

BENTHAM NEWS

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Photo of the River Wenning by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging, see article on page 2

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Aren't we lucky to live in the Wenning Valley?

By The River Wenning Group

In replies to a recent local survey many people said the lovely countryside around us was their favourite thing about living in Bentham. And surely the riverside is one of Bentham's most beautiful and precious places.

The Wenning has given us so many gifts over the years - water powered silk and linen mills, rich alluvial soils for riverside pastures, the valley for the railway route, walks, bathing, fishing and birdwatching. Upstream it links us to Austwick and Clapham, where the waters run clear from the river's main source at Gaping Gill on the flanks of Ingleborough. Keasden Beck brings in waters from the moors to the south in the Forest of Bowland. And downstream it is a tributary of the Lune, wending its way through wide meadows and the city of Lancaster to the sea in Morecambe Bay.

Do we take it for granted? Do we notice any damage through the years from uses of the river and its catchment area, the hills and moors where the water collects?

Have you noticed changes in your lifetime here? How tempting the water is for swimming on hot summer days? How rich the fishing? How fascinating the water creatures under the stones? How frequent the flooding after heavy rainstorms? How the river in spate affects the Lune Valley, downstream?

There is growing concern in the UK about coastal and river pollution, particularly from sewage and from slurry run off. Local groups are getting together and uniting in protest to protect their rivers and beaches which we all enjoy. After the showing of the film *Riverwoods* in February we are having discussions about how we can take care of the Wenning and its valley that has given so much to us. We have made links with the Clean River Kent campaign group based in Staveley who are generously sharing their ideas and experience with us. If you share concerns about the river's future, please let us know by contacting us at RiverWenningGroup@gmail.com

Meanwhile we would love to read your stories about life along the Wenning to share in Bentham News. If you would like to chat to one of us about your memories or ideas, contact us at RiverWenningGroup@gmail.com Or you could send your story straight to Bentham News at info@thebenthamnews.co.uk.

Photo of the River Wenning by Leonie Pearce



River Wenning: we asked David Fisher for his memories of the Wenning as he has lived here all his life and is a keen fisherman. This is what he wrote:

As I recall from when I was a lad on the river, I started catching big minnows in Minnow Beck using a piece of string and a jam jar with a narrow entrance for the minnow to swim in and not be able to get out. Sticklebacks were also about then. I could lift a stone up and see Stone Loach underneath and could catch them with a net bought at Ward's sweet shop in Bentham. Alan would patrol the river in those days and check I had a permit to go on the river. Then it was a junior one!

I know the Wenning is a fast-rising river, but since the peat bogs were drained years ago there have been changes in how quickly the river can fall after a flood. I caught eels, which can breathe out of water, on the river, some of them European eels and some Common eels, one being a larger size than the other.

Noticeable nowadays is how the banking is eroded at Camphall Corner as the river has worn it away. Improvements have been made, like trees removed at Fowgill for instance, near to the railway line. Also, the banks near Staggarth have eroded. This is where kingfishers have nested in the past.

So, from tickling bullheads to later fishing with reel and rod I then got Brown Trout and ultimately I successfully got the king of all fish, the salmon. I caught the salmon on the last day of the season 31st October 1999 and still have fond memories of getting it.

Bentham Masterplan Update

By Elizabeth Adlington, Shirley Brown, Phil Gerrie and Jim Munday

When we volunteered last October to take on the task of producing a Bentham Masterplan “for the rejuvenation of the town centre and to set out a clear vision for the future development of Bentham”, we perhaps hadn’t realised how much work was involved in consulting the whole population of Bentham: residents, visitors, clubs, organisations, faith groups, businesses and traders. Anyway, we’ve done our best, it’s now 5 months on and everyone who wanted to let us know their opinions and ideas has had a chance to do so via the widely distributed questionnaire, both in printed version and on-line. We’ve now analysed all the responses and have drafted an interim report which we are presenting to Craven District Council officers on 22nd February, and then again to Bentham Town Council on 6th March at 7pm (prior to the full council meeting). Everyone is welcome to come along but we will also be letting you know our findings in Bentham News.

Where we go from here will depend on what support the Masterplan gets from the various councils, town, district and county, Bentham people themselves and potential funders and whether funds can be made available to make some of the changes that have been so clearly articulated by Bentham people.

Teaser Question: in the 2021 census, can you group these towns according to the size of their population: from smallest to largest: Bentham, Ingleton, Kirkby Lonsdale and Settle.

Answer on page 39



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Person of Bentham – Alec Ellershaw

It was a pleasure to interview one of our older residents, and someone who has lived in Bentham all his life, and has a deep affection for this, the town of his birth. He remembers that the Co-op used to be on Station Road and would sell food and clothes, that the Barber Shop on Station Road used to be Mrs Adams' Tea Rooms and there was a café at Oakroyd bakery which was Foster's then. Memories of changes in the High Street could form a whole future article:

(Now that's an idea - Wendy Dowbiggin and Alec should put their heads together!)

Alec describes himself as someone who has been through good times and bad but is now a contented man. Please read on to find out more.

How long have you lived in Bentham and what brought you here?

I was born at 20 Wenning Avenue, on 10th June 1937. I was named Alexander Ellershaw, as was my father and grandfather before me. This tradition of a family name being passed down the generations continues as my son is Lee Alexander. My dad was a mason working for Slingers before the war, then he worked for the Council and then at Angus, and my mum, Gladys, (née Wright) was in service. 20 Wenning Avenue, a terraced property very near the banks of the Wenning, was demolished at some point – I'm not sure exactly why, but perhaps it was prone to flooding and was no longer considered safe to live in.

We moved to Lairgill and continued living there for 30 years. I was the oldest child and have 4 younger sisters: Jean (sadly deceased), Pauline (now living in Wallsend), Doreen (lives at Burnmouth in the Scottish borders) and Eileen (lives in Scotland). I went to school at Bentham Primary and Ingleton Secondary Modern. I left school at 15 and went to work at Angus factory in Bentham in 1952 and stayed there throughout my working life.

I married Sharon in 1967 and we moved to the council house on Banks Way where I still live. These houses were newly built and were surrounded by fields which we called "The Brown Cow fields" (The Coach House used to be called The Brown Cow). This was a great playground for all our 3 children: Lee Alexander, Deana and Dale.

I have seen Angus change hands many times. I started off making brake linings for 'Telamite', then there was Dunlop who were interested in the rubber, and then automotive products, others followed and in the 1990s the worst thing happened and asset strippers, Williams, arrived in Bentham and "ruined" the works. They ruthlessly disposed of thousands of pounds worth of equipment; it was very upsetting. Along with other employees we made sure that some valuable items were stored away secretly so they couldn't be chucked, maybe they're still there!?

What's the worst job you've ever done?

Since I have only ever worked at Angus, the job has been good, although some aspects of it were not so good. Working on brake linings involved the use of asbestos, and although I always wore a mask, in the early days the dangers of asbestosis weren't understood, and some older workers, despite having x-rays every 6 months, have died. Also, when I was working in the weaving shed, one person operating 4 circular looms making hosepipes, it was very noisy. Workers had to wear ear protectors, but this wasn't always possible.

Tell us something about yourself that people wouldn't normally know.

The only time I've been away from Bentham was between 1955 and 1959 when I was in the army serving in Germany. I was with the Service Corps attached to the Royal Engineers. At the end of World War II, the area was divided into 3 sectors governed by Britain, Russia and the USA. One day I was with a group of British soldiers sent to the army camp at Kassel, which was the US sector. At that time Elvis Presley was serving with



Photo by Jon Brook of Benthams Imaging

the US army: I can't be sure I saw him, but I might have done! I walked around and saw the plaque where the Germans surrendered at Lüneburg Heath, and also went to the site of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where there was no wild life as the land was still contaminated.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you like to go?

I would like to visit Germany again. When I was there, they were just rebuilding after the war, so I'd like to see what it's like now.

Are there any world events that you remember particularly from when you were growing up?

I remember the football World Cup which we won in 1966. I went to a couple of the matches, at Goodison Park in Liverpool and Old Trafford in Manchester.

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

A farmer.

If you had an unlimited budget, what investment would you make in Benthams?

I was an early member of the Playing Field Committee. I have many happy memories of playing sports there and would now spend money to develop it as somewhere for all sports to be played in Benthams.

It sounds like you've been very involved in sports during your long life in Benthams.

Yes, I played football and in 1948 Benthams won the Craven Cup. I'm a life member of Benthams Golf Club. I joined in 1975 and played until I was 80. In the summer I still go up

...../Continued on page 6

there on my buggy and take a 5 iron for old times' sake. I played in the darts team at The Con Club (now The Bentham Club) with Jacky Metcalfe, Ken Ratcliffe, Ian Guy, Terry Newhouse, Jimmy Macdonald, Andy Westbury and Mel Louth. I played cricket too and recognised most of the people in the photo in the January Bentham News (Albert Lister, Billy Smith, Armitage Thornber, Brian Cowgill, Maurice Calverley, John Whalley, Herbert Slinger, Johnnie Wright, Jim Haigh and Fred Smith).

How do you relax?

I've got arthritic knees so can't get out as much as I'd like, but when I can I enjoy gardening. In the house I like reading: I've read all the Peter Robinson Inspector Banks books, and I like doing jigsaws.

What does a perfect day look like to you?

In the past, the sun would be shining, and I'd walk along both sides of the Wenning, or over the fields to Ingleton, or to Clapham and climb Ingleborough. Nowadays I can't do that, but I'd love to have a big do and get all the family together.

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Bentham Social Media Roundup

Not all our readers use social media, but many local stories appear there, so here's our look at this month's highlights from in and around Bentham on Facebook and elsewhere, edited by Matt Purcell.



Joseph Gorton, visiting Bentham after living in the USA for a number of years posted about what a lovely place Bentham is to live. He added that the people are warm and welcoming and that it was a refreshing change to talk to people that aren't obsessed with guns and US politics. It was such a shame he noted, that there is so much dog dirt left on footpaths and pavements around the town causing such an avoidable health hazard. He says "Pick up after yourselves, you're lucky to live in such a place." Comments were in full support, bemoaning the irresponsibility of dog owners that do not pick up after their pets.

Bentham Fire Station have welcomed two new recruits. Both FF Charmer and FF Mayor are undergoing training before becoming operational. They repeated that the fire service is actively seeking new recruits.

Lauren Hopkins posted about a planning application to build just under 30 new homes on land east of Butts Lane adjacent to the Cemetery. Respondents were generally unhappy with this proposal and others that are currently in the planning process. There are plans to build in excess of 100 new homes, but it would appear without any investment in the town's infrastructure to accommodate the increase in population. Many pointed out that there are not enough affordable homes for local people at present, and residents have not been convinced by the affordable homes recently built, as these have not been priced as affordable for locals.

Fiona Evans reported hearing loud noises from the vicinity of Angus Fire during the night. Correspondents were unsure as to the source of the noise but many believed it could have been a Network Rail track gang working on the Railway.

Viki Helen and **Paul Hindle** shared that the **Bentham Badminton Club** has returned. They meet every Tuesday night during school term time at Cedar House School. The sessions run from 6:30pm until 8pm and cost £2.50. All are welcome and equipment is provided.

And finally, whilst visiting Bolton Town Centre recently, **Jackie Lingings** came across an industrial steam engine on display. The engine in question spent its working life at the Ford Ayrton silk mill in Bentham. It was delivered new from manufacturers Hick Hargreaves of Bolton in 1886 and removed by the same firm in 1969 when the mill closed. A number of correspondents replied with their memories including **Robert Currie** who helped to dismantle the engine, **Jill Noble** whose grandfather maintained it and **David Hutchinson** who worked at the mill after leaving school. He recalled that the operator Eddie Murray would blow the whistle as the engine was started, signalling for the workers to return to their machines.



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North Yorkshire firefighters raise over £1,000 with ladder climb challenge in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity

A team of North Yorkshire on-call firefighters raised the most of any UK fire station in a New Year ladder climb challenge, in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity. Bentham Fire Station took part in the December Ascender challenge – which finished on 31 January - where stations from across the UK are asked to compete against each other and raise funds. Each team of up to 10 climbs one 13.5m ladder as many times as they can in one hour. Bentham completed 156 climbs – raising £1,066.79.

The Fire Fighters Charity supports serving and retired fire and rescue service personnel, their dependants and other eligible members of the UK fire services community, throughout their lives, helping them to live happier and healthier. Derek Gotts, Managing Director of Supply Plus Ltd, which is the main sponsor of the challenge, said: “We are delighted to continue to sponsor the ascender challenge to raise funds for The Fire Fighters Charity. “The event is about teamwork, fitness, training and fun using a rescue ladder product which we, as a business, are proud the Fire and Rescue Service choose to utilise. The Fire Fighters Charity is a great cause doing fantastic work to support firefighters and their families in times of need.” Alex Byers, Community Fundraiser for The Fire Fighters Charity, added: “Despite the cold, rain and sleet, this fantastic team of seven pulled out all the stops and raised an incredible amount for us. They have been offered an award in recognition of their fundraising efforts. “A special thanks must also go to an anonymous donor, who supported the team with a donation having recently been helped by them. Every pound raised will make such a difference to the people that we support.”

The team have so far raised over £1,066, and donations can be made through their fundraising page [here](https://www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/donate). The total of the national December Ascender challenge stands at £3,744. With The Fire Fighters Charity relying almost entirely on donations to fund its vital work, none of the support it offers would be possible without the generosity of its supporters. You can support the brave members of our fire services community by donating now at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/donate.



Refugee Support Group

By Annie Neligan

We have continued to collect clothes, especially anything warm and waterproof, over the winter months. We take them to The Ripple Effect in Morecambe and they organise shipment to those living in such rough conditions in Northern France or in refugee camps elsewhere in Europe.

They find that some of the goods donated are not suitable for life under such conditions so they are organising a fashion show later in March to raise money towards the costs of shipment. If you have any good quality clothes or shoes that could be modelled and sold at the event, do email annieneligan@cooptel.net and we'll arrange to take them in.

On 8th March we are showing the feature film Limbo. This is a 'wry, funny and poignant satire that sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience' – set on a remote Scottish island!

Do come and join us at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 8th March at Looking Well, King Street, Bentham. Free – with donations towards the relief of displaced people in the earthquake regions of Turkey and Greece welcome.



Don't forget if you contact Bentham News via telephone be sure you get an acknowledgement if you want your article in!!! If not ring or email again.

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More Volunteers Needed at The Bentham Hub

By Shirley Brown

Our wonderful Bentham Hub is one of the most attractive, vibrant shops on Main Street, and those who volunteer to work here say they love it. They like that they're doing something really useful for a few hours a week, meeting people and learning new skills or using skills they've got already. It's a busy shop with generous donations coming in daily, so a few more volunteers are needed.

If you'd like to find out more, please just call in as there's always someone there to talk to.



Bentham News Finances

Our annual accounts for the year 2022 are now available if any of our readers would like to see a copy please contact info@thebenthamnews.co.uk or leave a message at Daisy Hair and Beauty. The wonderful financial support we have had from many readers has really made a difference. Thank you so much.

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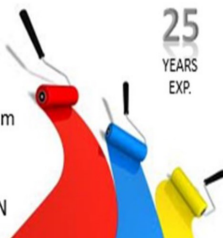
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March Garden or Allotments

By Joyce Knapp

March is the month when we can tentatively begin to sow and plant, but firstly we need to choose carefully which groups of plants are suitable for such an early start, and where we are going to put them. We can get away with sowing seeds outdoors of hardy annuals such as poppies and marigolds which can be sprinkled over the ground where we wish them to grow, raking them in and applying a light watering to help them establish. If we wish to sow seeds of less hardy plants, be they flowers e.g. tagetes or vegetables e.g. lettuce we will need to provide some protection from the elements either using a greenhouse if available or failing that, a windowsill. These seeds can all be started off in trays of moist compost and allowed to grow on until the first true leaves appear, when they can be thinned out. It is worth noting that any peas grown under cover will need to be grown in either deep pots or, preferably, specially designed root-trainers because their roots have the potential to grow quite long before being planted out.

Moving over to the allotment/kitchen garden, it is worth taking a good look at any herbs we may have, giving woody plants such as sage, rosemary and thyme a light trim and just taking care not to cut back into the old wood as this would prevent new growth. Any softer herbs e.g. oregano and chives can be cut back and we may even need to shrink the clumps by simply digging away the surplus roots which we can give to a friend or add to the compost heap. It is worth mentioning here that a layer of compost will benefit the softer herbs, but the woody ones always grow better in poor soil so it's best to resist the urge to feed them.

Much of the work we do in our gardens is classed as maintenance and under this



heading comes the task of dividing early spring bulbs such as snowdrops and winter aconite. We can do this quite easily by forking up a congested clump before teasing them apart. They can then be replanted spaced out around our gardens and, again, any surplus can be shared with friends and neighbours. We are in the process of renovating an old privet hedge and any spare bulbs have found their way to the border beneath the hedge.

Finally, towards the end of March, we may wish to plant up onion and shallot sets, taking care with the spacing, wider spacing gives bigger onions and shallots.

Nature Notes

By David Fisher

By Newby Moor pond common lizards basked in the sun as they are cold blooded and need warmth to enable them to move quickly when avoiding predators. They vary in colour from green to buff brown. They can discard a tail when caught to aid escape but can grow a new one in time. Rudd, tench and perch were in the pond when I fished it. I released a brown trout in it from a nearby stream. Toads and dragonflies are found here as well and I have also seen drinker moth caterpillars there.



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Latest news from St John's

By Libby Wheildon

It was so lovely to welcome Reverend Anne Russell back to St John's to lead our service of dedication on Sunday 29th January. The service was to bless and dedicate the building following the improvements made last year. Reverend Anne spoke about the lengthy, and at times frustrating process of getting the building work completed, she then cut the ribbon leading into the new toilets to rapturous applause. The afternoon of celebration ended with homemade refreshments.

We warmly invite you to join us this month for the following events:

Mothering Sunday Service on Sunday 19th March at 10:30am.

Easter Egg Bingo on Friday 31st March at 6pm in the Victoria Institute in Low Bentham.
All welcome.





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Fair Trade Fortnight, 27 February – 12 March

By Timothy Fox Tel: 015242-62575

At St John's Low Bentham there will be a display and sale of Fair Trade goods on Sundays 5th and 12th March.



Why not choose FairTrade products when and where you can – bearing in mind the extra we pay for them helps farmers with their families' education and health and to take on the climate crisis? Bear in mind also that UK farmers do not always get a fair return for their produce and this is reflected in the price we pay for some of our food.

Try The Fairtrade Quiz : Your Fairtrade Favourites

- 1: What is the name of the ethical clothing company which produced a facemask using Fairtrade cotton?
- 2: These Fairtrade chocolate pioneers were co-founded with, and are co-owned by, the cocoa growing co-operative Kuapa Kokoo. This year they revealed a brand new look and some brand new flavours. What is the name of this chocolate company?
- 3: Sticking with chocolate, which company famously and deliberately splits their Fairtrade chocolate bars into uneven chunks?
- 4: Which company, which produces a range of Fairtrade hot drinks including tea, coffee and hot chocolate, shares its name with a type of ship? Hint: they also produce extra eco-friendly biodegradable and plastic-free tea bags.
- 5: What is the name of our Oxford-based Fairtrade friends who produce underwear that is made using 100 per cent Fairtrade and organic cotton? For every pair of pants you buy, they also donate two pairs to someone in need.
- 6: Fairtrade bananas are available in most major supermarkets, lots of independent greengrocers and countless corner shops. But in 2016, what world record did UK Marathon Runner Andrew Lawrence set while dressed as a banana?
- 7: Belgian brewers Mongozo produce a wide range of pilsners and fruit beers. But what does 'Mongozo' mean in the language of the Chokwe people of Angola, Zambia and Congo-Kinshasa?

Answers next month - or from Timothy

Fair Trade farmers and workers are demanding climate justice

Fair Funds. The wealthy nations most responsible for the climate crisis must urgently deliver funding for communities already feeling real hardship due to climate change, starting with the \$100 billion per year those wealthy nations have already pledged, but have so far failed to deliver.

Fair Rules. We need strong rules on reducing emissions and environmental protection, urgently. But the costs of meeting new rules must be met by those making big profits from trade, not the farmers and workers earning the least.

Fair Trade Policy. As the UK signs new trade deals, cutting high-carbon trade and incentivising fairer low-carbon trade must be a priority.

Fair Business. Businesses need to pay fair prices, and invest in climate resilience so farmers and workers behind their products can take on the climate crisis.

'The costs of addressing the climate crisis must not be unfairly placed on those of us who did the least to cause it'



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Tel. 015242 63067
 Text 07973 481 461

marie@sole-to-soul.net
www.sole-to-soul.net



Craven Reboot

A North Yorkshire Community Partnership distributing recycled IT equipment to people in need across Craven.

Do you have a spare laptop, tablet or smartphone gathering dust at home? If so, you could help tackle social and digital isolation!

What items can be donated? Any smartphone, tablet or laptop donations would be appreciated, with any chargers or cables where possible.

Can businesses help? Businesses can donate devices and/or data.

Please email donate@cravenreboot.org.uk
All data is completely erased as part of the process.

Get in touch

By Email donate@cravenreboot.org.uk - for donations
 Or help@cravenreboot.org.uk - for requests

By Phone 01756 802212
 (Please ask for Craven Reboot)

People Page

Messages/Thanks/Notices

Bentham Show Quiz report

By Val Lawson

Thank you to the 29 teams who attended our 22nd quiz night in February at Bentham Town Hall.

After 10 rounds of questions set by quiz master John Whitfield there were 3 teams in first place. After a tie breaker question the results were as follows:

1st the Wray team - Simon Dowson, Dave Rodgeron, Kevin & Janet Dixon.

2nd the Morphet family - William, Kath, Philip & Simon Morphet.

3rd the Sore Losers - Nigel Harrison, John Dawson, Kathryn Dawson & William Dawson.

Look forward to seeing you all at next year's quiz night.

Sparkling wine and orange juice?

By Sue Arnott

5 letters and 4? Just one of the questions on the quiz sheet devised by our wonderful supporter, Sue Halsall, to raise money for **Bentham & District Pet Rescue**. All the answers were bands from the 1960s through to the present day and we had 17 completed quiz sheets with all 50 answers correct.

The winners were: 1st prize Andrew Chappell, High Bentham; 2nd prize Linda Somerville, Clapham Station; 3rd prize Vince and Di Smith, Yealand Redmayne.

Thanks to everyone who supported this fund-raising effort. We'll have more events coming up during the year. Please check out our website:-

www.benthampetrescue.org.uk

for more details or see our Facebook page.
PS Bucks Fizz!!

Bentham Age Concern Friday Lunch Club

By Deb Hawkins

Friday Lunch Club Coffee Morning

Bentham Town Hall

Saturday 1st April

10am - 12noon

We would love to hear from you if you can help with:

raffle and tombola prizes

baking (savouries or cakes/biscuits)

or if you just want to help in any way, please contact us via Bentham Older People Together.

Tables are also available for hire.

India - Culture and Language Group

By Gavin Wilshaw

We are a small group who have been meeting locally to share knowledge of this fascinating country.

We can accommodate 2/3 further members who share our interest.

You will hear some Hindi and Urdu spoken along with English translations, however, there will be no pressure to learn and the meetings will be mostly in English.

For further details email:-

gavinwilshaw@hotmail.co.uk

**Don't forget the BN deadline date is
12th March for the April edition**

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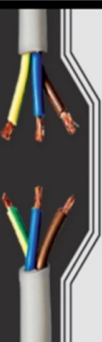
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Celebrating 100 Years of Freemasonry in Bentham

By Alex Kalkschmidt

2023 is a very special year for Bentham's Freemasons at Wenning Lodge, as it was founded on 18th January 1923 by 15 local members. These 15 were a group of landowners, businessmen, shopkeepers and a police officer who were Freemasons in the North West already, and decided to form their own Lodge in Bentham. In 2023 we are celebrating the centenary of the Lodge, situated at the Masonic Hall, a Grade II listed building, in Station Road, High Bentham.

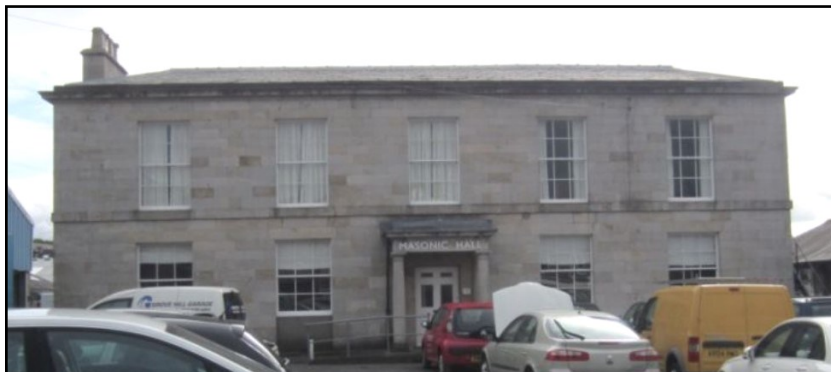
Currently there are 32 members aged between their late 30s and late 80s, some of them are second or third generation Freemasons. Our local Freemasons come from all walks of life, professions and backgrounds, and looking back over 100 years Freemasonry has always been a historical and integral part of Bentham's community history.

Charitable giving and kindness are deeply ingrained within the principles of Freemasonry. Wenning Lodge donated over £60,000 in the last 20 years alone to various local charitable causes and organisations in the Craven District, such as Bentham Food Bank, Bentham Playing Field, St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Friends of Tatham School, Bentham Primary School, the Air Ambulance and many more.

One of the oldest social organisations in the world with 300 years of history in the UK, Freemasonry is not defined by an ideology. It is open to people from all religions and political persuasions, and provides the common foundation for friendships between members.

Rather than working on buildings like the ancient stone masons, today's Freemasons focus on building themselves as people of integrity, and membership provides the structure to help achieve that goal: making positive contributions to communities and worthwhile causes through fundraising events or volunteer work.

If you are interested in Freemasonry in Bentham, and want to know who we are and what we do or are interested in joining, please feel free to contact us at wenninglodge@gmail.com



Town Hall

Every Monday,

BR, 1:00 - 4:00pm, Indoor Bowls

Every Tuesday,

WR, 10:00am - 12:00noon, Craft Club

LH, Blue Moose Dance

9.30am - 10.30am, Mature Movers

10.45am - 12.15pm Adult Ballet

Every Wednesday,

BR, 9:00am - 12:30pm, Stepping Stones.

LH, 9:30am - 10:30am, Pilates, Sally Horn

Friday 10th

Hip Joint 12.30pm (*see page 37*)

Town Hall - Meetings

Monday 6th, 20th

LH 7:30pm, Full Council Meeting

Town Hall - Coffee Mornings

Saturday, 10:00am - 12:00noon

4th, Community Link Café

11th, LASRUG

18th, Ingleton & District Twinning Group

25th, Pioneer Projects



St John's (*see page 17*)

Mothering Sunday Service on Sunday 19th March at 10:30am.

Easter Egg Bingo on Friday 31st March at 6pm in the Victoria Institute in Low Bentham.

All welcome.

WI (*see page 31*)

High Bentham

Thursday 2nd, 7:30pm, Bentham

Town Hall,

Low Bentham and District

Thursday 16th, 7:00pm in the Victoria Institute

Tatham Fells

Tuesday 14th, 7:30pm, Old School Tatham Fells.



Events in March

Bentham Golf Club

Every Friday

11:00am - 2:00pm, Age Concern Bentham
Friday Lunch Club



Footpath (*see page 35*)



We meet at Lairgill for 9.30am for the March walks except for the March 23rd walk, where we meet for 9.00am.

Friday 3rd, Bryn and Sandra Craggs, 015242 62416, Sharp Haw and Flasby Fell, 7 miles.

Wednesday 8th. George Sheridan, 07905-069990, Sabden Valley, Bowland, 8 miles.

Friday 17th. David Longton, 015242-61838, Dent Foot, 8 miles.

Thursday 23rd. Alison Kinder and Colin, 07854-789311, The Two Langdales, 8.5 or 9.5 miles.

Tuesday 28th. Peter Lennard, 07474-120898, Sedbergh Riverside and Lune Viaduct, 7.6 miles.

Methodist Church

Every Monday

10:00 - 11:30am, **Toddle In**, £2.00 per family.

For children newborn to starting school, and their parents/carers.

The Pantry

Every Wednesday

11am-12noon and 3:30pm-5pm

Everyone welcome to drop in for a chat, a brew and to top up on food and groceries.

Left side of Bentham Methodist Church.

Victoria Institute

Every Monday,

9.30am-2pm Warm Spaces. Come along for a chat and a cuppa.

10:00am - 12:00noon, Office Open, Enquiries/bookings

11:30am - 2:00pm, Community Link Café, Light lunch and activities.

6.15pm - 7:45pm, Tai Chi.

Every Tuesday,

10:00 - 12:00noon, Kay's Chat & Mexican Train meet, £2 tea and biscuits
4:00pm - 9:00pm, Helen Howard School Of Dance. Term time.

Every Wednesday

9.30am-2pm Warm Spaces. Come along for a chat and a cuppa.

9:00am - 12:00noon, Office Open, Enquiries/Bookings.

10:00am -12:00noon, Post Office Services.

11:30am—2:00pm, Community Link Café Lunch club.

4:00pm - 8:00pm, Helen Howard School Of Dance. Term time.

Every Friday ,

10:00am -12:00noon, Post Office Services.

Saturday 11th

Book Swap and every 2nd Saturday.

Every Sunday

11:00am - 12:30pm, Cornerstone Church Service

Pioneer Projects Looking Well Studios

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PROJECTS**

Every Monday,

9:20am, Health Walks for Women, Meet Lairgill car park

10:30am - 12.30pm,

Making Connections Dementia Group

Every Tuesday,

10:30am - 12:30pm,

Creative Community Hub

11:45am - 1:00pm, Creative Writing Group via Zoom

Tuesday 14th,

2:00pm - 4:00pm, Book Group

Every Wednesday,

10:30am - 12:00noon, Singalong to Every Song, face to face and via Zoom

2:00pm - 4:00pm, Art for All

Wednesday 8th, 7:00pm

Refugee Support Group

Limbo (feature film). This is a 'wry, funny and poignant satire that sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience' – set on a remote Scottish island! *See page 12.*

Every Thursday,

12:30pm - 3:30pm, Community Art Shed

Every Friday,

10:00am - 12:30pm, Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub

*For more info and to join any of the above groups
please contact 015242-62672 or
office@pioneerprojects.org.uk*

Bentham Fire Station

Thursday, 2nd and 16th, 10:00am

Bentham & District Dementia Friendly Community Breakfast Club

Tuesday 21st 7:00pm

Playing Fields AGM

Please come along and find out what plans the Playing Fields committee have.

Bentham Community Library

Monday 2:30pm - 5:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am – 2:00pm

Friday 2:30pm – 4:20pm

Saturday 10:00am - 12:00noon

Craven Warm & Welcome Place

during library opening hours with hot drinks, games, computers and of course lots of books!



Jazz in Hornby

Beyond Bentham

Hello Fans, Friends,

Reason for this reminder is that to my surprise and delight the first record played on jazz record requests (BBC radio 3) on Saturday was from Gaz Hughes's new CD "Beboptical Illusion" which is the music we'll hear here and as of now you'll be able to have a pre-listen. It is very exciting. Pianist Andrzej Baranek, who has been here many times, has reached a new and astonishing level of invention which should not be missed.

Saturday 4th March, usual venue: the Village Institute, Main Street (A683) Hornby.

Tickets; £15, on the door or ring 015242-22227.

Doors and bar open at 7.30pm, music from 8pm.

Hope you can be with us.

LVCS Hornby Pool. Swim the Lune!

The lovely little community pool in Hornby continues to thrive and during 2022 we welcomed over 28,000 users. This is a massive increase over 2021 - when we were closed for 3 months! 250 children swim every week plus all who attend with their schools. Other groups include: Lunesdale Divers, Lancaster Sub Aqua, Cubs and Beavers and our famous family party bookings.

We are pleased to confirm that Scott Townend and Georgia Tazzyman were promoted to Pool Managers in 2022 and they are introducing new sessions such as Splashball and many more.

They are also organising a '**Swim the Lune**' - Swimathon in March and all details are on line - Swim the Lune - not literally, just the 53 miles distance from source to sea!

For 2023 we have commissioned an energy audit of pool plant and building. This will assess efficiency and make recommendations on improved operation and upgrades.

This will help us pull together an investment programme, with projected energy savings for the future..

This is a great local community success story - and to celebrate we are holding a 'thank you' Coffee morning on Saturday April 22nd at 10.30am in the Hornby Institute, where you can enjoy cake and coffee and have a chat with the team. We are continually reviewing the timetable and welcome all ideas and suggestions..

The Coffee morning will be followed by an AGM at 12.00pm which you may also wish to attend, it's optional! Further details will be available shortly.

For all Hornby Pool general enquiries please contact Georgia or Scott on 01524-805666.

Website- www.lunevalleypool.com; Facebook – lune valley swimming pool.

Email poolmanager@lunevalleypool.com

Direct line pool telephone. (01524) 805666. Lune Valley Community Society Ltd Charity no 1176086 .

Walling in and out

By Mary Winter

In his famous poem 'Mending Wall', Robert Frost quotes his neighbour as insisting that 'Good fences make good neighbours'. The poet, however, openly wonders how real this need for boundaries is. In the end, the poet lets his neighbour have his way and they annually repair the wall between them, but he remarks to the reader, 'Before I built a wall I'd ask to know/ What I was walling in or walling out.'

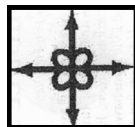
This is the problem with boundaries of any kind. They keep someone out. And while it may be quite legitimate to keep the cows off your newly seeded field, or the rabbits out of your vegetable plot, there are times when boundaries can cause more problems than they solve.

For one thing, life is just not that tidy. I remember discovering with delight, at the age of eighteen, that there is a town at the very top of Italy where Italian, French and German are all spoken. Languages, I realised, clearly did not respect boundaries as much as I had thought! Living more or less on the border between two counties has also taught me a lot. I'm sure that various County Hall officials would rather I conducted all my affairs in either Lancashire or Yorkshire, but life is not that straightforward – so our children swam in Lancashire and danced in Yorkshire, and I have my teeth looked after in one county and my blood pressure in the other.

But the issue of boundaries becomes much more important when we consider the differences between people's beliefs, manners and traditions. There have certainly been times in our human history when we were not willing to accept the validity – or even, at times, the humanity – of people who were not 'like us' and who did not 'do things our way'. Sadly, we have often metaphorically stood at boundaries throwing rocks at each other – behaviour that most definitely includes religious people.

Like Robert Frost, I am beginning to feel as if this whole issue of boundaries needs a re-think. One of the Quaker 'Advices and Queries' asks, 'Are you open to new light, from whatever source it may come?' It seems to me that this query is asking us to allow the boundaries between us to fade, and to focus instead on the fact that, as murdered MP Jo Cox said, 'We have far more in common than things that divide us.' Things like family and community, joy and grief, the care of the planet, birth and death.

We have a wonderful opportunity in today's world to live in a place where many beliefs and attitudes intersect. In this boundary-less place, we can explore what is really essential to the human experience and learn from each other. Non-religious families can check out the activities offered to children by faith communities without their parents having formally to 'sign up'. People from all backgrounds can join together in considering how better to care for our planet. A family with no church affiliation can ask a religious leader to perform a funeral for a loved one, knowing that it will be done with love and respect. Without boundaries keeping us apart, we can look after each other more easily in times of trouble – war, disease, the cost-of-living crisis. In this shared space without boundaries, it will surely be easier, as Quaker Isaac Penington said, to 'help one another up with a tender hand.'



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Police Report



Members of your Safer Neighbourhood Team covering the Bentham, Ingleton and Settle area are PS1006 Paul Evans, PC871 Ian Hunt, PC188 Jane Carpenter, PCSO5561 Jayne Grace and PCSO5881 Julia Runciman. They will be keeping you updated on recent crimes and incidents in Bentham and the surrounding area.

There were **29 incidents** reported between 11th January and 11th February 2023.

They included: safeguarding, a domestic dispute, a suspect male on Mount Pleasant, a wanted male, a 2-vehicle road traffic collision near the Green Smithy on Mewith Lane, anti-social behaviour, an abandoned vehicle in Low Bentham, highway disruption with an HGV in Low Bentham, criminal damage involving violence, a civil dispute, a crime involving violence and harassment and a licensing breach in Low Bentham.

Between 25th and 27th January: theft of Yellow Caterpillar Digger from a field on Nutgill Lane. Any information, please call 101, ref 0231

Between 8pm on 31st January and 8am on 1st February: theft of 5-ton Green JCB and 14ft Ifor Williams trailer from Ryecroft to Laithbutts Clapham

Between 28th and 29th January: burglary of 10 properties in Settle. Any information, please call 101, ref 12230018740.

We are working to keep the north a safe place to live, visit and work.

Please visit www.northyorkshire.police.uk

Please report suspect incidents at the time on 101, online or 999 if urgent.

Contact Information:

- 1 Ring 999 in an emergency or to report a crime in progress
- 2 Ring 101 to report incidents or provide information
- 3 Ring Crime Stoppers on 0800-555-111 to remain anonymous
- 4 E-mail SNACraven@northyorkshire.police.uk

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21st March 2023

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Low Bentham & District WI

By Kathryn Brownsord



Our annual meeting, which was attended by our Federation Rep, Sue Earl Armstrong, was held in January, a week later than was scheduled due to snow and ice making the roads and paths treacherous. Officers and Committee were voted in for the next 12 months.

The President, Christine Jennings, wished everybody a Happy New Year and then gave a report of our last 12 months, reminding us of the monthly meetings, lunches out, craft and chat days and lovely walks, including Federation days. We had a very diverse and enjoyable year. Sheila Brown gave the Treasurer's report before our President thanked all members of the committee for their work over the last year and especially Sheila Brown, who is stepping down from the committee, for her work over many years. The winner of the most points gained in the year for competition entries was Christine Jennings who was presented with a trophy and an M&S voucher.

The first meeting of our luncheon club was held at the Royal Oak in Hornby and a very enjoyable lunch was had by the 13 members attending. Low Bentham and District won first prize in the North West Federation of WI 200 club draw in December. A supper was provided and served by the outgoing committee followed by lots of chatting and laughter.

Why not join us for another interesting, informative and enjoyable year? I don't think you'd regret it, and you would be very welcome. As always look out for our posters advising our next meeting. We meet on the third Thursday every month at 7pm in the Victoria Institute, Low Bentham, and hope to see you there.



Tatham Fells WI

By Mary Taylor



Members of Tatham Fells Women's Institute discovered ways to live without plastic at the meeting in the Old School, Tatham Fells on Tuesday evening, February 14th. Kim from the Zero Pantry at Kirkby Lonsdale displayed non plastic items as she told the distressing news of plastic. All the animals washed up on the beaches had plastic in their systems, half the plastic produced is single use and all the toothbrushes ever made are still on the planet. If we drink any liquid that has been in a plastic bottle, we are ingesting micro plastics. Among the items on display were bars of soap, shampoo and conditioning bars, a metal toothpaste tube, beeswax food wrappers, and loose tea as tea bags contain plastic. Kim also gave tips on household items for cleaning, including vinegar and bicarbonate of soda; she also advocated buying second hand clothes. Carol Thurnham welcomed the speaker, and Helen Wilkinson thanked her, saying the evening had been an eye opener. Winners of the competition for a recycled item were Andrea Ball, Linda Kirkby and Mary Taylor. Kath Dickinson, Mary Kidd and Ruth Holden ran a sales table which raised over £54. Several members are to attend the Lancashire Federation Spring Council meeting, and plans were made for future events. The evening concluded with refreshments provided by Jenny Batty and Helen Wilkinson. Kim gave each member a paper bag containing the ingredients for a Date Loaf as they left.

The next meeting on March 14th at the Old school will be a Flower Demonstration by Joan Bentley.

Town Council Meeting 23rd January 2023

By Bob Clark

Councillors present: Gareth Adams (chair), Tony Burton, Phil Gerrie, Andy Jones, Thomas Marshall, Mark Paige and Leonie Pearce.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Howard Hill and Tim Stannard. Also present were the Town Clerk, Christine Downey, two members of the public and the BN reporter.

Comments and Concerns:

A member of the public addressed the Councillors with his concerns about the lack of public transport in Bentham with its inadequate bus service and the alternative service by train to Lancaster, with the current engineering work taking place and strikes, creating more problems for anyone wishing to travel to Lancaster.

A member of the public raised concerns about the lack of gritting of pathways in Bentham. Councillor Adams replied that the gritting of roads is given priority in Bentham, followed on by the paths, especially the paths to Bentham surgery and the surrounding areas.

The Punchbowl, Low Bentham: After a discussion on this matter, it was decided that because of the ongoing legal situation no further action could be taken at this time.

The Town Hall Clock: The contractors have found a fault in the clock but will need an electric supply to the clock to correct this and have requested two power points to be installed in the clock tower for the clock as soon as possible.

Resolved: Councillor Adams will supply the Town Clerk the job specifications and the Town Clerk will then arrange for a local firm to install the electrical supply as soon as possible.

Councillor Paige asked if the clock would chime throughout the night. The answer was yes, as this had always been the case in the past.

Request from NYCC Highways for a Site Meeting at Wenning Avenue: Councillor Marshall confirmed that he would be available on the proposed dates, the 6th, 7th and 8th February 2023, to discuss the possibility of getting the road resurfaced, and possibly adopted by North Yorkshire County Council.

Resolved: The Clerk to try and arrange for United Utilities to attend the meeting as they own the road at Wenning Avenue.

Review of List of Outstanding Repairs in the Town Hall: Resolved or updated.

Open Spaces: The Annual Inspection report of the Philip Harvey Playing Field was received and confirmed that the company were performing all the repairs that they can when on site, as per the contract with the Council. It was also agreed to review arrangements for weekly checks of the Philip Harvey Playing Field, with training on inspection of play equipment to be given to Councillors Paige and Stannard. The Open Spaces committee will meet on 7th April 2023 at the cemetery before commencing a walk of the parish.

Councillor Pearce gave an update on the complaints about the bad smell coming from the **River Wenning** at Shaky Bridge. On Monday 16/10/2023 Graham Tarn, Environmental Health Officer at Craven District Council, made a site visit with Councillor Pearce to the area, and noted that there had been some pollution around the cattle feeders, but because of the heavy rain fall of previous days the river was now running clear. The advice given by the Environmental Health Officer was to keep checking the situation.

Town Council Meeting on 6th February 2023

By Shirley Brown

All town councillors were present: Burton, Paige, Marshall, Adams (chair), Hill, Stannard, Gerrie, Pearce and Jones, as was town clerk Christine Downey, 14 members of the public and the BN reporter.

Comments and Concerns: Before members of the public had their say, Councillor Marshall read out the history of Craven District Council's Local Plan detailing the dates of public consultations which took place between 2012 and 2019.

In my experience of reporting on Town Council meetings for many years, this is an unusual occurrence and was commented on forcibly by a member of the public who felt that although such a detailed history was relevant for the planning applications under consideration at this meeting, it was inappropriate for Councillor Marshall to have been the chosen spokesperson as he had a declared interest in the two relevant planning applications. She felt that someone else from the council should have spoken.

Then followed a very lively expression of views by several members of the public. One supported the proposed housing development on Low Bentham Road near to the Primary School, and then four others put forward several objections to the proposed housing development on land adjacent to Butts Lane. These were focussed on Butts Lane being both narrow and steep and bordered by protected hedgerows, and the field and surrounding trees being the habitat for crested newts, bats and owls. It was felt that the Local Plan was completed some years ago and that things have moved on considerably since then, and this should be considered – the Local Plan is not set in stone. Allowing this development would jeopardise the things that people most value about Bentham (according to the results of the Bentham Masterplan questionnaire 2022) such as the natural environment, and make even worse the things that local people already think are the worst things about Bentham, namely traffic and road congestion issues.

I cannot cover all the relevant details here, but the Town Clerk's excellent detailed draft minutes are online at the Town Council's website and are worth reading. For my part, as I was there, I can say that the strength of feelings among some very upset Bentham residents were expressed with passion and clarity. This was reflected later in the meeting when Planning Applications were discussed in the absence of Councillor Marshall, and the councillors voted to oppose the Butts Lane development.

New Planning Applications:

Outline planning application for up to 27 dwellings on land south of Low Bentham Road LA2 7BP.

Resolved: that the council has no objections subject to the reserved matters of highways access and speed limits on Low Bentham Road being reviewed and suitably dealt with.

Outline planning application for residential development on land east of Butts Lane LA2 7AE.

...../Continued on page 34

Resolved: that the council objects to the application on the grounds of sewerage and drainage problems, issues with access to the site, problems with the right to light and severe traffic and highway issues and problems.

Councillors felt that infrastructure issues were never given enough consideration when planning applications are granted, and that the lack of nearby recreational space for young children was also not given enough weight.

Co-option of town councillors: No written applications have been received.

Bentham Masterplan Update: Councillor Gerrie reported that there had been 385 responses to the individual's questionnaires, which are at present being analysed. He regretted that although this exercise was designed to be a partnership between the Masterplan Team, North Yorkshire County Council and Craven District Council, so far there had been little response from those 2 councils, although a meeting with CDC is scheduled for 22nd February. The Interim Report will be presented to the town council before their next full meeting on 6th March at 7pm.

Grasmere and Cleveland Square Car Parks:

Resolved: that car parking spaces should be relined to make maximum use of the available space.

Vehicle Charging Points: Would installing more of these generate income and attract more visitors to Bentham? Where to place them: Robin Lane? Station Road? Lairgill Car Park? Low Bentham Road? Mill Lane? **Resolved:** that the clerk make further enquiries as there was a general feeling that those we have already aren't well-used.

Replacement of windows in Town Hall Ballroom: will take place in April this year, and as this will mean disconnecting radiators hopefully the weather won't be too wintery!

Parish Charter Consultation: The town council resolved to respond by encouraging the new County Council to engage more with Bentham town council, to provide Bentham with a fair service and not to forget that we are rather out on a limb at the edge of the County and to ensure that Bentham gets a fair number of services (e.g. buses) as are available in North Allerton, Scarborough, Hawes, Leyburn or Selby.

St Margaret's Churchyard: The clerk is to write a strong letter to CDC pointing out that St Margaret's churchyard and the gravestones are in a poor condition and need immediate attention.

Victoria Institute: Councillor Stannard reported that the Institute had received £2,000 from The Bentham Hub and another £2,000 from an estate and that this will be spent on replastering and rendering the outside of the office and providing dementia training for staff.

River Wenning: Councillor Pearce said that the film "Riverwoods" about a river in Scotland and community efforts to care for it would be shown at the town hall on 24th February followed by a talk by the Lune Valley Trust.

The full council meeting on **6th March** is open to the public and will be preceded at 7pm by a presentation of the interim report from The Bentham Masterplan team.

Sadly our super efficient Town Clerk, Christine Downey, is leaving us. She has been a tremendous help to Bentham News reporters at Town Council meetings for many years and we will miss her!

The Town Council advertisement to replace Christine is on page 6.

Footpath Group Walks in March

By Don Cartledge

There are five walks in March and we meet first at Lairgill for 9.30 am, except for the March 23rd. walk where we meet for 9.00 am. Please contact the walk leader if you have any queries.



Bryn and Sandra Craggs (tel. 015242 62416) lead our first walk on on Friday 3rd. It starts from the lay-by on the Grassington road - B6265, just inside the YDNP boundary. We walk briefly along the road to Bog Lane and after a short upward stretch take the Dales Highway up a gradual climb across open moorland. It's then a short steep climb to Sharp Haw with hopefully some great all round views. We descend through rough and boggy terrain to fields and a track on the edge of Flasby, before turning left to join a lane over Septeria Gill and a track through Crag Wood. Leaving the wood, we cross fields to meet the lane from Stirton and its back via Bog Lane to the cars. This 7 mile walk is muddy on a good day - so be prepared!

On Wednesday 8th. there is an 8 mile Sabden Valley walk led by George Sheridan (tel. 07905069990). The parking is on the Nick of Pendle road, from Clitheroe to Sabden, on the left just before Sabden. Crossing the road we follow tracks to Hodgeon Stone Plantation then turn east following paths to Sabden, from there we head to Dean Farm and on to Wood House and Stainscomb. We return to the start via Ratten Clough and Churn Clough Reservoir.

Starting from the lay-by on the Middleton end of the Middleton Bridge (Kirkby Lonsdale to Sedbergh road) we have an 8 mile walk around Dent Foot on Friday 17th. We start by crossing the bridge and stroll alongside the river, then its a section of road walking to join the Dalesway which we follow as far as Birks Mill. Here we cross the footbridge over the river and take the path and minor road to Miltthrop. We then rejoin the Dalesway, which takes us onto the moor and the Lower Dent valley as far as Brackensgill. Following the minor road through Dent Foot and on to Holme Fell, we pick up a footpath which leads around the fell to Jordan Lane and over the old railway back to the start. David Longton (tel. 015242 61838) is leading the walk.

The Two Langdales walk on Thursday 23rd. will be 8.5 miles - if there is parking on the National Trust carpark at Elterwater, otherwise it will be 9.5 miles should we have to park in the free car park on the right of the Chapel Stile road, above the village. Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud (tel 07854789311) are the leaders. Walking out of Elterwater, on the road to Coniston and Little Langdale, we take the first right past Baysbrown Farm and along tracks leading to Oak Howe. Then its along the Cumbria Way to Side House Farm and uphill to the gap between Side Pike and Blake Rigg. Crossing the road we progress via a small path to a wood overlooking Blea Tarn and take minor paths to eventually link up with the Wrynose Path road which we follow downhill past Fell Foot Farm. Then its over a bridge onto a track which is followed past some cottages to Slater Bridge. Crossing the bridge we continue uphill to Dale End Farm from where a track leads back to Elterwater village.

Finally, on Tuesday 28th. Peter Lennard (tel. 07474120898) takes us on a 7.6 mile ramble round Sedbergh riverside and the Lune Viaduct. Starting from near Lock Bank Farm, on the northern edge of Sedbergh we head west with a steady uphill climb of about 0.5 mile. Skirting the bottom of the first Howgill fell we drop down to the Lune and turn south to pass Low Braithwaite and the Lune viaduct. We follow the Lune riverside for most of the remainder of the walk, some of which is a stretch of the Dales Way, passing Lincoln's Inn Bridge, The Oaks, Briggflats, Birks and back through Sedbergh town past Castlehaw Tower. It's then west to pass below Canade Wood and once more past Lock Bank Farm (home of Howgill Fellside ice cream) back to the start.

(Editors' note: with our own lively walking group keeping going all through the winter, it's hardly necessary to remind readers of other sources of information about walks, but here's some that's come our way and you may find interesting)

Time to get walking again!

By John Harris: john@walkinginengalnd.co.uk

With Spring on its way, we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful English countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Yorkshire <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/yorkshire> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place. With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

*Don't forget the BN
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Closing Date 31st March 2023

Hip Joint's Springtime Surprise!

By the Hip Joint Team

We promised a Springtime surprise, and this is it! On Friday March 10th at 12.30pm, in Bentham Town Hall, you will be treated to the sounds of two excellent musicians playing especially chosen pieces that will make you feel that Spring has already arrived. Will Crawford plays the guitar and Emily Hopper a full-size harp. Wow, in Bentham Town Hall!

Here are a couple of examples of pieces they will play: 'The Secret Music Garden' with its wonderful flowery imagery and theme of new beginnings, and 'A Suite for Aphrodite' which is very uplifting,

capturing the essence of Spring. All of this amid a Far Eastern Springtime: cherry blossom, a zen garden – a place of peace and beauty. Last, but not least, you will of course be eating food from the Far East! As always, the Prosecco, a warm welcome and the anticipation of a wonderful time awaits you! If you haven't been to a Hip Joint lunch and entertainment event before, do join us. It's simply wonderful.



Simple Booking:

The cost is £10 plus a 15p ticket fee. Buy tickets by card or use PayPal. Go to www.trybooking.co.uk/CBWJ.

If you have any queries, please email hipjointtickets@icloud.com.

There is the option of a £5 ticket if you are on a reduced income.

Please email hipjointbentham@gmail.com to take up the option of a £5 ticket if you are on a reduced income.

Date for your diary: The next Hip Joint gathering is a mystery: we're not sure exactly where it will be or when, although probably in April, and as this will be our last event before we take a break for summer and start again in the autumn, it will be something special and a bit different. You'll find out more in the April Bentham News!

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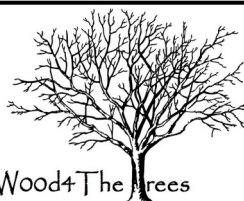
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News from the Fells

By Helen Wilkinson

On a freezing cold night at the end of January the Village Society Poetry and Prose evening was held in the Old School, and despite having all the heating on the chill seeped in to our bones. It felt like a night for haunting, scary tales from the moors but we enjoyed a diverse selection of serious and humorous readings followed by delicious food and very big cups of tea that went a little way to warming us up. The Village Society meeting in March will be the popular quiz. Lancashire County Council must have started reading the Bentham News, as after mentioning in last month's news that Ringstones Lane was still awaiting repairs, the work men appeared and the gap that had been washed out has been filled in and a new drain added to prevent a repeat of the problem.



Tatham stint holders, the farmers who jointly own Lancashire Burnmoor, met as usual on the first Monday in February to arrange the management of the fell: arranging the dates for gathering sheep and repairing the fence and folds and payment rates for grazing sheep. As the early signs of spring are appearing more bird song can be heard and the first curlews and lapwings have been seen on the moor; a barn owl can often be seen near the Big Stone. Fortunately we haven't seen any instances of bird flu in the area and our bird population doesn't seem to have been affected. I have recently seen a pair of jays in the garden as well as a grey wagtail. We can hear a lot of woodpeckers in the area, green and spotted so I expect they will be arguing over their territories as the weather warms up.

Answers to Teaser Question in the Bentham Masterplan article on page 3

In the 2021 census, group these 4 towns according to population size, smallest to largest.

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Ingleton 2186

Settle 2714

Bentham 3035

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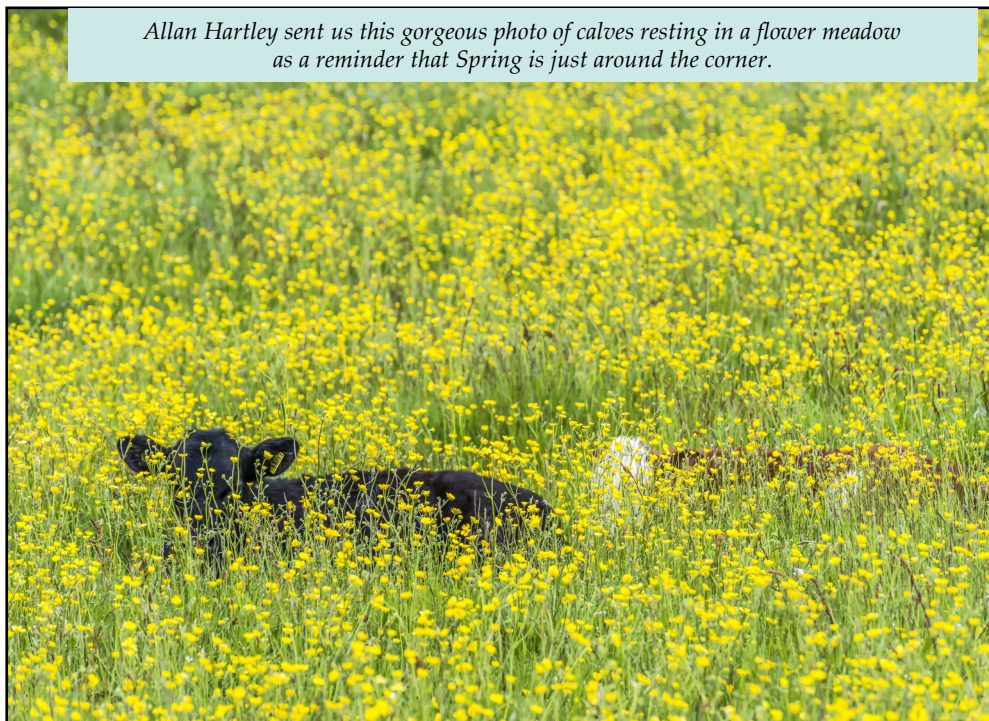
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*Allan Hartley sent us this gorgeous photo of calves resting in a flower meadow
 as a reminder that Spring is just around the corner.*



Fascinating Talk about Crossing the Sands of Morecambe Bay

By Mary Taylor

Dr. Andrew White, former curator of Lancaster Museum, gave a fascinating talk, 'Crossing the Sands' to Ewecross Historical Society members in Bentham Methodist church on 30th January. From his research of many documents, including those from the monasteries surrounding Morecambe Bay, Parish Records and Hiring Fairs, Dr White built up a kaleidoscope of activity over many centuries. Employees of the monasteries were the first guides, with the earliest recorded drowning being of Michael De Furness in 1269. Following the dissolution of the monasteries, local people, some of them fishermen, took over as guides, also called 'Carters'. As today, the guide would mark the safe route with laurel branches. Quick sands occur where ships have been lying in the sand at low tide, called 'ship holes', and in the old channel of the rivers after they create a new channel. Dr White read accounts written by many famous people, including William Wilberforce, George Fox who crossed to his Quaker centre at Ulverston, and Mrs Gaskell, who stayed at Silverdale and described the guide riding a white horse blowing his horn. Travellers crossed the sands every day on routes to different destinations including the Hiring Fair at Ulverston. A sad fate befell one of these in the 1850s when a cart carrying young farm labourers from the Whit Fair drove into a ship hole and were never seen again and the recent tragic fate of the Chinese cocklers. Andrew said that there is nothing better than crossing the bay on a good day and was surprised by how few people were drowned crossing for business or pleasure, including the Duke of Edinburgh's carriage driving.

Rotary's Range of Speakers and Disaster Relief Work in Turkey and Syria

By Lilian Barton

To date this year Rotary Club of Lunesdale members have welcomed some excellent speakers covering a variety of very different topics. These have included "The Life and Times of a Banker", "Army Service Across the World", "Across India in a Tuk Tuk" and "Barrow Shipyard". Club President Dave Tuohy has also welcomed some new members. When the club welcomes new members, traditionally, after they have settled in, they give a talk about their jobs which reveals a fascinating insight into their professions.

In future months we look forward to hearing many more interesting speakers. These will include an update on the school in Kitale, Uganda, the restoration of an old car named Ruby Vi and The Ascent of Kilimanjaro. If you would like to come along to listen to any of these talks, you will be welcome.

On a monthly basis the Rotary organisation publishes a magazine entitled, not surprisingly, "Rotary". All clubs are encouraged to submit articles on their current projects/activities in their community. It makes for fascinating reading to realise just how much support clubs do provide within the various Rotary Districts across the country and indeed worldwide. The next paragraph is from the RIBI website and tells how Rotary responded quickly to the earthquake disaster in Turkey and Syria:

"The Rotary world responded to this catastrophe immediately. RI President Jennifer Jones activated our disaster response efforts, communicated with the affected districts, and encouraged governors in those regions to apply for disaster response grants and share information about their relief efforts so that Rotary can amplify the calls for support."

In recent days many people have said to me how lucky we are to live where we do. Stay well, stay safe.



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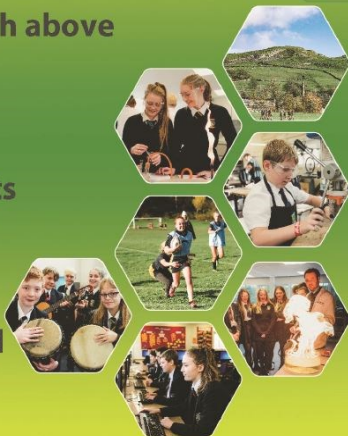
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What to look for in March

Words and photos by Sue Halsall

Many plants that live in woods, will grow and flower early so that they get a head start before the trees come into leaf and block the light reaching the ground. Examples are wood anemones, wild garlic and primroses but another early plant is dog's mercury, (*see photo below*) though its flowers are not showy at all. It can carpet the woodland floor as it spreads by underground runners and can out-compete smaller plants. Dog's mercury has spear-shaped, toothed, fresh green leaves carried on upright stems. It produces a foul and rotten smell, bears clusters of small, greenish flowers in spring and is highly poisonous.

Mosses, being small, tend to go unnoticed, but they grow all over the place – on trees, walls, around ponds, on moors. They are very simple non flowering plants and since they have no roots, they absorb moisture and nutrients through their thin leaves. This particular one, called wall screw moss (it lives on walls and twists as it dries out) is very common on the tops of stone walls, especially on the mortar between the stones and you can see the capsules which contain the spores that get blown away on the wind. I particularly like these when they have drops of rainwater on them. (*See photo top of page 45.*)

Other signs of spring to look (and listen) for in March are curlews, more birdsong, new leaves appearing on hawthorn hedges and in ponds, frogspawn. (*Photo bottom of page 45.*) Frogs breed when they are 2-3 years old and usually return to the pond that they hatched in. If there is a mild, damp evening, listen near a pond and you may hear the males croaking to attract females. Toadspawn is less obvious and is laid in strings, whilst newts attach single eggs to pond plants.

Finally, on 20th March, it is the Spring equinox, the first day of the astronomical spring when daylight and dark are roughly equal then British Summer Time starts when the clocks go on an hour on Sunday 26th. Lighter evenings – more time to go out looking for wildlife!





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Zanna – Aspiring Auctioneer

By Shirley Brown

A new generation of livestock auctioneers celebrated their achievements at the annual graduation ceremony for the Livestock Market Operations and Management course hosted by Harper Adams University and attended by the Livestock Auctioneers' Association (LAA) on 9th January. And the reason we're covering it here, is that Bentham's own Zanna Dennis featured by winning the 'Golden Gavel' Dick Harrison Trust award as the highest achieving first year student.

This is a 4-year course where students can study while in full-time work by remote learning with some residential weekends. They learn all about the day-to-day operations and wider management of auction marts. There are 36 students from throughout UK on Zanna's course, which she describes as "fantastic" and a hugely valuable opportunity to meet with and learn from other auctioneers from across the UK.

Zanna was brought up around the family farm in Low Bentham and has an auctioneering heritage. As many Bentham people will know, her father is Stephen Dennis, senior auctioneer at Bentham Auction Mart where he's worked for 40 years. What most of us didn't know is that her uncle, Paul Dennis, was also an auctioneer and is still at Richard Turner's now doing land agency work. Then her granddad, David Dennis, was an auctioneer at Malton and Kirkbymoorside market, and to cap it all her great uncle, Harold Robinson, was also an auctioneer at Pannal, near Harrogate.

However, she didn't always want a career in agriculture, this was not on the cards when she was at school as she really wanted to be a dancer. After professional dance training she returned to Bentham to help set up 'Blue Moose' community dance company, and taught dance across NW England for 10 years. I know about this because I went to Zanna's first dance class in Bentham for older people – Mature Movers! This dance class became the highlight of the week for dozens of us who soon became dance enthusiasts. We had such fun.

But Zanna had caught the auctioneering bug, and always kept her hand in by working one day a week at Bentham Auction Mart. She loved it – no day was the same and she really enjoyed working with livestock. The adrenalin rush of action in the auction ring when buying sheep felt a bit like "live theatre." So, in 2020 she took the plunge, stopped teaching dance (much to the dismay of us older dancers) and started working as development officer for LAA 3 days a week, representing the interests of auction marts throughout the UK to government and setting up a training programme about best practice. She continues also to work 2 days a week at Bentham Auction Mart.

My question is: now that you've got your own gavel (auctioneer's hammer), are you going to follow the family tradition and have a go at selling?



Photo by Harper Adams University of Zanna Dennis with Robert Addison, Managing Director of Hexham and Northern Marts and Trustee of the Dick Harrison Trust

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