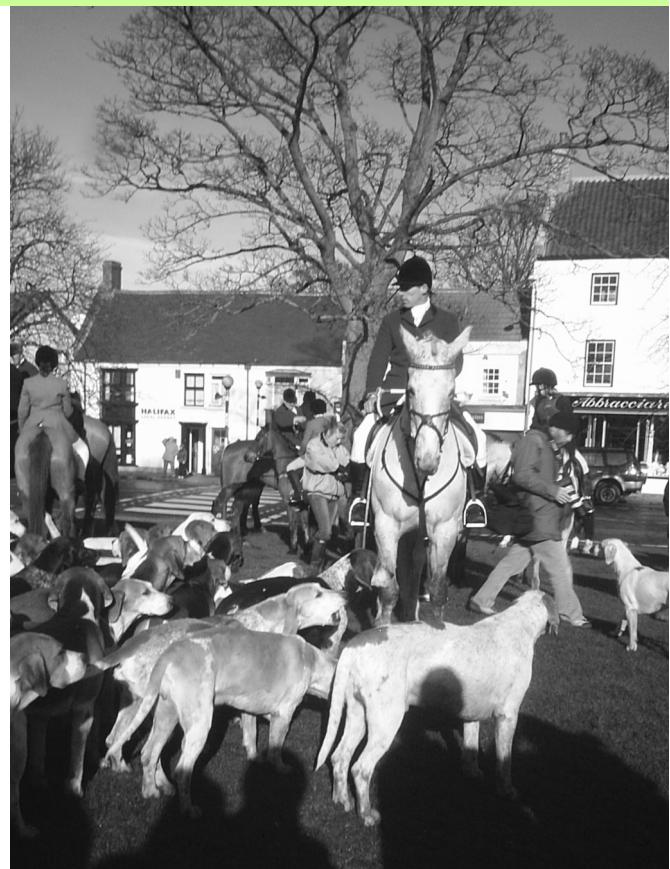
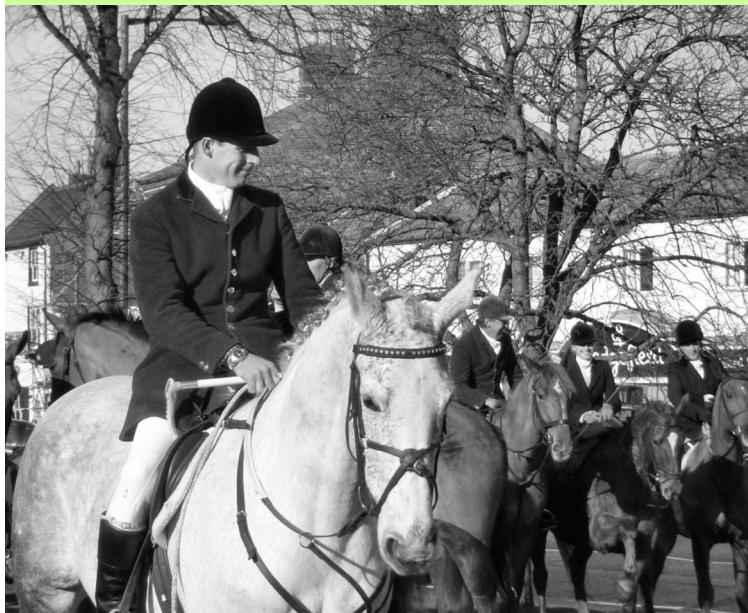


Sedgefield News

Insert logo

By the villagers for the villagers of Sedgefield, Bradbury & Mordon
March 2005



Thanks to Ian Hunter for his pictures (left, and many more on www.sedgefieldweb.com) and to Mr & Mrs Harvey for theirs (above and below)

Wherever you stand on the issue of hunting with dogs, these pictures (February 16th) mark part of our history - the South Durham Hunt has been held since 1872. Master of the Hunt Mark Shotton has vowed that the sport would go on, but that the dogs would no longer chase foxes. They will chase false scent trails. The International Fund for Animal Welfare has welcomed this attitude to the ban. A spokeswoman said "There is no ban on riding and using false trails is a good alternative."



'BREAK A LEG!' But the show must go on..

Just before Christmas, Sedgefield Players were delighted to receive good wishes from the writer of their panto, Alan P. Frayn, who sent them a Cinderella Christmas card containing the verse printed below.

Norma Neal (Sedgefield Players' Chairman) writes..
I'm sure that those of you who came along to see the panto will agree that it was an excellent show and everybody did have a ball. However, we had to contend with one or two mishaps beforehand, including an accident to one of our members. Dorothy Tate had a fall down the back stairs of the Parish Hall, ironically enough when she was helping set up the bar for the panto - and she hadn't touched a drop! Sadly, she ended up with a very painful broken shoulder and broken bones in one leg, so her planned appearance as the Good Fairy was not to be and, at very short notice, two other good fairies stepped in to the breach. But the show went on, giving capacity audiences the traditional Sedgefield Players panto which has become such a vital part of a happy family Christmas. After all that, we felt we had to reply to our Cinderella writer in like vein. He was delighted to receive it and we thought you might like to read it, too. *Sedgefield Players perform a thriller by Richard Harris this month. See p.11*

A bright new start for Spring!

Are YOU thinking about starting or changing your career? learning a new skill? getting to grips with computers? starting a new hobby?

Contact Maggie, Katie or Zoe and ask how we can help YOU! Call 077 642 692 51 or call at 58 Front Street on Thursday morning, 9.30 - 12noon

Sedgefield Learning Borough

Sedgefield Town Council Election

Following the death of Cllr. Vaughan Lonie, there is one seat vacant on Sedgefield Town Council.

The election will take place on **Thursday 10th March**
The candidates are: David Ralph Brown, Conservative & Gale Platts, Labour

Please vote at your usual polling station, Parish Hall or Hardwick Primary School between 8am - 9pm

Have you got a "musical talent"?

Sedgefield Methodist Church is seeking a volunteer to share in the rota of appointments with our other two musicians, in providing musical accompaniment during Sunday services. We have three excellent instruments; a piano, an electronic organ and a clavinova.

Perhaps you have given this kind of support to another church in the past, or maybe this is completely new to you. Why not pay us a visit one Sunday morning, or evening, and if you like what you see, make yourself known. We will be delighted to see you.

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

The Sedgefield Panto is bound to impress,

From the moment you start to perform,
So now may I wish you the greatest success,
Go take County Durham by storm!

Thanks to all your hard work now you'll reap the rewards,

For your show's full of fun and variety,
So be sure to enjoy, as you're treading those boards,
'Cos you can't beat a happy Society!

I'm sure it will be the best panto of all,
And those Sisters will have them in stitches,
So I hope that, like Cinders, you all have a Ball,
And your show will turn rags into riches!

and the players' response...

Many thanks for your greetings so kindly sent
And your words of encouragement sincerely meant.

We had a great panto in our Parish Hall
Sedgefield audiences loved it - one and all.

The sisters were gruesome, they got booed every night
But Cinders was lovely, a sparkling delight

Our Prince and Dandini should both take a prize
For their singing and dancing and slapping those thighs.

Budget and Leggett got plastered each night
And their closing number was a memorable sight
Buttons, that's Thomas, was everyone's friend
And we hope that he also finds love in the end.

His Nanna Annette, was a fearsome Hattie.
From her clutches no man in the audience was free
As poor Baron Hardup, David lived in such fear
He's leaving for Africa in the New Year!

Let's not forget Dorothy, our Fairy so kind
Who had to drop out, though she'd learned all the lines
Now we know in the theatre for praise we don't beg
And it's bad luck to say anything but "Break a leg!"

Taking this literally, Dorothy came to some harm
Down the backstairs she tumbled, broke a leg - and an arm
But the show must go on and with one week to go
Jean and Norma stepped in and they saved the show

As Chamberlain, Jack announced the guests with aplomb
And his ghost cleared the line-up one by one
Our dancers and chorus were light on their feet
And I've never seen kids eat so many sweets.

The sets were fantastic, sound and lighting a dream
And we must offer thanks to the brave backstage team
Not to mention the bar staff and those front of house
Who dealt with the public with never a grouse.

Walter directed the lot with his usual flair
And we hope to repeat the same process next year
Once we've recovered from the aches and the pain
We'd love to do another by you, Mr. Frayn!

New Cancer Research Group start-up

Anyone interested in the formation of a new Sedgefield branch of Cancer Research UK should contact Margaret Ogden on 01740 621028

Featuring '*the Lyrics*' - singing for sheer delight

'It's Lyrics tonight'... Someone from another planet might think we heading for a word-smiths' convention, but the refrain is well understood amongst Sedgefield singers, young and old. A change of name for the youth choir was touted once - maybe something a bit more modern and snappy, but heaven forefend. 'Lyrics' is where they go on Fridays and 'Lyrics' it remains - cast in stone!

The Lyric Singers, born in 1974, still going strong, retaining a surprising number of founder members and attracting new faces as others move on or retire. From time to time, smaller groups have emerged from within the choir, notably a Barber Shop quartet which absolutely buzzed with personality, and the delightfully tuneful Ringer Singers; musical directors come and go and the music changes too. The Lyric Singers welcome it all and they are definitely here to stay. The most lasting spin off has been **Sedgefield Lyrics Youth Choir** (slyc for short - say it 'slick'!) which first emerged as the Junior Lyrics in 1985. In size and gender it has been extremely variable as singing together goes in and out of favour with 9-18 year olds, but just like the parent choir the sheer love of singing keeps it going.

The power of voices together, when the singers are 'on song', brings a life enhancing exhilaration that is difficult to imagine if you haven't experienced it, and both choirs have a loyal audience who enjoy seeing and hearing that very exhilaration.

Though they regularly appear on the same bill the two choirs have a distinct life of their own, often entertaining other groups or singing at weddings and other services.

The tradition of giving to charity is strong in both groups and at every AGM, the year's giving is debated. For the last five years, as well as making their regular donations to St John Ambulance and the SCA, a Nepalese child has been sponsored through her education. Now that she has finished school, another child is to be given the same support.

The youth choir has given concerts on behalf of various causes - most memorably 'Yanomamo' which was performed for WWF. This month (see right) they take up the cause of fishing communities devastated by the Tsunami, and the Lyric Singers have voted to back this up with a donation of £200 to Fisherfolk Aid. If you have a little time on the 12th or 13th March to give your support, it will be much appreciated.

Do you secretly love singing, but lack confidence in your voice or worry about reading music? Both choirs would say don't worry - give your voice a try. Most people **can** sing in tune and that's all it takes, because regular practice does the rest. Aside from those whose voices soar with the large choral societies, many others would enjoy a weekly vocal workout, as well as the kind of friendship and support that comes from being one of the 'Lyrics'.

Check it out! Fridays in Ceddesfeld Hall; 6pm in term time if you're still school age; 7.30pm if you're not. Contacts: for the Lyric Singers, Judith Edgoose, 620244 and for SLYC, Sandy Clubley, 620609

Success Story

It won't surprise anyone who has reacted to his singing with joy and sometimes tears, is that Thomas Guest continues to make his mark. He proved himself one very slick singer recently, by winning an unconditional place at the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts.

Friends of Hardwick AGM

At the AGM of the Friends of Hardwick, Tony Blair was re-elected president, as was Hon. Secretary, John Fitzpatrick and the three members of the Committee, Lesley Fitzpatrick, Geoff Hughes and Alex Gibson. The Friends' financial position is healthy and a good start has been made in raising funds for a new Statue of Neptune. Lee White, a Durham County Council Archaeologist, gave an interesting talk on the Time Teams final report of the Roman dig in East Park. It had significant importance in archaeology as it was the first definitive proof that Cade's Road existed and that settlements existed in County Durham.

More of this next month when Sedge field News will have a big feature on the renaissance of Hardwick Park.

Sedgefield News has learned that the Labour Party in County Durham has decided that Sedgefield Ward will not be one of those chosen to have an all female shortlist for the County Council elections.

Wines for Easter

Easter foods are amongst the best, heralding, as they do, the onset of spring. Such great foods naturally demand great wines - so what to drink with your Easter feast?

Breakfast eggs: a tricky wine match. Fortunately, the solution is fizzy, so pair with Champagne or Cava.

Roast lamb requires a meaty wine with some tannin but in spring you might enjoy some refreshing acidity too. The classic answer is red Burgundy but a good-value alternative would be a medium-bodied red from Italy (Chianti, Dolcetto) or Spain (look for Crianza or Reserva).

Simnel cake Try a tangy, apple-y Loupiac for a good-value sticky that's not too cloying, or a sweet Moscato (Muscat) from Italy. Try Asti again - with an open mind!

Easter eggs Milk chocolate demands Muscat – again, the Italian sweeties are great. Dark chocolate (Green & Blacks Eggs available at Katie's Kitchen) is good with Tawny port or a sweet red - maybe an Italian sparkling red.

Community Safety

Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crimewatch Panel

Minutes of Meeting held on 8th February 2005

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of 14/12/2004 were approved.

2. Matters Arising: Item 2(7) Phone Stickers – C/man stated that these would be bought when the Borough Community Care Force installs the Community Warden (Tim) telephone at Ceddesfield Hall.

3a) Treasurer's Report: Details of Bank balance was given.

3b) Secretary's Report: Correspondence had been: Received from - Town Council, CAVOS, Chief Constable, Durham Police, Sarah Norman Area N/Hood Watch Manager, Durham Agency against Crime (DAC), Community Care Force, National N/Hood Watch, and Sedgefield Community College. Issued to - Town Council, Chief Constable, DAC, Community Force, Nat'l/Hood Watch, Sarah Norman.

4. Representative Reports:

4a) Village Constable: PC Keith Todd was unable to attend the meeting – Ball Game Duties. His Crime Report for the period (11/01 – 7/02) – 2005 was circulated. This shows only 5 crimes were recorded, consisting of 1 Theft, and 4 of Damage (to Property & Cars).

C/man observed this was indeed a good message for the Village despite the short period of recording.

4b) Crime Prevention Officer: Neil gave a brief update on Operation DARC. Good news being that December 2005 saw the lowest numbers of burglaries in Sedgefield Borough ever. Responding to a concern over Distraction Burglary Neil advised that despite apparent increases the figures across the **Borough** were fairly consistent with previous years

C/man confirmed that Neil would be given the 15minute time slot to present a video he has made covering a 24hr period of a Sedgefield Borough Police Officer at the next (**12th April**) meeting.

4c) Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator: Sarah gave a brief report and distributed new posters. Regarding the promised “Information Packs” Sarah confirmed that these were being processed by her senior officer and would be issued in due course.

4d) Community Force: Tim distributed copies of Task log for our Village. He spoke about one incident of Anti Social Behaviour and of several fixed penalties he has issued for dog fouling.

Tim works varied hours to suit problems encountered (as dog walkers have experienced). He anticipates spending his full duty period in Sedgefield from the 1st March, which should coincide with the dedicated phone installation at Ceddesfeld.

5 Schools – Citizenship Schemes: C/man reported that the Schemes were still much valued and working well in both village Primary schools. Secretary reported that the Community College Deputy Headteacher after separate conversations with himself, C/man & Vice C/man had written to our Vice C/man apologising for the delay in implementation, confirming the College

will fund replacing the lost Shield as well as his personal commitment to the Award and to establishing genuine links with the village N/Hood Watch group.

6 Ring Round: Secretary confirmed writing to the Chief Constable on behalf of members after December meeting and that a reply had been received stating that this was to be followed up by Supt. Turnbull Operations Manager South Area; as yet no further contact has been received. The C/man stated that no further debate was necessary and we should wait for the Police to follow up our request, this was agreed.

7 AOB: **7.1** A member recorded concerns over youths with dogs in East Park, and of the Police response to this.

7.2 A member informed the Panel that the response to a resident reporting (at 3a.m.) an ongoing crime in East End left the resident disgusted, angry and disenchanted with the Police.

7.3 A member reported that despite continued reporting to the Police, anti social activities in Old Beacon Lane continued; this for some residents has stopped them bothering to report matters to the Police.

7.4 A member had reported a white van unloading scramble type motorcycles in Beacon Lane and the Police had “not wanted to know”.

7.5 A member of the public seeking assistance from a Panel member regarding a van fly tipping in the village, the registration was passed to the Police who advised that this issue was one for the Council to action; the person reporting then contacted the Borough Council who were totally disinterested. Our Panel member then sought assistance from our local Sergeant and despite his best efforts the Councils disinterest continued and now the member of the public first involved will not have any further involvement.

7.6 A member reported of a very recent experience involving property damage and protracted anti social behaviour in the village – the officer attending was to be highly commended for both his manner and for the almost immediate results achieved.

7.7 A member reported of personal contact with the Police that had been totally satisfactory being thoroughly professional in communications and follow up.

7.8 David Hillerby has booked the “Coach”, anyone interested to contact David directly.

7.9 A member stated that in a National newspaper, reports of air fresheners causing fires were repudiated; Tim confirmed that the details he had passed on at the previous meeting came from the Fire Brigade.

7.10 A member reported that recently two males had called at his home purporting to be from BT and asked about persons under 55yrs. at the property. The member subsequently rang the Police and their intended follow up (sending a patrol car) to confront the two men (still in the area) never happened. The member had confirmed with BT that they did not have anyone calling at houses in Sedgefield.

Raffle Held after the meeting raised £14 Next Meeting: Tuesday 12th April at 7 pm in Parish Hall.

PC Todd reports

Reports of damage to windows at the Community College and Sedgefield Primary School recently have caused concern – please inform your children to stay away after normal school hours unless authorised by the school. I will be taking action against anyone found trespassing.....

Changing the subject, I would like to take this opportunity to mention a fund raising event I will be taking part in on 15th March. I hope my efforts to walk in a straight line barefoot over hot coals will encourage you all to sponsor me or donate your small change in aid of a worthy cause. If you have ever walked past the War Memorial on the village green you will have noticed that it is in need of repair to bring it back to the immaculate and proud memorial it once was. As this is the 60th year since the end of World War II, many communities, including ours, intend to commemorate this anniversary with various events. It would be a fitting tribute from the people of Sedgefield and surrounding villages if we could return the memorial to its former glory. If you wish to contribute to this cause and to the good work conducted by Butterwick Hospice, who are organising the fire walk, look out for the posters which will shortly be going up in pubs and shops, where you can sign a sponsor form or place your loose change into the collection tin.

Please give generously!

Keith

P.S. Hopefully I will be walking my beat the day after the event!

Crime figures for Sedgefield

Village 11.01.05 – 7.02.05

There were **4 incidents of damage**, two to windows and two to cars; and **1 theft** – a plant pot stolen from a garden.

Skerne Carrs Flooding Report

A packed audience in Mordon Village Hall heard Roger Martin of the Environment Agency, talk about their investigation into the likely consequences of the proposal to shut off the drainage pumps in Mordon and Bradbury, allowing the Carrs to flood. First, a précis of the main report:

There are three pump locations, in Mainsforth, Bradbury and Mordon, installed some 30 years ago, when the emphasis was on land drainage and agricultural use. Since then the emphasis of the Environmental Agency has changed to protecting people and property from flooding and the provision of wetland areas for wild life.

However, in the winter of 2001/2002 the pumps at Mainsforth failed and were not repaired. Since then the water level has raised some 1.4 metres, though no properties were shown to be at flood risk. There have however been some indications that the railway banking has suffered stability problems as reported by Network rail.

Two main issues are associated with railway lines running across wet ground. The first and most obvious is instability in the embankment and the second relates to the track itself. Heavy trains travelling at high speeds set up waves, which travel along the track in front of the train, and this is known as the critical velocity problem. On soft ground the critical velocity slows down and trains can potentially catch up with the wave causing a risk of derailment and a very serious public safety issue.

Network Rail is most concerned about any scheme that would cause changes in ground water levels in the Skerne Carrs area. They have already imposed a speed restriction on the branch line because significant track subsidence has been detected since the Mainsforth pumps failed. The costs associated with this speed restriction are between £2400 and £2600 per month in train delay payments. The East Coast Main Line bisects Mordon and Bradbury Carrs, and if a speed restriction were to be applied to both lines between the Ferryhill South and Newton Aycliffe junction, this would give a weekly cost in the order of £3.2 million.

Opportunities for Wetland Restoration

Mordon Carrs is the most suitable location for a wetland restoration project, but the issues of the railway main line would seem to make it necessary a partnership with all the numerous external organisations to be the way forward. Before any hasty decisions are made to simply replace the pumps in the Skerne Carrs area it should be remembered that many railways within the UK run over wetland areas and that the pumped drainage scheme in the Skerne Carrs was only installed 30 years ago.

After a very lively discussion period, this is what your correspondent took from the meeting.

The basic argument is about money, and revolves round which agency should pay for pump replacement plus the maintenance and running costs (if in fact this is the way to go).

As flood protection is now the main aim of the Environment Agency's Flood Defence department, their argument is to say that Network Rail should pay, as they would be the main financial beneficiaries. It is fairly obvious that without the involvement of Network Rail in the equation, the remaining pumps would have been allowed to fail and we would not be investigating a hypothetical situation, but have for real, a higher level of water on the Mordon Carrs by up to 1.2 metres in a normal year - very much to the detriment of local agriculture, but to the benefit of an extended area of wetland for breeding wetland birds.

There is a statement in the report, which says that local landowners may be agreeable to the idea, but it was evident at the meeting that most of the local farmers are against.

It seems that the main road, the A1M is unlikely to be effected.

However the safety of the railways should be of paramount importance, and this is stated in the report's conclusions. *John Parkinson*

Country Market

Fridays in the Parish Hall
from 9.30 - 11.00am

Excellent value home baking,
eggs, garden produce & crafts.
Tea & Coffee served

Sports Update with Chris Lines Please send any sports news to me at chrisjlines@aol.com.

Following on from last month, we have a good variety of news on the sporting front. From a high profile regional perspective, to a very important local event, there is plenty to report.

North East Sports Awards Held in Seaburn on 6th February, this annual gong-fest celebrates the best in sporting achievement and potential in North East England. Middlesbrough FC was named team of the year after bringing home some silverware for the first time in the club's history. Up and coming rugby star Matthew Tait picked up the young sports person prize, just a day after he'd been picked up himself by the odd Welsh player or two during his bruising England debut. Meanwhile, Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson rounded off a wonderful 12 months by accepting the disabled sports person of the year award. However, the biggest winner at this year's event was cricketer Steve Harmison. The Durham CCC and England fast bowler was named North East England sports person of the year and was also given an award for the performance of the year, thanks to his remarkable test match haul of seven wickets for a dozen runs in the West Indies at the start of 2004. Let's hope he can find that kind of form again this summer against the Aussies!

Shrove Tuesday Ball Game Talking of great performances, hats off to John Taylor, who won the ball game this year. This writer missed the event for the first time in a while, so can't offer a first hand account. However, it's probably fair to assume that the game was the usual showcase for dazzling, subtle skill, mixed with cunning tactics and interesting variations on the popular 4-4-2 formation so often used in standard football matches. Or something like that. Roll on 2006.

Football Not much to report on the football front this issue, mainly because I've failed to track down the information I need. The Black Lion may have fallen at the quarter final hurdle in the Staffieri Cup, but St. Edmund's may have progressed, possibly even as far as the final. I will try to clarify the situation next month.

The Golden Lion team has struggled to find form of late, suffering a series of defeats in the league. Respite came in the cup quarter final on 13th February, against Trimdon Dovecote. In terrible conditions and on a poor pitch, the team from Sedgefield found itself 2-0 down at half time despite dominating much of the play. Unfortunately, the situation just got worse in the second half and Trimdon ran out convincing winners. The Golden Lion club can now concentrate on improving its lowly league position.

Sedgefield Racecourse Good news from Sedgefield Racecourse, voted runner-up in the Tote sponsored Neil Wyatt National Groundstaff Awards. It is the first track in the country to include a complimentary colour race-card for all visitors to its meetings. This is the first time the track has been rewarded for the hard work and efforts of its groundstaff. Sedgefield was awarded the runner-up prize in the Jumps Category of this National Groundstaff competition, which recognises the efforts, care and improvements made to the actual racing surface on Britain's 59 racecourses. Gemma Charrington, Clerk of the Course, said: "We are absolutely delighted to win this award. Sedgefield is unique in that it is one of the

narrowest Jump tracks in the country, stages 19 fixtures and also gets its fair share of rainfall. These factors combined mean that the turf surface receives a real pounding all year. Mark Davison (Head Groundsman) and Groundsmen Brian Dutton and John Cook, who are supported by a loyal band of casual staff, have done a great job on improving the racing surface here at Sedgefield." The track received letters supporting the improvements to the surface from local trainers Richard Guest, Ferdy Murphy and Kate Walton.

The Dogs Our greyhound mole (!) has proved a knowledgeable furry creature. Both of last month's tips enjoyed success - Distant Thunder and Compatible have come home first in recent races. Rather than quit while we're ahead, we've managed to persuade our tipster to suggest some more potential winners.

The first is SHOOT LOW from the Jackie Teal kennel, a June 2003 pup with an eight race career to date. This dog has won its last two races and since returning from a KO is starting and staying better and should improve several grades within the next month. The next is a very young pup from the Graham Calvert Jnr kennel - DELWOOD MARVIN. Winning on its third official run at the track in A3, this dog can only continue to improve and can be expected to reach the dizzy heights of A1. Delwood Marvin recorded a 27.97 last time out and could well remain in A3 for its next run, so it's well worth backing it for the next three or four runs when it is expected to find time. Only Graham Clavert knows how much this dog is expected to improve. A third and final selection is BALLYREGAN LIRA, a July 2003 pup from the Alison McNicholas kennel. This well bred bitch out of Tom's The Best/Nice One Betty has had five runs at the track and managed to find trouble on all of its previous runs. It has enough early pace to win a race in its current grade more than comfortably with a clear run.

Ten Pin Bowling I can report that ten pin bowling team Women's Troubles are now second in their league. Well clear of the third placed team, they are only 1.5 points behind the leaders with two games to go. By the time this newsletter is published, the team will have played a crunch tie against the team just ahead of them, so the destiny of the title should be decided. If Matt Wilson can repeat his form of a few weeks ago then the team has to have a good chance. He scored 290 in a game which included 11 strikes in a row and meant he was just short of giving the perfect performance! Watch this space...

Tipped for stardom - 3 potential sporting stars of the future posing during a football game. L to R are Lewis Wall, Niamh Dunn, Ciaran Lines.

*Team-mate
Robert
Peacock
is out of
shot on the
substitute's
bench!*



Winterton puzzle for family historian 'down under'

We're hoping that someone who was working at Winterton Hospital during the early 1960s and has a good memory, will remember a patient called Catherine Spence, who died in the hospital on 22nd December 1963; Mrs Spence had been married to John George Sayer, who died in or around 1945.

Contact has been made by Catherine Spence's great granddaughter, who lives in Australia. She would be delighted to receive any snippet of information about her great grandmother—how long she was in hospital; what were her family circumstances; what kind of life had she led. . . .

Contact Sedgefield News (snews@sedgefieldweb.co.uk or 629011) and we will either pass it on or put you in touch with the lady in question.

Cash crisis after Christmas?

Question: *I am having a cash crisis and am considering pawning some of my personal items to raise money. Do you think this is a good way to borrow money? Citizens' Advice Bureau answers...*

Pawnbrokers lend money against the value of articles left with them as security. So if you don't repay the loan and interest (typically 6% per month) the goods can eventually be sold to recoup the debt. Pawnbrokers can provide a useful service but this is not a cheap form of credit. People often use them because they need money quickly and don't want to be hounded by debt collectors if they can't afford to repay what they owe. The amount of money pawnbrokers agree to lend you need not to relate to the full value of the goods you leave with them. They must give a receipt for the goods (called a 'pawn receipt'). The credit contract will state that the pawnbroker is lending you money for at least 6 months, but you can redeem your goods at any time during that period by presenting the pawn receipt and paying off the loan plus interest. The period can be extended by mutual agreement if you pay the interest on the loan and re-pledge the goods, but you need new paperwork.

A record has to be kept by the pawnbroker at every stage of the process, even if the pawned item is sold, and notices are required to tell you before and after every sale. You are entitled to collect the pawn item at any time up to the moment it is sold, provided that you pay interest

for all the period you have had the loan.

If you think you might not be able to repay this money, don't pawn something you can't live without. If it is something precious, check out your insurance position – it's very unlikely to be covered by pawnbrokers insurance if it's stolen (most raids on pawnbrokers are at gun point), but it may be covered by your home contents insurance. If pledged goods are lost or stolen while pawned, you still owe the money to the pawnbroker. The pawnbroker may be held liable for the value of the goods only if you can prove negligence.

Most pawnbrokers belong to the Pawnbrokers' National Association, which has a standard agreement. Loans from pawnbrokers are covered by the Consumer Credit Act 1974, and pawnbrokers must have a credit license.

For several years now there has been a very similar agreement you can make by selling the goods with a right to buy them back within a given period, say 6 months. These are called buy and sell back agreements. So far these have not been regulated, so make sure you know if you are selling the item or just leaving them as security.

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 money advice funded through the Community Fund and the Northern Rock Foundation. For details of Citizens Advice Bureau sessions phone 0870 121 2024 or go to www.cab-spennymoor.co.uk

A story of dropped kerbs and the power of the press

If you recall our letters page in August and September of last year, you will know that there was a good deal of feeling about the issue of dropped kerbs; they make it possible for people in wheelchairs to make their way around the village. Well, we have it from the horse's mouth that the airing of the problem through this paper had a direct impact on the provider - Durham County Council.

They have ordered the construction of 30 new crossings, providing a route from the High Street to the Community Hospital via North End and Durham Road, as well as on the area of land between The Square and North End. The work has started already and should be completed during the spring of this year. Since the specifications for dropped crossings changed in 2001, a number of routes have been completed, including a scheme linking sections of The Lane to Barclays Bank via Front Street/High Street. Dropped crossings have also been constructed as part of larger footpath maintenance schemes, for example, in Boynston Grove. By the time the latest measures are in place, around 70 crossings will have been made accessible to wheelchair users and others, in the last four years, at an estimated cost of £22,000

A detailed survey has revealed approximately 170 further crossings, mainly in housing estates, yet to be constructed. It is clear that there is an intention to continue, as soon as funding has been identified for the work - an estimated £50,000.

Councillor Ken has said that the investigation of the problem and the resulting provision of more dropped crossings, is a direct result of the coverage in these pages...

...so a pat on the back from the Editor to all of you who find time to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. Keep it up – you never know what you can achieve until you try. Do remember to give us your contact details though – see page 12.

The power of the press!

If you recall our letters page in August and September of last year, you will know that there was a good deal of feeling about the issue of dropped kerbs; they make it possible for people in wheelchairs to make their way around the village. Well, it seems the airing of the problem in Sedgefield News has had a direct impact on Durham County Council, whose responsibility this is.

They have ordered the construction of 30 new crossings, providing a route from the High Street to the Community Hospital via North End and Durham Road, as well as on the area of land between The Square and North End. The work has started already and should be completed during the spring of this year.

Since the specifications for dropped crossings changed in 2001, a number of routes have been completed, including a scheme linking sections of The Lane to Barclays Bank via Front Street/High Street. Dropped crossings have also been constructed as part of larger footpath maintenance schemes, for example, in Boynston Grove. By the time the latest measures are in place, around 70 crossings will have been made accessible to wheelchair users and others, in the last four years, at an estimated cost of £22,000.

A detailed survey has revealed approximately 170 further crossings, mainly in housing estates, yet to be constructed. It is clear that there is an intention to continue, as soon as funding has been identified for the work - an estimated £50,000.

Councillor Ken Manton says that the investigation of the problem and the resulting extension of provision of dropped crossings, is a direct result of the coverage in these pages.

*from the Editor...
...a pat on the back to all of
you who care enough to put
pen to paper or fingers to
keyboard...keep it up!*

Cheerleaders for charity

Children at Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School have worked hard to raise over £900 for the Tsunami Appeal. Family and friends at home sponsored the children to do a range of tasks, such as tidying their bedrooms or folding clothes. Some agreed to give up watching TV or eating sweets and one nursery child even gave up using a dummy!

Head Teacher Linda Johnston said 'This sponsorship idea was thought of by our nursery staff, who wanted the children to have real involvement in raising money following the tsunami. We are absolutely delighted at the enthusiasm shown and are very proud of our children'.

Money is still being brought in and it is expected that the final total will be nearer to £1000.

Children in every year contributed to the appeal, but pictured below are:
*Back; Robyn Kinnersley, Katherine Askew, Kelly Dobson & Robert McGuinness
Front; Megan Brown, Dylan Blakey-Ryder, Luke Surtees and Jessica Brown*



March DIARY

Announcements on this page are free
to non-commercial organisations

Sedgefield Garden Society

Tuesday 1st March
at 7.30pm in Ceddesfeld Hall
Alpines and Cultivation
by Alan Spencely
Tuesday 5th April
Perennial Plants
Westwinds Perennials
All Welcome

Tiny Steps at St Edmund's

Wednesday 2nd March 1.30pm
Singing & Stories for
pre-school children & carers.
All welcome

Sedgefield W.I.

Wednesday March 2nd
at 7:15pm in Parish Hall
The Work of the Dogs' Trust
Sarah Shreeve
Members' competition - a small
ornament in the shape of a dog
Visitors welcome - £1.50

Sedgefield Cricket Club

QUIZ NIGHT
Saturday 5th March at 8pm
presented by Mike Blocki
*The club now operates a no
smoking policy in bar/lounge*
**The Cricket Club is available
for private hire**

Sedgefield WI: Coffee Morning &

Bring and Buy in aid of the
Great North Air Ambulance
Sat 5th March 10-11.30am
at Sedgefield Methodist Church
*Everyone is welcome - please
come along and support us!*

Sedgefield Primary School PTFA

Is hosting a
Chocoholics Evening
in the School Hall, Rectory Row on
Wednesday 2nd March
at 7.30pm
Entrance £1.50 - pay at the door
- includes a glass of wine

Local History Society

Monday 7th March
7.45pm at Ceddesfeld Hall
Allan Smart
**"Growing up in a Durham pit
village in the 1930s"**
Further details on 620244
Everyone is welcome

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club

Tuesday 15th March
7.30pm in Sedgefield Parish Hall
Jillian Swiers,
NE area demonstrator
'My Yorkshire'
Everyone Welcome

Sedgefield Wildlife Group

Meets in the Parish Hall on
Thursday 17th March
at 7.45pm
New film - 'Teesdale'
with Sam Forsyth
Contact Anne Gladwin
on 620811 for details
All Welcome

Film Night

in Sedgefield Parish Hall
Friday 18th march
?????????
(subject to confirmation)
Organised by the
Positive Youth Project

Sedgefield Cricket Club

LIVE MUSIC NIGHT
Saturday 19th March at 8pm
Main Guest -Flossie
Also featuring the Corner Boys
and the John Wrightson Band
Admission £7 inc buffet
Tel 621347

Family History Group

Monday March 21st
at 7:45pm in Ceddesfeld Hall
"The Old Grocery Shop"
Norman Kelly
New Members always welcome

Sedgefield Area Churches Together

Invite you to a performance of
"One Friday Afternoon"
a musical drama of the Good Friday story on
Wednesday 16th March
at 7:00pm in Sedgefield Methodist Church
Admission £4.00 by ticket only,
from any of the churches in Sedgefield or from Selections

Your Letters

Fair play for youngsters

I quite understand the concerns of PC Todd re the Jubilee Gardens area and those of the nearby residents. I have lived in Chestnut Road for 35+ years, and whilst the village has grown into a small town with the addition of numerous houses, there has been no improvement to the facilities on offer to the youngsters. There are large areas of playing fields (at the Community college) but the neighbourhood children are not allowed to play football on them (they say). This means that they are left with ... nothing! They could of course go to the Eden Drive area, having to cross the main roads but even then they are not allowed to play football. They do what generations of children have done and play in the only areas possible - the streets and Jubilee Gardens. If the residents of Sedgefield - I also take on board the letter re Yobs Rule in Sedgefield - want a community that can be enjoyed by everyone then perhaps we need to be more vocal in ensuring that there are adequate facilities for both the children and teenagers, who are also valuable members but with little opportunity to express their needs in an appropriate forum.

I for one will take this into consideration the next time the local elections are due as I believe the youngsters of Sedgefield have been poorly represented and as such the residents themselves.

Mrs Lorraine Mortimer

Did you write to us about a Pre School group?

We would like to publish your letter but cannot without your name & contact details. We need not print your name, but we do need a record of authorship. Ed.

Out of Hours GP service

I read with interest the letter 'Retrograde step for health' (January) taking issue with recent changes to the provision of Out of Hours GP services. As Chief Executive of Sedgefield PCT, I feel I must respond.

The writer refers to services over the last 50 years, when your GP would make home visits 'during the night' and contrasts it with the current system. Such arrangements obviously relied on GPs always being either at work or on call - and while this may have been sustainable when the NHS was established, it certainly cannot be regarded as acceptable conditions of work for the GPs themselves, nor as providing the quality of service that patients expect. In fact, for several years now, virtually every GP practice in County Durham has relied upon GP co-operatives or locum services to provide out of hours GP cover.

The new system, in operation since December is a consequence of the national GP contract, allowing doctors to opt out of Out of Hours services. We acknowledge that this has been a relatively big change for the Sedgefield/Trimdon/Fishburn area and to that end the PCT has agreed with Dr Jones and partners that the PCT will fund Saturday morning urgent care surgeries from Fishburn at least until June 05 (to be reviewed thereafter).

With the exception of Saturday mornings, all other Out of Hours services will be provided from the Urgent Care Centre at Bishop Auckland General Hospital, next door to the A & E Department.

Making contact with the service is simple - just a single phone call to 01388 455455. An experienced

receptionist will take details of patient and symptoms and will ensure that you are called back by either a GP or a specialist nurse. If the patient only needs advice, this will be given over the phone. If they need to be seen by a GP or nurse they will be given an appointment at the Urgent Care Centre. This a well equipped, specialist facility and is the best place for a GP to examine a patient, with access to all the specialist equipment they require - in contrast to consultations carried out in the patient's home. Where a home visit is deemed necessary, this will be made at the clinician's discretion.

In regard to transport, we have a contract with the North East Ambulance Service for a comprehensive service across Sedgefield. Where patients are unable to arrange their own transport, or their clinical needs require specialist provision, the ambulance service will collect and return the patient home.

I recognise this is a change, but I am sure people will feel it is an increasingly professional and responsive service to people with urgent needs outside normal working hours.

Nigel Porter, Chief Executive, Sedgefield Primary Care Trust

A689 Junction proposals

Of the 63 responses to the County Council's proposals, displayed in the Library, 60% came down in favour of the suggested solution. 21% were against and 19% undecided. Ed.

*Copy for April by
March 15th to*

*58 Front St, Sedgefield
TS21 2AQ - or to
snews@sedgefieldweb.co.uk
or 01740 629011*

Views expressed in Sedgefield News are not necessarily those of the publisher. We strive to be impartial & independent.

Sedgefield News will not publish letters of unknown authorship.

Sedgefield News is grateful for the support of the Community Empowerment Fund & the County Durham Foundation. Sedgefield Development Partnership is a member of the Development Trusts Association.

