. Funding is available, though not necessarily to the Town Council.

John Fitzpatrick of the Friends of Hardwick Park suggested that the Town Council should take a wider view, look at private sources of funding or consider handing over the redevelopment to a trust. John Parkinson of Mordon Village recommended that Sedgefield should not accept a compromise, but go for what we want. It can be done - Mordon has a beautiful new village hall to prove it!

There was a good deal of concern about the attitude of Sedgefield Town Council and its refusal to speak to an open meeting, having been offered two opportunities during the last month.

It was felt that there has been an economy of the truth from Sedgefield Town Council over recent years and that there is a conflict of interest between some Town Councillors and SCA management at Ceddesfeld Hall. As SCA is a charity, run on a voluntary basis, the future running of an extended building could be problematical. Furthermore the Town Council seems to have given up on its responsibility to maintain the Parish Hall

Hunting with Eagle Owls causes concern



Bubo Bubo - the European Eagle Owl

Falconers are warning of the dangers of hunting with owls, a practice recently introduced by South Durham Hunt and others, where Eagle Owls may be used to flush the fox. Concern is emerging on local weblogs, and we have picked out a few comments to kick off a debate.

"Owls are by nature dumb as two short planks. To a bird of prey, working out what's a fox or a dog is like telling coke and cola apart - impossible until it comes to taste. An owl would have no problem in taking out a hound. They have an extreme grip under their fluffy feathers."

"European Eagle Owls have a 6-7ft wingspan. Pretty big. If you were a horse, charged and ready for some good jumping with the hounds, when a pair of wings flew past, silent until forward of you, you would panic and try to get away. What if the horse slipped and broke a leg beyond fixing, then having to be put down by a vet. What if the rider should fall? He could be injured or even killed."

Falconers are concerned that the practice of hunting with birds of prey will lead to their sport being next on the list for banning. They want us to appreciate some of their areas of activity have positive benefits. The average person may not realise the threat posed by birds on airport runways, which are kept clear by falconers and their trained falcons. Falconers keep rabbit and magpie populations down, though they have to seek permission first to hunt protected quarry. They claim that with half a million falconers in the world, wild birds of prey and many other bird species rely on falconry to keep the balance of nature stable.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch



Wilf & Jeanette Garbutt - Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch's Longest Serving Couple



A very surprised Wilf & Jeanette receiving the Chairman's Annual Award for 2005 from Ken Saiger at the October AGM.

Wilf and Jeanette are founder members of what we today know as Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood Watch - originally it was formed as the Crime Prevention Panel. Together they have given the Panel, and in reality the Village over **50 years** (combined) service; not just as Panel members but active participants in all activities. Their efforts include much fund-raising -

predominantly for Sedgefield Show every year - as well as erecting signs, door to door contact work and support to the local Police. They also act as that most important part of Neighbourhood Watch, the Street Contact. At their combined age of 165 years, Wilf and Jeanette are still good neighbours in their street and the wider village; they are determined to keep being involved and continue helping to make Sedgefield a safer place to live - for this we thank them most sincerely and look forward to many more years working together.

Sedgefield Village N/H/Watch are pleased to Support Durham Trading Standards "Registered Trader Scheme"

Durham County Council's Trading Standards Service in conjunction with the County's Safety Partnerships, have set up this scheme to help people in County Durham choose a reputable home repair trader.

The scheme provides a list of reputable traders available to residents of County Durham, who have been vetted by Trading Standards, and are committed to good working practice. All traders who are members of the scheme have undergone a series of stringent checks and only if they fulfil all criteria will be entered onto the scheme.

We often hear about so-called trades people who have no real building skills and charge exorbitant prices for sub-standard work. They will target the old or infirm who cannot tell whether work needs doing, or whether it has been completed satisfactorily. They will insist on cash up-front and leave no form of details such as a receipt or invoice. But if things go wrong there is no form of redress as the "trader" is not an actual business and there is no way of tracing them.

The Registered Trader Scheme will help to alleviate these problems. The traders on the scheme all abide by a Code of Practice, and their business documentation contains their contact details for the consumer to reach them on. In the event of any problems occurring, Durham Trading Standards Service is more than happy to mediate between customer and trader to reach an amicable solution.

It has been up and running since mid June and has been a great benefit to both traders and consumers alike. It is an excellent way to help protect the residents of County Durham from unscrupulous people who prey especially on the elderly, and will ensure that we can have confidence in the work that is done in our homes.

If traders or consumers would like further information on the scheme, contact Trading Standards on 0191 3833589 (local call rate) or visit www.countydurhamrts.org.uk

Winter Night Security

Dark nights bring the burglar & sneak thief's greatest opportunity. Take the time and trouble to help yourself minimise the risk of their Christmas Bonus. Don't leave your house unlit after dark - use light timers, and draw your curtains. Tell a trusted neighbour of any extended periods of absence and ask for their help to push all letters and papers fully through the letterbox (& why not complain to the culprits who leave stuff sticking out in the first place?) Report suspicious persons or out of place vehicles to the Police on 0845 60 60 365

PC Todd reports

I would like to start this month's round-up of crimes with an appeal to the friends of the mindless yobs who have damaged the handle on the water pump on the village green. A group of up to 10 youths around 14 years of age were observed at the water pump - let me know who was responsible for the damage. Also, to the friends of the three girls who pulled the Christmas Lights from the tree on the village green, who are these girls?

This type of vandalism is on the increase throughout the village and must stop. These incidents happened on Saturday evening when the village was full of visitors enjoying the fireworks display.

I would also like to mention that we are still receiving reports that sheds and garages continue to be targets for the nocturnal low life who roam our streets at night.

Tools have been taken and freezer contents removed. Please check your own security and let me know if you have any information that might help catch these people.

Other crimes in the past few weeks included 30,000 litres of diesel stolen from the industrial estate and a house break-in where play station games, etc, were removed. See you next time - *Keith*

Tim's Tips

To stop unwanted 'visitors' from getting into your homes, keep your doors secure until you know who is on the other side. If they are who they say they are, they won't mind you asking for ID; they will allow you to check and if needs be, make a appointment for a time and date which suits you both. **Seasons greeting to one and all. Keep warm and safe till next time**
Tim Spearey, Community Warden

Sedgefield & District Citizens Advice Bureau Is going bankrupt a good option?



Question I am up to my eyes in debt and it is causing me a great deal of stress. I have heard that I could go bankrupt and wipe the slate clean. Is this true and would you recommend it?

CAB answer Firstly there may be a number of options for sorting your debts out that could be better for you than going bankrupt. You should make an appointment with a debt adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau who will be able to give you some expert advice on what may be your best option. **There are advantages and disadvantages in filing for bankruptcy.** The pressure is taken off you because you no longer have to deal with your creditors. An official called the Official Receiver takes control of your money and property, and deals with your creditors. You will be allowed to keep household goods and a reasonable amount to live on. Normally after a year you will be able to make a fresh start and in most cases the money you owe will be written off.

However it costs approximately £460 to go bankrupt and whilst you are bankrupt you will be restricted from applying for credit. If you own your own house it will usually have to be sold and you may lose your car and other luxury items. In some professions people who have been made bankrupt would not be able to carry on working. Bankruptcy is never private; you will be listed on the Internet and it may even be published in your local paper. Some debts such as court fines will never be written off. If you do run into debt problems, don't ignore them and hope they'll go away – they won't. Go to www.adviceguide.org.uk for advice on advice and credit, or contact your nearest CAB for free confidential, independent debt advice funded through the Big Lottery Fund and the Northern Rock Foundation. For details of CAB sessions phone 0870 121 2024.

SEDGEFIELD VILLAGE RESIDENTS FORUM

Meetings to be held on 4th Monday of the month (not December): everyone welcome. Minutes available on village websites, in "hard copy" from Advice & Communication Centre and on display in library 1 week before meetings. *Updates from sub-groups*

A689/Stockton Road junction – despite Coroner's comments, the number of accidents, public consultation on the proposed changes, etc, we are now told that any improvements to the layout of the junction will have to be judged along with any other highway spend across the county and will not be given any priority. The Forum finds any further delay in improving safety at this junction to be totally unacceptable and the Road Safety Group will be making representation to the county Council.

Disability Access - a request for dropping the step to the rear of the chemist shop still awaits response from the property owner. There is no money available currently for any further kerb dropping around the village.

DOVE – Durham County Council have provided toilet facilities (Portaloos) to the illegal encampment of travellers in Beacon Lane. This was felt to be totally unacceptable especially when the Public Toilets in the village cannot be made available to the general public. The travellers have told the authorities (police and DCC) they intend to stay until Christmas. We understand DCC sees no reason to move them on despite the fact that several residents have already experienced threats and intimidation and that they are carrying out business from the area. These travellers have recently spent some weeks illegally camped in Fishburn, leaving the usual appalling mess yet the provision of facilities by DCC seems to be an open invitation and acceptance of their long-term presence in Sedgefield. DOVE awaits the Local Government Ombudsman's report into DCC's actions and a response from Tony Blair on his proposed actions to assist in this matter.

The Neighbourhood Watch Group continue their work in the village and would welcome new members to assist in this very valuable service.

Youth Forum to organise an event to engage with some of the young people on their involvement in things that affect their age group.

Controversial Rotary Wheel erected in the flower bed on Stockton Road has been identified as requiring planning permission. It is not known whether Rotary Club intend to apply for permission for it to stay or whether it is to be moved, to what many would suggest, a more appropriate area.

Public Meeting on the proposals for the Parish Hall arranged by interested parties. We await further information.

Do come along to any of the Forum meetings – Residents' Forums only succeed if residents take part.

COMPUTER WARNING - False E-mail

If you receive an E-mail message similar to the one below, DON'T follow the instructions. It is not from your Internet Service Provider, even if it claims to be. There may be an attachment which is a .zip file and contains malicious code. DO NOT open this file or anything similar.

*"Dear Customer
Due to overwhelming interest in our service we now request that all users connect via our new routing software. If you do not use the software you may experience connection problems including delays and disconnection. We hope this will improve your service.
Thank you for your support."*

Farmers' Market Update

The weather was once again kind for the November Farmers' Market. It was of course Remembrance Sunday and I was very aware of the emotions of the day and understand that having the Market close to the Church is upsetting for some people. We closed the stalls for the service by the War Memorial and switched off generators so not to disturb the minute's silence. Stallholders and customers went across and joined in with the service. The rush just after was astonishing and I'm so sorry I ran out of cakes. Having had a cold, I was only able to make a few! Amongst the stalls at our Christmas Farmers' Market on Sunday 11th December, the Sunday School Choir will be singing Christmas Songs and - fingers crossed - Santa will have time to pay us a visit. Mulled wine and mince pies will be available courtesy of Sedgefield Town Council. Why not get into the Christmas Spirit with us? The Market will open at 9.30am as usual and close at 1.30pm but if you can, go early so you're not disappointed!

Wishing you a magical Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Joanne Martin, Sedgefield Farmers' Market Co-ordinator

Excellence in training

The Independent Adult Learning Inspectorate has described Sedgefield Borough Council's Training Service as 'excellent'. It is one of the most complimentary reports for a work-based training provider in County Durham since the Inspectorate started almost five years ago.

As the nights grow longer, the temperature drops and the winter draws in, it's good to see that enthusiasm for getting out and having a go at one sport or another is far from waning, in Sedgefield at least.

Running Club

As reported in previous updates, the running club is well and truly up and, er, running. I know this partly because the newsletter has received regular correspondence about the club, but mainly due to the fact that I've seen the runners in action. I may even join them at some point soon!

Actually, the club now has a name, **Sedgefield Harriers**, and is applying for affiliation to the Amateur Athletics Association. It's really taken off and offers plenty of opportunities for enthusiasts of all ages and levels of experience and fitness. If you're interested in joining the club, or simply joining other runners one night to sample what's on offer, here's the information you need:

The official weekly club meets take place on Wednesdays and Fridays at 6.30 pm and Sundays at 8.30 am, though Fridays are set aside for speed training as a group. All runs start at the time stated, so it's best to arrive five to ten minutes before to avoid missing the start of the run and for warm up purposes.

Sedgefield Harriers' official meeting point is now Sedgefield Community College foyer.

The club no longer meets at Sedgefield Cricket Club. Keen club members unable to run on Wednesdays have agreed to meet on Thursdays at 7.30 pm outside West Park Motors on North End (near the BP Garage). Everyone is welcome but please note this is not ideal for new starters.

Time Trials take place on the last Wednesday of the month followed by a chance to socialise with fellow runners from 8 pm at the Nags Head, Sedgefield.

To find out more about the club, its race programme and even the official team vest, contact one of the following:

Ean Parsons, Chairman
07771 828568

Jeanette Ives-Wright, Secretary
01740 629778

Rosemary Sims, Treasurer
07786 863893

Mature Football

I regularly report on the various Sunday league teams in the village. Look out next month for a summary of progress made by these teams so far this season. I say "progress", but I've delayed this piece for a couple of months, waiting to be able to report on at least one victory by a particular team! I am confident that by the time I'm writing the next sports update, I will have positive news to relate about every club.

Meanwhile, I have John Cant to thank for the following news from a Sedgefield football team that benefits from great experience and has clearly improved with age. The **Sedgefield Winkers** side consists of 'maturing' players from many parts of the Sedgefield district, playing under the motto of "age and treachery will always overcome youth and skill". A healthy squad with an even healthier rotation system is enjoying a good start to the season, with just one blip to date.

Norton Veterans was one team to taste defeat early in the season, which, despite a late fight back, could not break down the massive experience of Macphail and Marshall in central defence and an inspired Peter Bates in goal. Despite (lack of) fitness issues contributing to a depletion of the 3-0 lead, the Winkers eventually ran out 3-2 victors and have generally built on this success since.

Another Winkers win came in early September with a 2-1 victory over a resilient Compass Royston team, however the glory was short-lived. The Winkers were then humbled by a 6 - 3 defeat to Morgan's 11 from Acklam. Despite missing some pivotal centre halves the Winkers should have had enough strength to take something out of the game, and were clearly disappointed by the defeat. With a strong squad back in place the team then faced Norton again determined to regain some pride. After some strong words in the dressing room, it was time to avenge the humiliating result. The changes and discussions obviously had the desired affect and this time the Winkers came out 6-3 victors, with a brace for Simon Whitfield and Kevin Foulkes being the highlight. The manager's decision to substitute both players

before they reached their hat-tricks was perhaps a little contentious (perhaps?!?), but he explained that this was due to the need to give everyone a run out, rather than the fact that he himself was being left behind in the goal scoring stakes. Yes, right.

Look out for more Winkers news in future updates.

Squash

In a positive sporting coincidence, Sedgefield Squash Club, in a similar move to the Harriers, is seeking national accreditation - assuming this is granted, the club will be able to be more proactive in promoting the sport, e.g. by working with schools and colleges.

In anticipation of success in gaining accreditation, the club recently arranged taster sessions for kids, which took place at both Sedgefield Hardwick (Yrs 5&6) and Sedgefield Primary (Yrs 4&6) schools on November 23rd. Qualified coaches Nick Williams and Mark Shipley travelled up from Yorkshire to lead the sessions. These sessions will be followed up soon with "Mini-squash" sessions on a Saturday morning at Sedgefield Squash Club. The club hopes that further taster sessions will be possible next term for the years not covered in this trip and for other schools in the area.

Meanwhile, fingers crossed on the accreditation - news on that to follow as soon as I have it.

Fishburn Pool

Get in trim for the over-indulgence of the festive season with a swim at our local pool.

Until Christmas, public swimming sessions are £1 per person, at the following times:

Mondays from 7pm - 8pm

Wednesdays from 7pm - 8pm

Fridays from 3.30pm - 6pm

So that's it for 2005! As ever, please send your sports news to me on chrisjlines@aol.com.

The editor is aware of numerous young women who enjoy their football - and other sports - as much as the next bloke.

Competition for places on the Sedgefield Community College football teams is particularly hot! How about sending Chris some of your news?

Wines for Feasting

with Meg Clubley

If you're hosting Christmas it's time to take a break from meal planning and give some thought to the drinks that will best show off your hard work, and refresh you whilst slaving over that hot stove!

To whet the appetite and disperse the effects of that Christmas Eve night-cap, a **Champagne** breakfast is an excellent way to start the day. The crisp acidity gets the digestive juices flowing whilst the bubbles will cleanse the most jaded of palates, restoring the spirit of indulgence.

Sherry, the classic aperitif is also the perfect way to steady a cook's nerves! Fino is the pale, bone-dry kind that works best before or during a meal. Manzanilla, similar but with a salty tang, is at home with salted nuts, olives etc. Don't forget to chill all sherry well and drink within a few days of opening. Like any other white wine, it should be crisp, cool and served fresh.

Turkey is actually a relatively recent introduction to the Christmas dinner table, popularised as a festive centrepiece only towards the end of Victoria's reign. Don't overwhelm this delicate meat with powerful, oaky wines. Subtle Italian whites will work well but if you have found one of the gamier, rare-breed birds, go for a Pinot Noir – from Burgundy, New Zealand or California. An Italian red (Chianti or any other Sangiovese) would make a good value alternative.

Gamier and richer than turkey, **goose** really calls for red and is the ideal partner for Pinot Noir. A herby red from the southern Rhone (Chateauneuf du Pape, Vacqueras, Gigondas) would also be a deliciously full-flavoured match.

Pork marries well with sweeter, fruitier wines, both white and red - think of the apples and apricots it is often served with. Fruity grape varieties such as Grenache, Gamay or Merlot, grown in balmy climes such as California, Chile or Spain should do the trick. Or go for a

classic off-dry German Riesling – the peachy fruit will seem like part of the meal itself, which is of course what you're aiming for.

Salty-sweet ham or gammon cries out for a juicy, oaky Spanish red – look for *crianza* or *reserva* labels. Spicy, fruity Pinot Bianco (aka Pinot Blanc in Alsace) is also delicious with ham, as are apply Gewurztraminers and peachy German Rieslings.

If you're celebrating in style with a **joint of beef**, then it does really need to be red. Argentine Malbec is wonderful with beef, but this is also a good time to crack open that posh Claret (aka Bordeaux) you've been storing for a rainy day.

Cabernet from Italy makes an elegant, modern alternative - they eat a lot of steak in Tuscany. Or you could opt for a good strong ale or stout. Think of steak and ale pie – a match made in heaven.

Moving on from meaty matters, **Salmon**, richer than most fish, is very versatile. Nutty Italian Vernaccia and lightly-oaked white Burgundy would both be lovely with a whole baked fish, whilst Pinot Noir will be complex and juicy but not over-powering. Smoky Pouilly Fumée complements smoked salmon well.

Nut or mushroom dishes are a wonderful excuse to splash out on posh earthy Burgundy but the combination of chestnuts and mushrooms also brings to mind Christmas markets in mediaeval Tuscan hill towns, making me crave a really good Chianti.

Treacly Oloroso sherry is a heavenly match with **Christmas pudding** but is equally good drizzled over ice-cream or sipped on its own; and sweet Australian Orange Muscat echoes the candied-fruit in the cake. Tawny Port is of course a classic partner to hard or blue **cheeses** but Amontillado sherry makes a lighter alternative. Serve it well-chilled before sloping off for a well-earned snooze.

Raymond Blanc's Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

250g each sultanas, currants, raisins, brown breadcrumbs & brown sugar
75g nibbed almonds
1 Bramley apple, cored & finely chopped
1 lemon, grated zest & juiced
1 orange, grated zest & juiced
4 eggs, organic/free range, medium, beaten
100g candied peel, chopped
50g wholemeal flour
1 tsp Chinese five spice powder
250g vegetable suet

And for the armagnac butter

150g unsalted butter
75g icing sugar
4-8 tbsps armagnac
(or rum, brandy or cognac)
plus armagnac to flame

Preparing the puddings

Grease 2 x 1-litre pudding basins well with extra butter then line the bottoms with greaseproof paper. In a large bowl, mix all the pudding ingredients together thoroughly. Fill the basins to 1cm below the rim, then cover each with a circle of greaseproof paper followed by a larger piece of foil. Tie this around with a piece of string, loosely so there is room for expansion.

Cooking the puddings

Steam the puddings for 3½-4 hours. The longer you steam them, the darker they will become. If you do not have a steamer, cook the puddings on a wire rack in a pan of boiling water. Make sure the water stays at a steady boil, and top it up from time to time.

Remove basins from steamer and leave to cool. Remove puddings from the basins, wrap well with clean greaseproof paper, and store in a cool place until needed.

Making the armagnac butter

Cream the butter until white with an electric whisk. Beat in the sugar gradually. Add armagnac little by little. Beat it in thoroughly. If mixture shows any sign of curdling, do not add all of the alcohol as you can pour it over the pudding when serving. The butter should be white and foamy. Refrigerate until needed. (1 or 2 days)

Reheating and serving

Return puddings to greased basins and steam for about an hour. Turn out on to a serving dish and decorate with holly. Heat and flame a ladleful of armagnac, pour over and serve with the armagnac butter separately.

Christmas Cook's Corner

A refreshing Cucumber dip

(suitable for vegans)
25ml/three-quarter fl. oz.
lemon juice
125ml/4fl. oz. Soya milk
175ml/6fl. oz. sunflower oil
half teaspoon of salt
quarter of cucumber

Dice cucumber and liquidize with all other ingredients.

Chilli Salsa

3 fresh chillies, quarter of an onion
400g. tin of tomatoes
2 tbsps. fresh coriander
2 teasp. salt

Roast chillies on a tray in the oven (gas mark 4 / 180degrees C) until the skins brown

Carefully remove stalks and skin. Liquidize with all other ingredients.

St Edmund's and the 'chill factor' Sorted? Let's hope so!

Around Christmas last year, it became very obvious that the church heating system which is more than 100 years old, had a major leak somewhere. Problem was, nobody could find it!

As the leak became worse, a large hole was located in a pipe beneath the floor forward of the north aisle, where the steel pipe work had been buried in damp soil and rubble for many years.

The heating to part of the church was isolated, so that the remainder of the heating system could be used. Thankfully, the cast pipe work elsewhere in the church appears to be in remarkably good condition, despite its old age, so it is hoped that the recent leak will prove to be an isolated problem.

Now, after many months of planning and applications for a 'faculty' (required for modifications to Church buildings), the heating system to the north aisle is being completely re-plumbed by TW Steam and Heat from Durham, who



Much needed work in progress

photo, Nigel Clegg

specialise in work to churches and other large installations.

As apart of this work, the north aisle pews have been completely removed to allow installation of the new pipe work, whilst four large cast iron radiators have been re-located to provide warmth where it is most needed.

Replacement seating will now be

provided adjacent to the pews in the Nave (or central aisle), leaving plenty of space for disabled access to the Vestry and toilet facilities, which in turn are due to be updated in the new year.

The total cost of this work is around £5,000, half of which will be contributed by the Friends of St

For further information, or to make a donation, please contact Nigel Clegg, e-mail - treasurer@stedmundschurch.co.uk

101 get the Bird!

We've been carrying their gig list for a while now, but recently have noticed that Sedgefield's name has not appeared. Well it seems that 101's absence from the area has been down to the fact that our pubs are not really large enough to accommodate them (success has its pitfalls!) and also The Bird In Hand had lost its entertainments licence.

Now, with the 'Bird' under new ownership the band is making a return to one of the first venues they ever played.

Still featuring the original line up, Tim Lowe on lead vocals and guitar, Richie Coxon on bass and Robin Love on drums, 101 recently celebrated 400 gigs together since a nervous debut at The Hope Inn, in 2001! That's a lot of gigs and they reckon to be one of the hardest working bands on the local scene. They must be doing something right - check it out!

The December gig list is on p. 11.



Neptune early 20c

A Step Forward for Neptune

The Friends of Hardwick have been successful in their search for funding for a new Statue of Neptune. The Northern Rock Foundation have generously provided a grant of more than £26,000 towards the cost of the project and the remainder will come from monies already raised by the Friends.

The Friends have commissioned Keith Maddison to make a new interpretation of Neptune, cast in bronze, as a replacement for the original statue on the island in the Serpentine River in Hardwick Park. The original was lost in the early 1950s and, despite extensive enquiries by the Friends, no trace of it has been discovered.

Our sculptor, Keith Maddison, lives in Northumberland and is the son of a Second World War RAF rear gunner and is himself a member of the Royal Auxiliary Airforce. His notable local achievements include the statue of George Hardwick at the Riverside Stadium, the Memorial to Durham Miners on Fishburn Village Green and, most recently, the statue celebrating the bravery of the Canadian Airman Andrew Mynarski which is located at Teesside Airport (sorry, Durham Tees Valley Airport). He is also a talented artist with many aviation pictures to his credit.

It is hoped to have the new statue in place on its plinth in the Serpentine by the autumn of next year.

John Fitzpatrick, Friends of Hardwick

December Diary

Announcements on this page are free
to non-commercial organisations

Wynyard Planetarium

What's up in the Night Sky?

Friday 2nd December, 7.30pm

Deep Impact

Friday 16th December, 7.30pm

Adults £3 Children/Concessions

£1.50, Family ticket £6

Prior booking advised - contact

John McCue on 630544

Crosshills FC Fixture

Sunday 4th December -

Ferryhill Surtees - AWAY

Local History Society

Monday 5th December

7.45pm in Ceddesfeld Hall

**A Station Saunter - the Early
Victorian development of
Ferryhill Station & Little Chilton**
with Tim Brown

For an extra £1 enjoy mulled wine
& mince pies

Everyone welcome

Sedgefield Garden Society

Tuesday 6th December

Christmas Meal & Party

(Names to any committee
member please)

No Meeting in January

Tiny Steps at St. Edmund's

Wednesday 7th December

1.30pm Singing & Stories for
pre-school children & carers

All welcome

Family Magic Night

Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School

Mark's Magic Kingdom

Tuesday 6th December, 6.30pm

Tickets £3 from School,

Library & Selections

Sedgefield W.I.

Wednesday 7th December

7:15pm in the Parish Hall

Pat Parker

**Line Dancing Demonstration
followed by a Faith Supper**

Members' competition

"a small evening bag"

Visitors welcome (fee £1.50)

Sedgefield Area Churches Together

wish you all every blessing at
Christmas and the New Year.

Details of church services in the
area will be advertised in local
Post Offices.

Together for Christmas

The Lyric Singers, SLYC & Lirica

present their Christmas Concerts

on **Friday & Saturday**

9th & 10th December

at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall

Tickets £4 / £3 from Selections,

Choir members or phone 620625

Sedgefield Farmers'

Christmas Market

from 9.30am - 1.30pm

Sunday 11th December

on the Village Green

Town Councillor Surgery

Monday 12th December

6.30-7 pm in the Council Offices

Sedgefield Library

Teenage reading group

3.30 - 4.30pm on

Monday 12th December

Rhyme time - stories, songs and
rhymes for under 5's

Wednesday 14th December

from 10 - 11am

Ferryhill, Sedgefield and

District Flower Club

Tuesday 13th December

Parish Hall at 7:30pm

(N.B. one week earlier than usual)

David Raeburn from Consett
will give an illustrated talk on

"The Himalayas"

followed by a Faith Supper

All Welcome

Sedgefield Cricket Club

LIVE MUSIC NIGHT

Saturday 17th December at 8pm

Christmas Party with

George Welsh & Stewart Handy,

Scratch Band,

Andy & Claire - aka Stolen

Standards -

and the John Wrightson Band

£7.50 (inc. Xmas Buffet)

Telephone 621347

N.B. - Club is available to hire for
private parties, free of charge

St Edmund's Church

Baptisms & Weddings can be
booked in Church on

Thursday evenings from

6.30 to 7.30pm

Sedgefield Players

Pantomime 2005

"Mother Goose"

will be performed

at 2pm on

Tuesday 27th December

then at 7pm on

Tues 27th, Wed 28th, Thurs

29th & Fri 30th December

Round Table

1st, 3rd & 5th Thursdays

Sporting, social and charitable
events - new members welcome

Contact Rob on 629079

Country Market

is on Fridays until 16th December

9.30 - 11am in the Parish Hall:

then closed until Friday 3rd

February 2006

PLEASE NOTE

The following groups will not be
meeting in December. They
send Seasons Greetings and
look forward to seeing you
in the New Year

**Family History Group
Sedgefield Wildlife Group
The Residents Forum
Friends of Hardwick**

101 Gigs in December

02 - The Station Hotel, Redcar.

03 - The Ox Inn, Stanley.

04 - The Frigate, Marske.

07 - The Old Bookmaker, Redcar.

08 - Aruba Nightclub, Redcar 11pm

**10 - The Bird In Hand,
Trimdon Village**

11 - The Normanby, Normanby.

14 - The Lord Nelson, Stockton.

15 - The Clarendon, Redcar.

16 - The Old Fox, Gateshead.

17 - The Cannon, North Shields.

23 - The Ropery, Sunderland.

24 - The Station, Redcar.

(Special Xmas Eve Party)

26 - The Ox Inn, Stanley.

27 - Cat & Bagpipes, East Harsley.

29 - The Frigate, Marske.

31 - The Princess Alice,

Middlesbrough.

(Special New Years Eve Party)

Your Letters

The following letter has been sent by the Trustees of Sedgfield Development Partnership to the members of Sedgfield Town Council

Dear Lesley

Following the public meeting held on Monday 7th November and some discussions which followed our Annual General Meeting on the 14th, the Trustees have been made aware of the strong feelings held by many in the community about the future of the Parish Hall.

We understand that the Town Council has been working hard to find a solution to this issue for some time and that, as a result of the public feedback, different options are again being considered. The SDP would like to offer the Town Council and community our help and assistance with whatever Hall projects are being initiated. The Partnership is structured as a Development Trust and as such is able to access a wide breadth of funding opportunities, some of which the Town Council, being a Statutory Body, may find difficult to obtain directly.

In addition, we are able to offer experienced and skilled volunteers who, we are confident, could greatly assist the project.

We feel strongly that we can contribute to a way forward and request that the Town Council consider involving Sedgfield Development Partnership in this community project.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
John Fitzpatrick

Company Secretary, Sedgfield Development Partnership

Quick police action commended

We wish to commend the police on extremely prompt action regarding a shoplifting at George Bolam Foods on Thursday 17th November. Their response was within 30 minutes.

A person was seen walking out of the premises with stolen goods. After being confronted he ran to his co-partner, who was parked in the Community Hospital car park and they sped away, but not before we obtained a vehicle registration.

The police were given the details and within a further 30 minutes two people were apprehended. This was an outstanding performance which we greatly appreciate.

George Bolam

No whinging please!

I was listening to Radio Cleveland a couple of weeks ago when I heard the presenter bemoaning the fact that he had received a speeding fine (fixed penalty) for driving at 33mph in a 30mph zone. "I was only 3 miles per hour over the limit. It's ridiculous" he moaned. British motorists are becoming constant whingers. They complain that the police have nothing better to do than hound them, but just stop and think. If everyone was to acknowledge that the speed limits are for the protection of lives and are the maximum speed at which a motorist should drive, not the minimum, then there would be some positive benefits.

Fines would cease for a start; accident statistics would be stood on their heads; there would be fewer deaths and injuries. Insurance premiums would also be reduced, fuel economies improved and less greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere.

Why not put a New Year's resolution into practice early this festive season. Instead of driving at 10% above the speed limit why not try driving at 10% **below** the limit, it would benefit everyone and it would not make a lot of difference, time-wise, in reaching your destination. It would also reduce hold-ups at bottle necks. Please don't drink and drive either this Christmas or at any other time. That would also save lives. Have a think about it. You know it makes sense. Merry Christmas to you and to all those people whose lives we have just saved!

IF ONLY it could come true!
David Hillerby

People's Millions

I discovered at the Parish Hall meeting on Monday 7th November that a lot of people there (all) did not know that our wonderful win of £50,000 for Ceddesfeld Hall Grounds had to be matched in "cash or kind" and in place before reaching the final of the competition. Where is THIS money coming from?

I was and still am very thrilled at our success, as, I believe, were all. However, why were we not made aware of the rules? Many no doubt will say "what's new?" When is the village ever going to pull together?
Pat Catterson

PS I have checked the facts independently.

Sedgfield News contacted *Cllr Dudley Waters* to address this question. He gave us this response.

When the bid was made to the People's Millions, both SCA and the Town Council offered to put £2,500 into the scheme, although this was not a requirement. There is no question of matched funding in cash or kind being needed; the award is a straightforward £50,000. The grand total to be spent on Ceddesfeld Hall grounds is therefore £55,000.

Sedgfield Round Table's Autumn Fayre

held in the Parish Hall, raised just over £600 thanks to the generosity of the residents of the village. The following day a hardy bunch were up bright and early and managed to sell another £100 worth of goods at the Car Boot Fayre. All of the money raised will go to local projects such as Carols on the Green, Santa's Sleigh at the Farmers' Market and the annual pensioners party. Many thanks,
William Robinson

Sponsored Walk We have now closed the account for the above and it gives us great pleasure to inform everyone who assisted us to raise a total of £2,300. £1,300 of this has gone to Breast Cancer Care in the Northern Region and £1,000 to Breast Cancer Research at Newcastle University.

Thanks again

Francesca, Georgina and Allana



DEVELOPMENT
TRUSTS
ASSOCIATION

the community-based regeneration network

Copy for the January issue by December 15th please to 58 Front St, Sedgfield, TS21 2AQ: phone 01740 629011 or snews@sedgfieldweb.co.uk

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