

Sedgfield News

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By the Villagers for the Villagers of Sedgfield, Bradbury & Mordon
January 2004

New 'Citizen of the Year'

At the Christmas Reception given by the Mayor of Sedgfield, Edwin Derrick Lofthouse became the latest recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award, organised by the Rotary Club of Sedgfield with Sedgfield Development Partnership.

In the words of a previous winner, Derrick is 'like a stick of rock – he has the word Sedgfield written through his core!' Very apt words for a man who is Sedgfield born & bred and seems to have devoted every spare moment to the interests of this place and its people. A Town Councillor for many years, he worked for improvements to the Parish Hall, the building of a Sports Hall at the Community College and the instigation of a very happy 'Partnerschaft' with our twin town of Hamminkeln in Germany. Derrick has also done a great deal with St Edmund's church: a member of the PCC for 40 years, he has chaired both PCC and Deanery Synod, served as a church warden and was secretary of the Restoration Fund which raised the huge sum needed to repair the church roof and interior and to create a 'Welcome Room'. With Sedgfield Charities and the Rotary Club, he was instrumental in establishing the 'Pop In Club' for our older citizens. Derrick had been secretary of the Charities when there were 6 in all; he led the work to amalgamate them and later was chairman of the consolidated Charities. Always a keen singer, along with David Garrod, he was the driving force in the establishment of Sedgfield Lyric Singers.

He receives an engraved glass goblet along with an illuminated scroll to honour his achievements.

Honorary Burgess

At the same time, Cllr. John Robinson was made an Honorary Burgess of Sedgfield. Presenting the award, the Mayor said that John had been a Town Councillor for 25 years; indeed he was the youngest in the country when elected at the age of 21.

Since then he has been involved in many other organizations, including Sedgfield Charities, Civic Trust, Round Table, Sedgfield 2000 and more.

Charity number comes up

After months of hard work to produce a business plan that would stand up to the most critical scrutiny, Sedgfield Development Partnership can celebrate becoming a Registered Charity. This should open up a whole raft of new opportunities to help make things happen in Sedgfield, Bradbury & Mordon.

Over the next few months, they will work to establish a firm footing with a base in the centre of town, from where they hope to reach out to other active groups, so that everyone can work together for the interests and aspirations shared by the whole community.

Next month: charitable status - the benefits it brings.



Derrick Lofthouse (above) & John Robinson receive their awards



Currently the secretary of the SCA, John was the prime mover in the Millennium and subsequent Jubilee Celebrations.

John said he was very surprised but delighted to receive the award, whilst

his wife Maxine said it had been very difficult to keep it all secret from him. The Council is now hoping that John, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, will approve the cost of the small gift and certificate!

It's a safe bet...you can put your money in it!

Friday 14th November; I was about to depart the office for my annual Christmas present buying expedition when I got a call from the Post Office staff to say the safe wouldn't open. "I'll come and have a look." Ten minutes later, because the safe has a time delay mechanism, I, of course, was also unsuccessful in opening the safe. I called the engineers.

Their response was to ask if we had forgotten to allow for the time delay, or inadvertently deactivated the daily over-ride. No to both. "That means an engineer will have to come out". "Yes, that's what I'm phoning for". "Your call is logged at 2:12pm and an engineer will phone to let you know when he will arrive." I have a duty to inform all relevant departments of the PO; and as each one asked the same questions as the engineers' call centre, it went beyond the inane to the laughable.

An engineer arrived on Saturday and tried to unlock the safe with our key. His conclusion? "It won't unlock! I'll bring a team on Monday". Monday came, along with a special delivery of cash for

our Pensioners. The engineers arrived and began to drill the safe door. Now, it takes about 90 minutes to drill even a small hole into this type of safe door, plus the time needed for the engineers to 'look' inside with their endoscopes, so I left it till 2pm to ask when we might have access; "We don't know; we'll let you know."

At this point I had to begin making arrangements for a range of products to be sent to the office urgently, but the Post Office works to a set system and I had to circumvent these protocols. Sometimes there was immediate understanding, but at others my powers of persuasion were sorely tested. One serious suggestion was to close the office until the safe was opened and repaired; this I refused point blank. So measures were put in place and we were able to operate for the next couple of days - while the engineers continued to drill!

Customers were quick to see the funny side; "Lost your key, Basil?" "Ask the Governor of Durham Jail to lend you one of

his inmates!" "Get a stick of *gelignite!*" We could appreciate the humour, (sometimes my reply was, we were concerned about a number of large, strange looking people asking questions & saying they were American tourists, so we were improving the security of our safe) but we were getting a bit fed up of the almost constant drilling. By Wednesday it was obvious we had a very serious problem. After discussions with my Network Manager, the official suppliers of safes to the Post Office were to bring two new safes, to allow the office to operate 'normally' insofar as security of stock and cash were concerned. However the police wouldn't let them into Sedgefield on Friday because of a certain visitor, so they arrived on Saturday.

Drilling recommenced after Friday's respite, but from then the special arrangements could be dropped, making life behind the counter a little easier. The team of engineers, one of whom I am told is one of the top five safe engineers in the country, finally opened the safe on *Tuesday 25th November at 11:15 pm.*

Eleven days in all, during which time I had to be in attendance.

It was tiring and more than a little trying, but we got the problem solved in the end.

I must thank our customers for their forbearance and the humour they displayed; a big thank you also to my staff for their part in maintaining services throughout this trying time, but the whole thing did at least demonstrate how well the Post Office and its safes are protected, and just how superior the security of the safe was! (The new ones are just as secure, by the way). So you see, it's always *A SAFE BET* in your local Post Office!

Basil Watson, Sub-Postmaster.

Meet the new face of Youth Work in Sedgefield

Litza Johnson (pictured) has just taken up her new post as the detached and outreach youth worker based in Sedgefield.

Employed by Durham County's Education in the Community Service, Litza will be out and about making contact with young people in their own environments around Sedgefield and the surrounding area.

Her aim is to respond to their needs either directly or by working with other agencies and she will be encouraging young people to take full advantage of all the opportunities available to them.

She is already working with partners in the anti-bullying service at the Community College; this brings wider benefits to the whole school. Starting this month Litza will be helping to bring training to the peer support group who are already active in the school.

On Wednesday afternoons, from 4pm - 6pm, Litza will be working with young people interested in dance and drama. Currently there are ten youngsters from year 11 in the group, but she is hoping to spread the age range to cover 13 to 19 year olds.

Friday nights see Litza organising sports taster courses, while on Sunday afternoons she is with the Sedgefield Slayers games group. She is hoping to broaden the club's appeal by attracting young people interested in model-making for games and perhaps wishing to develop their model making into drama or other areas. Already Litza has begun to pick-up on young peoples' opinions; for example they are keen to have a base that can combine coffee



and refreshments with a social space and access to cyber-space. So, lots of ideas and potential for all young people; if you're inspired get in touch with Litza through Sedgefield Community

The Mayor, Cllr Linda Maddison's Charity Concert was a great success. She would like to thank the entertainers, who gave their time freely, businesses & individuals who provided raffle prizes, the College for hosting the show and all who supported the event by attending.

Christmas Farmers' Market

The special Farmer's Market held in December was a resounding success, with stallholders reporting good business and visitors enjoying warm mince pies and mulled wine provided free of charge by the Town Council. Everyone appreciated the seasonal entertainment from the Lyrics Youth Choir, led by Sandy Clubley; St. Edmund's Junior Church with Julia Rowsby and the Celtic Pipes; and there was even a visit from Santa & his reindeer, courtesy of the Round Table.

Market Coordinator Bob Harris said it had been a great success and he hoped it would be bigger and even better next year.

Lesley Swinbank added, 'The mulled wine and mince pies were very popular, but no, I didn't make them!' Thanks to everyone who helped, and especially to Nancy Wells and Liz at Katie's Kitchen, for their culinary expertise.



photos courtesy of Ken Saiger (above) and Roger Clubley (below)



Community Safety *with contributions from Neighbourhood Watch, Sedgefield Police, and the Road Safety Group*

Sedgefield NHW: Notes from the Chairman's address at the December Meeting

It gives me great pleasure to inform the panel that the engraving of the Alan Sowerby trophies carried out by Sedgefield Jewellers has cost us nothing, thanks to the continued generosity of the owner, who insisted that the fee be waived as a donation to the panel for all the good work we carry out.

Now for a matter that has caused considerable concern amongst a good number of members and others, after reading a letter published last month. Apparently one resident feels that we are deliberately ostracizing a group of Sedgefield children who attend a school in Trimdon. I feel it is important to set the record straight publicly, in case anyone else is similarly concerned. The Citizenship Award was born out of this Panel's collective response to try to honour the memory of Alan Sowerby, our past Chairman, who died suddenly and most tragically last year. Donations given by panel members were used principally to set this up and there was quite a debate about how best to provide a worthwhile and permanent memorial which would keep Alan's memory alive.

It was unanimously decided that the citizenship award should be set up in its present form, limited to children resident in Sedgefield attending *schools located in the village*. This meant that the award would be offered only to the junior schools in Sedgefield, where Alan had lived and was known and valued.

The thinking behind this decision was that this was the appropriate age range to help and influence children; and that just as Alan was passionate about trying to improve life and standards in Sedgefield Village, he was also passionate about good education. At the time, we were not even sure whether the schools would consider taking part, though I am glad to say they both welcomed it with enthusiasm. A few months ago, the Panel decided it would be worthwhile to offer the award to the Community College as it would lend some degree of continuity to pupils who had experience of the award at junior level. This would also keep it within the village. I have no proposals to alter these arrangements and look to panel members to reaffirm our previous collective decision.

Recently there has been some confusion regarding the purpose/remit of our Neighbourhood Watch organisation. We have had a formal Constitution agreed and in place for over a year, to ensure that we

Road Safety Group

The Panel has been disbanded due to lack of support, but other arrangements are in hand to carry on the work which had been started and which needs still to be addressed. Thank you to all who have helped. As to the future, there will be a statement in next month's issue of Sedgefield News.

have a clear purpose and relevant rules to try to achieve it. Our aim is simple: to promote & support activities aimed at reducing crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, with a view to improving the quality of life for the residents of Sedgefield Village. Meetings are open, but voting is confined to registered members, who must be residents. We are lucky that our Beat Bobby along with Crime prevention Officer, Area NHW Co-ordinator & Community Force Officer attend each of our meetings, and we also encourage a representative of the Town Council & Borough Council to attend. *Volunteers do all the work; no one is paid, and all activities are confined to Sedgefield Village and its residents.* We are not affiliated, in any shape or form to any group or organisation, except by registration with National Neighbourhood Watch. I hope this satisfies concerns recently brought to my attention by a number of residents and some members.



Left to right: Wilf Garbutt, Jeannette Garbutt; David Worsnoe & Debra Newton (Trading Standards); John Crawford, David Hillerby, Phyllis Hillerby & Joe McKenna, all from NHW.

Recently, a team from Sedgefield Village NHW Executive Committee attended a training session, (see photo above) provided by Durham County Trading Standards Department, with a view to teaching those who may be vulnerable, about the handling of 'Distraction Burglars'.

If anyone would like more information please contact Ken Saiger 621896 or David Hillerby 621343

A sincere apology - In a previous Sedgefield News we advertised security lights at a cost of £1.50. This figure should have been £2. Still, however, quite a bargain.

The Directory of Community & Voluntary Organisations and Businesses within Sedgefield, Bradbury and Mordon

It's your last chance to be included in the new Directory.

The deadline date is January 9th 2004

Please call Simon on 629011

Sedgefield Development Partnership

PC Todd reports

Now that the excitement about the visit of Mr Bush & Mr Blair has died down, I can turn my attention to my annual Christmas card competition.

This year the Pubs & Clubs of Sedgfield agreed to sponsor the event. Hardwick Primary School was the venue and the winner was Robert McGuinness aged 9years. Runners-up were Laura Foakes aged 8, Sam Till aged 11, Lara Reynard aged 9 and Joshua Lewis aged 7. They all received prizes for their efforts.



Christmas card competition winners, Lara Reynard, Sam Till, Joshua Lewis, Laura Foakes & Robert McGuinness, received their prizes from

I now turn my attention to crime, and although we are pleased that there are only a few crimes to report, you must not become complacent. Windows have been damaged in Lilac Avenue, Front Street and Church View areas. Vehicles have been broken into & items stolen in The Orchard, Maple Grove and Turnpike Walk (Winterton), and a caravan broken into and items stolen, in the Beacon Lane area. So do please be careful during the rest of the festive season and DON'T give thieves a chance at YOUR property. Have a happy & prosperous New Year, apart from the villains, of course! *Till next time, Keith.*

Sedgfield Village Neighbourhood Watch: Monthly Crime Figures

	Last month 10/11/03 - 9/12/03	Year to date 10/01/03 - 10/12/03
Youths Causing Annoyance	nil	5
Burglary Non Dwelling	2	16
Burglary Dwelling	nil	9
Crime Drugs	nil	3
Theft from Motor Vehicles	4	10
Theft of Motor Vehicles	nil	4
Taking & Driving Away	nil	nil
Vehicle Interference	nil	4
Assaults	3	11
Criminal damage	4	22
Theft	1	24
TOTAL	14	108

Sedgfield Slayers need YOU

If you like working with young people, have good organisation skills & are available on Sundays from 2 - 4pm, you may be interested in helping run our club.

Formed by a group of young people, the club is based on the Lord of the Rings & Warhammer 40k games by Gamesworkshop.

We're looking for someone who would enjoy helping young people to use their imagination & learn new skills. If you are interested, please contact us on **629011**.

Pay is based on Auxiliary Youth Work rates and you'll be part of County Durham Youth Work team, subject to successful checks.

The POP-IN Club

The Pop-in Club for disabled and retired residents of Sedgfield held their annual Christmas dinner in Ceddesfeld Hall on Tuesday 9th December. 69 members attended and were entertained with a sing-song by Mr George Hodgson of Sedgfield, and his music.

Thank you, George and very well done!

We would also like to thank "No 4" who again donated the Christmas cake. This has become a regular donation, for which we are extremely grateful.

For anyone who would like to join, we are open every Tuesday & Wednesday morning from 10am till 12noon, as well as Thursday afternoons from 12 noon till 2.30pm. You will be more than welcome to join us at Ceddesfeld Hall for a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits, plus, of course, a good chin-wag!

Wilf Garbutt

Wilkinsons of Sedgfield



The book is now on sale at £9.50 (direct) or by post (add £1 for postage & packing) from David Hillerby,

10 Boynston Grove, Sedgfield,
Co Durham, TS21 3BD

Also available from the PO & other outlets in Sedgfield & surrounding area
Look out for our Poster!

Change continues apace at Hardwick Park

The forestry contract is now complete and the contractors did a good job in opening up vistas and clearing the bed of the Lake. The dam can now be clearly seen. We are very pleased with the result and the Park looks better for the removal of the conifers. Other trees can be taken out later if necessary. If you are concerned, please note that white crosses and other markings on some trees result from engineers setting things out and are *not* indicative of impending removal.

Good progress with the Car Park means it will be finished in 4 to 6 weeks, apart from the final surface. Traps have been installed to catch any oil and prevent it getting into the Serpentine. Work will start soon on the Cascade and Bridge at the end of the Serpentine, and in March on the main Lake, weather permitting. This will include the Bottle Pond, the bund between the Fen Carr and the Lake, as well as reshaping the Lake edges. In late spring or early summer, work is expected to start on the Gothic Seat and Temple of Minerva. The programme has been stretched slightly to avoid interference between projects. The Heritage Resource Centre should open in spring '06 but the Round Pond and Grand Terrace have slipped a year. The Tuscan Alcove and the Ice House may be brought into the same contract as the Gothic Seat and Temple.

The East Park will be turned into pasture, possibly within two years. Belted Galloway cattle are a possible stocking option; these are an attractive old black and white breed.

It is intended to sub-divide the East Park into three sections so that people walking through can avoid the cattle if they want to. A rare breed of sheep may be an option in the Temple Field.

A new web site has been launched, at www.tomorrows-history.com, which includes the Friends of Hardwick as one of the contributors.

The book, "The Reawakening of Hardwick Park" published by the Friends, was their contribution to the project.

John Carr - an appreciation

We are very sad to announce the recent death of John Carr, of Hadleigh Close. John had lived for many years in Sedgefield, though before settling here, his career as a quantity surveyor in engineering had taken him and his family to live and work abroad in Italy, France, Holland and Norway.

In latter years John was very active in the voluntary sector; he was the first volunteer worker for the Community and Voluntary Organisation Sedgefield - CAVOS, and an advisor to Stockton Citizens Advice Bureau. He was also the first treasurer for Sedgefield Development Partnership, and became one of its first directors, as well as being a founder member of Sedgefield First Responders.

John's main hobby was horticulture, growing flowers for competition and to give away to his friends. Just recently, after receiving a prestigious award from the British and European Geranium Society, John was busy taking geranium cuttings to compete with and to give away next year.

He will be deeply missed by his wife Marjorie, his son Tony, his daughter Deborah and his many friends in Sedgefield.

Tales from the A177 at Hardwick Park ...

or, how Durham County Council aborted my efforts at the Show Field/Hardwick Park exit.

Last April, or thereabouts, I successfully petitioned Durham County Council to improve the pedestrian sight-line to the north from the east side of the A177. The sight-line was blocked by a private sign advertising the Quad-bike facility. Eventually, they provided new Quad-bike signs mounted on the Hardwick Park signs to the north and south of Hardwick entrance. However they over-egged the provision by mounting a third sign on their own Hardwick sign immediately opposite the entrance, cunningly setting the new sign at head-height so that the sight-line to the south was very efficiently blocked. I am now assured that new legs will be provided for the sign post thus raising and restoring the view to the south. When? Hopefully by April!

DCC compounded their crime by installing the "No Overtaking" sign for south bound traffic about 10 yards south of the "Quad bike" sign at such a height & position that the pedestrian sight-line to the south on the east side of the carriageway is seriously obstructed. I have asked that it be raised on a high easel – a wait and see situation.

Not less than 12 months occupancy of the A177 from Sands Hall round-about to Hardwick entrance!

The lane width restriction will remain in force until (or long after) the new round-about is built. It cannot be started before the end of March and then only if there is money left from the current year. Otherwise construction may start in April, or sometime thereafter (assuming the budget permits).

Construction time is variously estimated at three months or six months. Whatever, the road will be restricted for at least 12 months. Current usage by Hardwick Park construction traffic is some 20 vehicles per day (about two per hour) – quite soon the car-park will be complete and there will be few, if any, heavy lorries.

Chris Tunstall, the Highways Manager, was reported in the Daily Telegraph as frustrated about the time the utilities occupy the highway when carrying out repairs. He seems to be guilty of double standards.

R Smeeton

Invitation to musicians

Following the recent departure of several players to University, **Ferryhill Town Band** is looking for new players.

Based in nearby Ferryhill, the band have had much success in recent years, including consecutive appearances in the Brass Band National Finals and a never to be forgotten performance at the Royal Albert Hall. They have also recorded two CDs and hosted a number of concerts with guest soloists of national fame.

An exciting programme of contests and concerts is planned for 2004 and we would welcome new members, particularly cornet, euphonium, and bass players.

Rehearsals are on Wednesdays & Sundays, and transport can be provided from Sedgefield and the surrounding area.

If you are interested, contact Jonathan Wallace on 01740 629194 or e-mail via the band's web site - www.f-t-b.org.uk.



Ferryhill Town Band in action, recording their recent CD, 'Pastime With Good Company'

STOP PRESS - Boxing Latest News!

***Bradley Saunders of Sedgefield
has won his 8th British title in the
Boys Clubs Championships***

More on South Durham Boxing Club next month

Prize for young poet

Tim Jasper has won the Northern Echo's 'North-East Heroes' Poetry Competition. His prize was £100 in book tokens and a series of poetry workshops for his school, St. William's in Trimdon.

You may remember his poem about clearing up after our doggy friends, published in Sedgefield News a few months ago.

Tim also produced a newspaper for his school on Friday 21st November.

'The Timbo Times'

detailed President Bush's visit, with photos and interviews. Here are a few excerpts.....

'THERE is no school today for St. William's pupils who live in Sedgefield because the police have restricted traffic movements in and out of the village.....Police and officials have been checking every lamppost and man-hole cover for explosives, then sealing them. All litter bins have been covered and sealed and the post boxes have been blocked up.

It has been reported there are 1,300 police on duty, about one for every two residents of Sedgefield. Indeed we counted seventy-five as we walked up to the village.

A **protester** told me he'd been on every London demonstration, apart from Thursday's when he was working. He said, "I'm sure it will be a peaceful demonstration today, noisy but peaceful. George Bush is not welcome here because of the unjust wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Schools are closing all over the country for lack of money yet we are wasting millions on security measures for one day's visit."

An **American family** from Atlanta, Georgia, currently studying at Durham University were thrilled to have the opportunity to catch a glimpse of their President. The husband said, "George Bush has never visited our town back home, yet we are going to see him today in this small village. I am so excited."

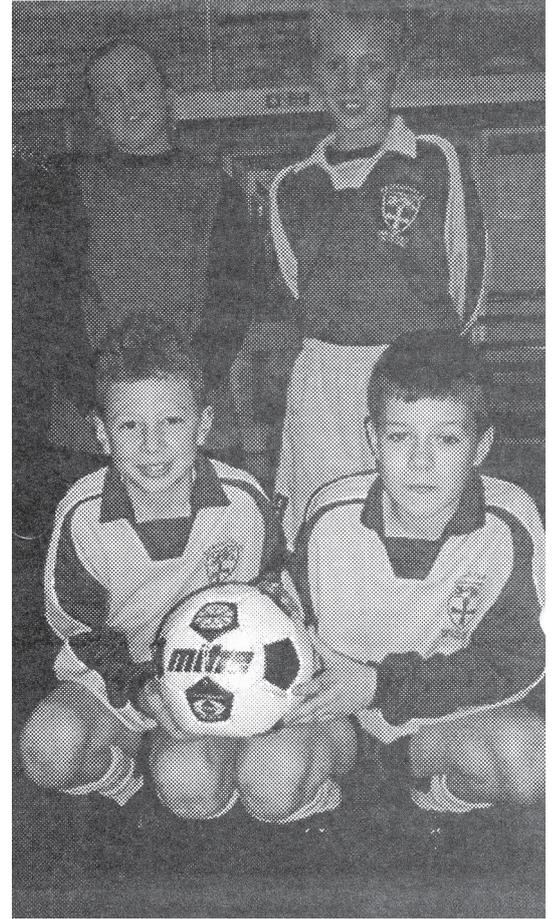
A **local resident** who declined to give her name said, "I think it is a great honour for the village of Sedgefield but I hope the funding...will be

New strips & extra coaching herald a bright New Year for Sedgefield Primary School Football Team

Sedgefield Primary School football team recently received new football strips which would grace any Premiership side!

The two new strips (home & away) are in the school colours of blue & yellow. They were able to purchase this new kit through the very generous sponsorship of one of our parents, Mr Alan Austin.

Another parent, Mr Mike McAlister, kindly offered his coaching support at the start of the school year. As well as supervising the matches already played, he has organised several training sessions for all the children interested in playing for the school team. Thanks to them both, the school squad is now very well prepared to face the second half of the season in the New Year.



coming from central government."

Dog breaks through police cordon!

Had the villagers of Sedgefield waited on the A177 this morning, (like my sister did), they would have seen the entire cavalcade as it passed.

Unfortunately, a couple who brought their dog with them did not have it on a lead and the dog wandered into the road minutes before the cavalcade passed. A policewoman on duty would not allow them to step into the road to retrieve the animal and the first police motorcycle outrider had to swerve to avoid it. Luckily, despite the commotion, the dog was eventually enticed back from the road and led to safety and an international incident was narrowly avoided, much to the relief of its owners. The policewoman was beginning to show signs of agitation too.

In the end, the nearest I came to the President was as he flew over our garden on his way to Teesside International Airport.

I wonder if he saw us waving?

Cook's Corner; Eccles Cakes

*Half 1kg. pack puff pastry,
8 oz currants*

*2 oz butter, 4 oz sugar,
milk & sugar for the tops*

Melt butter and sugar together. Add currants and leave to cool.

Divide pastry into 18 sections Roll into balls then roll out into 9cm circles on floured board. Moisten the outside edge of the circle with milk and put a desert spoonful of the cooled mixture in the centre. Gather and lift the outside edge to the centre and squeeze together. Flatten and make into a circle with the joined edge underneath.

Roll out again to 9 or 10cm.

Place on baking tray and cut three slots in the top.

Brush with plenty of milk and sprinkle with sugar.

Bake at 180C for about 10 mins.

Thanks to Bett and John Parkinson

Happy New Year from all of us at Sedgefield Community College

Our New Year resolutions this year follow on from 2003. We'll be doing all we can to further increase our standards, and continuing to build good partnerships and relationships with our local community

I am really pleased to say that in both of the above areas we made great strides forward in 2003. We had the best results ever and have made some very good links with the local community. We are indebted to Linda Maddison, Mayor of Sedgefield, who in particular has done a great deal to build positive local relationships.

It seems a long time since the visit by President Bush and his wife Laura, and Tony & Cherie Blair, but the experience will be remembered by everyone who was involved. Whatever views are held about the President, it was a great honour to be visited by two world leaders and an experience that was more than 'once in a lifetime' - I think it must be unique worldwide.

After the visit, we received good wishes from around the globe - another reason for residents of Sedgefield to be proud of their college! *So what was it like?*

The lead up to the big day was fascinating but exhausting. The school was occupied by Americans, secret service people and police, not to mention the technology. This was good for creative thinking; strange stories were being discussed by students who had obviously watched too many TV programmes! I didn't see any guns but some Year 7 students insisted they had seen machine gun posts. OK, there was a bit of inconvenience, but we didn't detect very much disruption to learning during the period.

The day itself was really exciting. The children, with

their teachers, set up activities for the visitors to see. Some were engaged in sports, some in computer work and some in activities about

learning itself. President and Prime Minister were in good humour and joined in with some of the activities. We discovered that President Bush has a resting heart rate of 40!

Laura and Cherie (I'm being a bit over familiar here!) worked on ICT with some Year 10 students, chatting and exchanging of ideas. Cherie even quizzed the English department about revision ideas for the Blair children - we hope we were of service! Pupils not directly involved in the activities still got a chance to see the President and Prime Minister and some lucky children got autographs and even the odd cuddle!

The visit was a great morale boost to the school. Everyone we spoke to enjoyed it and thought the President was 'warm and human'. We appreciate and respect the views of those who protested and who were in some way inconvenienced, but overall it was a day to remember for the rest of our lives.

A CD of pictures is available from Mr. Foster at the college, at a cost of £2 (to Butterwick Hospice) and an anthology of the visit will also be published and sold in aid of charity.

What next!? **Lynne Ackland; Headteacher**



Visiting 'spooks' just loved our hand made pots - and raspberry jam?

In the weeks leading up to President Bush's visit, sales at Sedgefield Pottery showed a remarkable increase, thanks to the interest of the many members of the pre-arrival party who were based here to take care of 'special arrangements'.

It seems they couldn't get enough of Bill Todd's hand made pottery and the chat, which of course is an integral part of the buying process. A little bit of old England to take back to the States was the very thing to commemorate their visit and the shelves were almost bare when they left.

One particular lady bought a number of items and asked Bill to pack them up to go back on Air Force One, but there was one problem. She was desperate to take back a jar of home-made raspberry jam, but had been unable to find just what she wanted in the village. After she mentioned this to Bill, he went home and persuaded his wife to part with a jar of their own home-made jam (somewhat reluctantly, we believe); it was duly packed along with the pots.

The next day the parcel was collected, but as the original purchaser couldn't be there, it

was picked up by her friend.

"Tell her I've put the jar of jam in," said Bill, as she left the shop.

As the President's bullet-proof limousine drew to a halt in front of the DunCow on the big day, Bill was astonished to see that the first person to emerge from the car was his lady customer. Seeing him watching the proceedings, she shouted over "Got the jam Bill! Thanks - had it checked out, going back on the plane today" and went into the pub, leaving the ladies over the road wondering what on earth was going on!

JP

January DIARY

Announcements on this page are **free** to non-commercial organisations

Local History Society

Monday 5th January
at 7.45pm in Ceddesfeld Hall
Tony Walker will talk about
**The Navy Postal Service of the
First World War**
Further details from
Judith Edgoose on 620244
Guests and new members welcome

Sedgefield W.I.

Wednesday 7th January
Michael Dodds on the work of
**Teesdale & Weardale
Search & Rescue**
Competition for members is
2 homemade sweet mince pies
Visitors Welcome: Entrance £1

Sedgefield Cricket Club

Quiz Night starting at 8pm
on **Saturday 10th January**
All welcome

Sedgefield Civic Trust

Open Meeting
on **Thursday 8th January**
at 7.30pm in the Fletcher Room
of the Parish Hall
Speaker -
Mr Derrick Lofthouse
'Growing up in Sedgefield'
All welcome

Sedgefield Farmers' Market

The next market is on
Sunday 11th January?
from 9:30am to 1:30pm
Local traders always welcome
Please contact Bob Harris on
07977 231815 for details

Sedgefield Racecourse

Racing fixtures for January are
Tuesday 13th & Tuesday 27th

**The W.I. Market
will be closed during January**

Family History Group

Monday 19th January
at 7:45pm at Ceddesfeld Hall
Mr David Parkin on
**Using Computers in
Family History - part 2**
New members always welcome

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club

Tuesday 20th January
at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall
Annual General Meeting
& a talk by Wynn Alderslade -
'Colour me Beautiful'
Everyone welcome

Sedgefield Wildlife Group

Thursday 22nd January
at 7.45pm in the Parish Hall
David Long,
from Durham Wildlife Trust
will give an illustrated talk on
**Wetlands &
Great Crested Newts**
*For further information
call 620811*

More of Your Letters *We wish to make it clear that
views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher.*

From the Horse's Tail?

Your letter suggesting that County Highways had brought a horse from Preston, having sent someone there for a riding lesson, to film it crossing the A689, was woefully illinformed, misleading and I suspect, mischievous in intent. It asked indignantly, could horse & rider not be found locally, without burdening the Council Taxpayer. A reasonable question, you might think, but which Taxpayers and which County Highways Dept? The Department in question wasn't identified, but readers were left in no doubt that it was Durham County Council's. 'Fraid not! Similar crossings were planned in North Yorkshire, but after the British Horse Society objected on safety grounds, it became an issue at a public inquiry. Prior to the inquiry and to prove this type of crossing safe and easy to use, the National Highways Authority carried out a trial, which involved their equestrian expert being

photographed using the crossing on the A689. I understand horse and rider were from Preston, *but DCC was not involved in any way.* I know that a Member of Sedgefield Borough raised the matter with DCC Highways Department in August, but being happy with the explanation given, did not request a report. The intention may have been to embarrass Durham County Council, instead the letter served only to embarrass its author. She says she got her information 'from the horses mouth'. It's clear to me that she was talking to the wrong end of the horse.
Councillor Ken Manton

Where was the Mayor?

In recent telephone calls from friends in England and the South of France, the visit has been the first topic of conversation (that, & England winning the World Cup). Mr. Bush's visit is now history, but so is the fact that our very own mayor, Cllr. Linda Maddison, was not invited to the Dun Cow on that famous Friday when Sedgefield was put on the world map. I look for a plausible reason for the exclusion, but I'm dumbfounded and await an explanation from those concerned! Whatever political view one might have, I hope that we, the rate payers, are not footing the bill.
Jeff Wragg

Sedgefield News is supported by the Community Empowerment Fund, the County Durham Foundation and is a member of the Development Trusts Association.



We received so many letters on the subject of the education of catholic children from Sedgefield that this page is devoted to the topic. Other subjects are covered on p11. But a heartfelt plea! We do value your letters and opinions, but, as some readers have suggested, the page might be more enjoyable if letters were more concise!

I have read the letter regarding St. William's School in the last edition of Sedgefield News and I feel we should state that we are grateful when we are included in the many activities organised in Sedgefield. This letter does not represent the views of the school and we hope we will continue to be included in the activities which the children enjoy so much.

Mrs. Sheila Doherty, Headteacher

In reply to last months letter regarding the alleged discrimination by the Town Council against those Sedgefield children attending St. William's school in Trimdon, I must point out that St. William's are invited to take part in all activities organized by the Town Council for the young people of Sedgefield, including the Annual Tub planting (their children won the competition this year), lantern workshops, poster competitions etc. All these events are advertised in Sedgefield News & Sedgefield Extra, ensuring that children from schools other than Sedgefield JMI, Hardwick or indeed St. William's, are able to participate. Sedgefield children attend many schools outside the village including Red House, Ian Ramsey, Carmel, St. Leonard's, Hurworth etc., none of which receive the individual attention that St. William's enjoys. It is disappointing that the writer felt compelled to write on this issue.

Lesley Swinbank, Town Clerk

The letter published in your December issue is an affront to the councillors and staff responsible for the two excellent primary schools situated within Sedgefield. The policy of religious segregation was discontinued here over 100 years ago when the grammar school situated in the Church grounds was closed. Your correspondent was given the choice of schools for his children's education and if he has made the wrong choice he should stand by it.

Name & address supplied

I have been asked by the editor to comment on a letter in the December issue. I should point out that Sedgefield News is not the official voice of the Town Council. It is independent!

The letter was written by a parent of one of the 30 Sedgefield catholic children whose 'appropriate' school happens to be a 'shared' school; the problem, it now is clear, was simply a result of a communications breakdown prior to the Town Council's November Fireworks display.

I know that the writer did not intend to question Christian unity in Sedgefield; in fact he has been active for many years in the church unity movement. In the Sedgefield of 2003, possibly half the population were not on our electoral role 25 years ago, but older residents will be aware that I am the only survivor of the original trio of 1968, Canon Edmundson, Rev Bob Broughton and myself, who worked very hard to establish the 'churches together' movement which still flourishes today.

25 years ago St William's school was built as a replacement school to serve 3 catholic communities. My old friend Cllr Mick Terrance and the County Council were very proud of it, but it would never have materialised at all without the 60 catholic children from Sedgefield and the £30,000 building investment from St John Fisher Parish demanded by Government rules for church schools at the time.

Town Council & Medieval Fayre Committee have always recognised that 30 or so Sedgefield children who attend St William's School identify with Sedgefield. Historically, their parents are the main stakeholders in the school.

I hope this goes some little way to clarify the situation. I must emphasise that in all my 37 years here, I have had tremendous support from all residents, in my work as priest, councillor and community leader.

Father John Caden

After the reformation, there was no permanent Catholic priest here in Sedgefield until the 50's. St Edmunds was always known as 'The Church'. Methodists used what is now the scout hall and Catholics were served by West Cornforth, until church land was restored to them in the 1930s. The first permanent Parish Priest had digs with a Methodist Lady in Spring Lane while waiting for his house to be built, and Sunday school was conducted in rooms above the Barber's shop. There has never been a denominational school here. Sedgefield was always an ecumenical village; we worshipped together sometimes, but still retained our own beliefs. Rectory Row school catered for all, with staff of different faiths. Catholic children were allowed to visit St John Fisher for holidays of obligation and the R.E. syllabus was laid down by the government.

After the 11+ catholic children went to Darlington or Stockton. Without school buses it was a long journey for them. In the late 50's/early 60's, St Peter and Paul's school in Stockton accepted Sedgefield Catholic children and the diocese paid for school buses. I taught there and brought the records over as the new school was to be opened in Trimdon. Father Caden, as County Councillor, campaigned for a Catholic primary school in Sedgefield, but it was not to be; the numbers did not warrant it. However, he did serve as Chairman of the governors of both Rectory Row and Hardwick Primary schools.

Our mayor obviously supports the schools in her own village, as do councils in other villages.

Name supplied? Nail your colours to the mast. Not afraid to give my name!

Maire Garrood

**Deadline for February issue -
January 15th**

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or call 629011