

BENTHAM NEWS

February 2024 | Issue 448 Recommended price £1



'Young Handlers' Raise £3,120 for Cancer Care

See page 5 for full details

Person of Bentham - Julia Collins

Although Julia has only been a permanent resident in Bentham for 7 years, her connection to the town goes way back. She was always destined to live here! For how and why, please read on.....

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

I was born in 1963 in Neasden, North London, where I lived with my mum, dad and younger sister until I was 11. Then we moved to Harrow in Middlesex. It was here in 1984, while working in our local Beefeater restaurant, that I met Martin, and we were married a few years later in the late 1980s.

Martin's mum and dad, Janet and Michael, moved to Bentham, a place they had visited on holiday for many years. They took over a small business renting out videos called 'Pop and See' on Main Street. They ran this business for about 15 years before retiring. They were happy here, and during those years made lots of good friends. Martin, me and our young son, Daniel, visited three or four times a year for family holidays. We loved coming to Bentham so much that we knew one day we would live here. And seven years ago, this is what happened!

I have always wanted to be part of the community life of Bentham, so since moving here I've been a volunteer at the dementia support group at Pioneer Projects and have worked tirelessly, with my dear friend Jenny Durrant, raising money for the group. I also run a craft club for local people and support the 'Art 4 All' group at Pioneer Projects. On distribution day I help collate and deliver Bentham News. Life is good. I'm very settled in Bentham and have made lots of good friends. I would not want to be anywhere else.

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

When my son was 10, I took him to a karate class so he could learn self-defence. After a while I joined the adult class and eventually achieved my brown belt.

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

My dream holiday would be a cruise around the Norwegian Fjords to see the Northern Lights. I would also like to go by train up around the north of Scotland and island hop around the Scottish Hebrides.

What does a perfect day look like to you?

My perfect day would be spending time with Martin, visiting my son Daniel and his partner Holly in Hemel Hempstead, or crafting with friends. The rainy days don't worry me.

If you could witness any event of the past, present or future, what would it be?

Strangely there is an event that I was very thankful **not** to witness, and that was the Kings Cross fire. It was in 1987 at a London Underground Station when a fire started after a discarded lit match caused a wooden escalator to catch fire. The fire spread suddenly into the underground ticket hall in a flashover. There were 31 fatalities. I would have been there but for the fact that, unusually, I didn't go into work that day.

Is there anyone (e.g. a teacher?) who has had a major influence on your life?

I suppose that seeing my mum always knitting or sewing was a strong influence on me. I love crafting anything and everything: painting, knitting, sewing, pyrography, glass painting, creating epoxy resin jewellery, making toys (most of which I donate to 'The



Photo by Jon Brooks of Benthams Imaging

Benthams Hub'). For all of this I really value having 'Temptations' in Benthams. What a brilliant shop, I don't go anywhere else for my supplies and have got through any number of their 'Loyalty' cards!

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

There are quite a few charities in Benthams that I would help, but one major thing I would do is open a cat refuge to help Benthams Pet Rescue with the care they give cats without homes. It would be like a luxury cat hotel with plenty of room for all cats needing their care.

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

When I was working as a secretary, I sometimes had to do audio typing, which is typing from dictaphones – and when the people dictating into the machines were muddled and kept changing their minds it was really frustrating.

What's your most treasured possession?

Our cat, 'Oliver'. He was here in the house before we came, so really, we moved in with him.

How do you relax?

You've guessed! By crafting! I do enjoy a good mini-series on TV and can binge-watch happily while knitting or crocheting. 'Coronation Street' and 'EastEnders' keep me entertained; however, I also like a good horror film.

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

When I was at school, I loved biology and chemistry and wanted to study them to go on

...../Continued overleaf

...../Continued from page 3

to become a pathologist. Some younger readers might be surprised to hear that at my school, girls weren't allowed to take science subjects at GCE exam level, so instead when I left school, I became a secretary. I worked around London as an office temp and spent time in many London offices as a secretary and receptionist. It was only when I started to volunteer in Daniel's school as a teaching assistant that I realised that for me being a secretary was "just a job" and not very fulfilling, and that there must be more to life than this. So, teaching became my vocation. I applied for a permanent position and in five years became a higher-level teaching assistant covering for teachers in their absence. I was in this job for 16 years before I retired and came to Benthams.

Is there a book, film or live event that you've particularly enjoyed recently?

The film 'The Impossible' about the tsunami in Thailand is excellent.

People often ask how Benthams News chooses who to feature as the monthly 'Person of Benthams'.

There is no easy answer!

Since July 2017 we have printed interviews with 70 Benthams people. Since July 2017 there have probably been roughly that number of people who for various reasons have chosen not to be interviewed! So, the interview that readers see is a result of people being suggested by other readers, agreeing to be interviewed, finding a Benthams News team member able to do the interview, and the result being acceptable to the interviewee, often after many re-writes, additions and omissions.

Benthams is an ever-changing, fascinating, vibrant, diverse, unusual small market town, and we try to reflect that in these interviews. The 'Person of Benthams' does

not have to have lived in Benthams all their life, or even for many years. They don't have to be young or old. There are no strict criteria, they just must be someone who has found that Benthams matters to them and are happy to explain why. Sometimes relative newcomers have useful and different comments to make – although of course that is always up to you, our readers, to decide!

We have a list of suggested interviewees that we are working through, but it's always possible to add more names to the list – so if there's someone you think we should approach, please let us know.



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'Young Handlers' Raise £3,120 for Cancer Care

By Amy Haslam

On 27th December, once again Bentham Auction Mart held a 'Young Handlers' show and sale, and there was a fantastic entry of hogs presented by the next generation.

Judge David Timm of Timm Family Butchers in Pickering had the difficult task of distributing the rosettes. The 'Reserve Champion' was awarded to Thomas Thompson which made £180 to Mark Mather. 'Overall Champion' was awarded to Ellie Jackson who realised



£300, selling to the judge David Timm. Ellie also won the 'Best Presented', receiving the Les Thackray Perpetual Challenge Trophy.

Ellie then donated her lamb to Cancer Care. Ellie lost her grandma to cancer, so this charity is close to the family's hearts. After spirited bidding, Ellie's lamb raised the amazing total of £3,090. This included £500 from Saj of Shan Group Ltd, Mohammad Alam of Lancashire Halal, Dan Towers, Andrew Atkinson, £230 from Liam Broster and Joe Bosworth, £200 Tom Sayer, £210 from David Timms, before finally realising £220 from

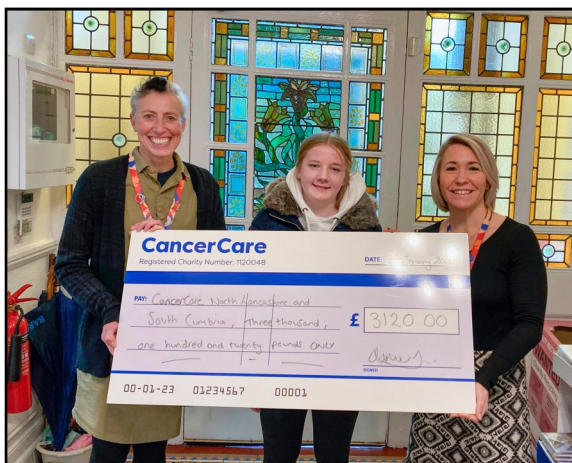
Mark Mather.

David Timm also donated a special prize to the 'Young Handler' with the best potential for the future - which he awarded to Teddy Whitaker.

Well done to all exhibitors in the show - the future is in safe hands!

Photo above showing the Young Handlers

Photo left showing Ellie Jackson in the centre presenting the cheque to Cancer Care and Cover photo showing Ellie with her lamb.



Graeme, Amy and Ellie would like to thank Bentham Auction and all the livestock buyers for their generosity, with a special thank you to Will Alexander for doing a tremendous job selling the lamb!

Christmas Lights Come Down

By Julia Abbotts (on behalf of the Bentham Christmas Lights Committee)

Thank you so much to our volunteers who came out on a chilly January morning to help control the traffic while the Christmas lights were taken down and thank you to the drivers for your patience!

Also, a big shout out to Bryan and the staff at 'The Black Pig' for raising much-needed funds from their recent music quiz with Martin Collins as Quiz Master. By the way, 'The Black Pig' has two more quizzes in March to raise money for local groups, so pop in to book a table for an enjoyable evening which will also benefit good local causes.



Photo Back L to R—Martin Collins, Bryan Jeffs, Adrian Leigh, Julia Abbotts, Tilly Chapman, Tristan Stannard. Front L to R—Pete Abbotts, Mark Paige



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Mary Harrison, 19th January 1937 – 8th December 2023

The family of Mary Harrison would like to thank all friends and family for their kindness and sympathy following her sudden death.

Mary was born on 19th January 1937, the eldest daughter of Charlie and Agnes Harrison of Birks Farm, Wray. Mary's formal education began at Wray School, followed by Lancaster Girls Grammar School and then onto Bingley College to train as a teacher. Her teaching career began in Manchester where she taught primary school children until her retirement.

Mary was often seen at the coffee shops or coffee mornings in Bentham or the surrounding areas. She was a people person and enjoyed catching up with people whilst

out and about. She loved to travel throughout UK and Europe and often would be seen on Bibby's holidays.

Mary attended Low Bentham Church and was also a member of Low Bentham WI.

Mary died on 8th December as a result of a heart attack. She will be sadly missed.



All of us at Bentham News are greatly saddened to hear of the death of Isabel Joel on Thursday 18th January aged 96. When we were just starting out, she was an early pioneer and supporter and worked with us for many years helping to compile and distribute BN. Until the end of her long life, she remained an avid reader and fan of BN. A fuller appreciation of our dear friend will follow in the March BN.

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

Christmas in the Mart 2023 – a Great Success

By Andrea Dennis and the CIM Team

A fabulous time was had by all who came to 'Christmas in the Mart' at Bentham Auction Mart on 8th and 9th December. It showcased top quality makes, bakes, crafts and art from across the locality which made this a great place for Christmas shopping, alongside delicious food and drink to sample and enjoy, celebrating our rural community, local artists and farming heritage. Special thanks to Jon Brook and Malcolm Preece who created the stunning photo montage on the back page of the January Bentham News, which managed to include just about every stall holder. There was live music by local musicians Dave Ellershaw and Chloe France, children's activities hosted by Cornerstone Church and Tatham School, a Christmas Bouncy Castle, a dance performance by the Blue Moose Company and professional balloon artist, Paul Curwen, created a full size nativity. The Farmers' Carol Concert on Friday evening with Kirkby Lonsdale Brass Band drew in the crowds and brought a true festive atmosphere.

Apologies for anyone expecting donkey rides, but our Christmas pony 'Sweetie', saved the day and was enjoyed by all who paid her a visit! Our wreath workshop with Kim from Fernhill Floristry was a winner and several beautiful wreaths were made that afterwards decorated houses in the area. One of the highlights was our first ever Charity Christmas Tractor run, with 90 tractors taking part, touring the area and bringing Christmas Cheer along the way. Across the weekend over £2,140 was

raised for the Farmers Crisis Network. Funds were also raised for Tatham School and our generous stall holders put together several fabulous hampers of their produce, which went to families in our local community who have had a difficult year.



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'Aladdin': Bentham's Amazing Panto: If You Miss It, You'll Regret It! (oh yes, you will....)



By Heather Knowles

This year's Bentham Pantomime is 'Aladdin'.

Aladdin is one of the best-known tales associated with the medieval collection of stories: 'One Thousand and One Nights'. The basic story is that a kind-hearted street urchin and a power hungry Abanazer compete to get hold of a magic lamp that has the power to make all their wishes come true.

Is the story Chinese or Arabic? The original story was set in China but has been adapted and retold by many cultures throughout history. The Disney version of Aladdin, which many of you will be familiar with, is far removed from the original. Our version, like Disney's, is set in the Middle East, although we had to include Widow Twankey as she is so well

known as the Dame in Aladdin.

Our Bentham Pantomime is full of songs, dance and acts that will astound you! There are even more children than before and, of course, our fabulous band. After selling-out all four performances of last year's pantomime, we have added a fifth to try and fit in everyone who wants to come to this fun-filled, feel-good community experience. Performances are from Wednesday 14th February through to Saturday 17th February, and only cost £6 per adult and £4 for concessions.

To avoid missing out, please get your tickets now at www.ticketsource.co.uk/bentham-theatre-group

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

Bentham Primary School

By Mrs C Pearson and Mrs A McGregor, Co-Headteachers

Last term children and our wider school community were engaged in a number of festive celebrations including lots of carol singing and nativity performances.

In **Butterfly Class**, our reception children made a chocolate mug cake! They also learned about road safety, painted some beautiful star constellation pictures and created shadow puppets with their hands. Our youngest children in **Ladybird Class** have read 'The Leaf Thief' and learned about woodland creatures and nocturnal animals. They have also shared stories by Julia Donaldson and made Gruffalo Paw Biscuits and Play Dough Stick Men. In **Hedgehog Class** children read the story book 'The Day the Crayons Quit' and looked at different materials and their properties, including waterproof materials and how these could protect reindeers' hairy hooves from wet weather! In **Rabbit Class** children got all scientific and learned about switches, even making their own and incorporating them into electrical circuits. A real treat was learning the history of the telephone, they were fascinated by the old-fashioned rotary dial phones and found it difficult to dial numbers using the rotating dial. Year 4 children in **Badger Class** learned how to keep safe in their PSHE lessons and started their new class reading book, 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. In **Fox Class** children learned about electrical circuits and Anglo Saxons, and our oldest children in **Owl Class** also learned about Anglo Saxons and Vikings and practised long division and assessments.

On 27th November, children in years 4, 5 and 6 took part in a Viking Workshop and at one point the school even hosted a battle re-enactment in the school hall. Can we reassure readers that no children or members of staff were injured at battle! In December parents/carers were invited in to take part in 'Stay and Learn' sessions. These are an opportunity for them to see what children get up to in class and have a quick look around school too. On 6th December all the children went to watch 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Grand Theatre in Lancaster (yes, they did!). The performance was magical and, as always, our children were a credit to both the school and the community. Recently, several children have been taking part in **Lantern Making Workshops** organised by Poppy and Hannah from Pioneer Projects, who we would like to thank for all their enthusiasm and support. We were involved in the **Walk of Light** on Friday 15th December.

Our **Christmas Crafts** evening was fabulous, and it was good to see so many children getting creative, so thanks to Mrs Nelson for organising this and to all the staff who supported her. This year's Friends of Bentham School's **Christmas Fair** was a wonderful fund-raising event, so thanks to everyone who came along and helped to raise important funds for the school.

Finally, we must congratulate our **Year 5/6 Girls' Football Team** who recently qualified to take part in the Craven Girls' Football Final in Skipton. Our team, Isabella, Violet, Dora, Elsa, Amelia, Francesca, Tilly, Layla Tallulah and Tanaia, all played amazingly at the fixture and (so far unofficially) they were second overall. A massive well done to them.



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Bentham's Firefighters Year - 2023

By Richard Blackwell (Watch Manager, Bentham Station – 01524-954447, 07769-952828)

Here's what Bentham Firefighters did in 2023, which involved attending **81 callouts**.

These included:

- Automatic Fire Alarms (25)
- Fires in buildings (9)
- Chimney fires (4)
- Electrical installation fire (1)
- Fire in the open (8),
- Vehicle fire (2),
- Hazardous environment (1)
- Assisting other agencies (10)
- Dangerous structure (1)
- Flooding (2)
- People trapped by fall (1)
- Road Traffic Collisions (10)
- Animal rescue (2)
- People trapped in lift (1)
- Standby other stations (4)



In addition to these callouts, we have attended countless 'safe and well' visits, community events, reading with school children and dementia-friendly community breakfasts.



With your help we have also raised £2,385 for The Fire Fighters Charity by a car wash event (£354), the Cave Rescue Organisation Ingleborough Challenge (£776), the December Ascender (£808) and donations to the Clothing Bins between April and September (£447 - the 6th highest in NYFRS). The next Charity Car Wash will be in March.

We welcomed 4 new crew members to the station during 2023: FF Charmer, FF Johnson, FF

Danskin and FF Blackwell. (*see photos opposite*)

We warmly thank employers Kidde Fire Protection, Creative Theory and Robinson Mitchell for allowing their staff to attend incidents during work hours. Without your help, we really would struggle to provide emergency cover to the area.

We said farewell to PSO Lyons, who left his post at Bentham during January to start his new role (*see page opposite*).

We also thank all of you for your support throughout 2023 and look forward to seeing you (in a good way) in 2024.



Photos (L to R) showing new recruits
FF Charmer, FF Blackwell,
FF Johnson and FF Danskin



A Fond Farewell to Bentham

By Craig Lyons (Public Safety Officer)

Wednesday 1st April 2020 is a day I'll always remember for a variety of reasons. It was a day full of excitement, nerves and uncertainty. It was my first day as one of two brand new tri-service prevention officers in North Yorkshire; a pilot role designed to help the people within the communities of Bentham and Grassington to be safe and feel safe. The role represented **Ambulance** as a first responder, **Police** providing crime prevention advice and **Fire** as an addition to the on-call crew and doing prevention work like fitting smoke alarms etc.

There was just one problem, the country was in its first lockdown due to the Covid pandemic, and everyone was ordered to stay at home, quite the April Fools' Day. Never one to be deterred, I set about trying to make myself known in this beautiful little town whilst held in the shackles of not being able to see anyone in person. I used news articles and the shielding lists, I delivered prescription medicines from the surgery, attended fire calls and much more. I was able to make the most of a bad situation, and as a result the pilot scheme was extended.

Since the pandemic and with normal life resuming, I have been able to carry out the role to its full potential. Two officers became four. The prevention work we carry out isn't always front-page news and often goes under the radar. It varies from safeguarding referrals to local problem-solving plans, and even helping to get the paths gritted in the town. Some of my proudest achievements are starting what has become a successful breakfast club in the fire station with the Bentham and district dementia friendly community. Also, the links I have



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made within the area's schools including reading at Bentham primary school alongside Bentham firefighter Lisa Guy. Also, I've made links within our area's health and social carers which I hope has sped up the process of making the most vulnerable in our community, safe from fire, falls and the risks of crime.

I've truly loved my time here, but sadly all good things come to an end and my chapter as PSO at Bentham is closing. I'll be moving to work for North Yorkshire fire and rescue fulltime as Watch Manager, staying within the prevention team.

The good news is that I will be replaced soon because the Public Safety Service has been made a permanent post, and the excitement for me is that I will now be part of the management team that builds and expands the service. In the meantime, Settle Public Safety Officer, Alice Micheltmore-Brown, will be helping to cover the Bentham area. You may see her around, but she will **not** be here on a fulltime basis. Her contact details are

Alice.micheltmore-brown@northyorksfire.gov.uk or 07464-532887.

So, it's goodbye for now from me and thank you for the last three and a quarter years, it's been my pleasure to serve this wonderful community. Thank you to everyone who's helped me over the years especially the amazing fire crew at Bentham who do an incredible job keeping everyone safe and PCSO Jayne Grace who has truly embraced the PSO role and has been an angel in disguise.

**Don't forget the BN deadline date
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'Ole Laney' Needs Friends!

By Lesley Barker (07967-116360, or via The Hub) and Liz Ryan

As Benthams residents will be aware The Lane, Duke Street or 'Ole Laney' as everyone knows it, has deteriorated dramatically over the past few years.

Andrew Jones, who has sadly passed away, used to "look after" the lane using his own equipment, his own time and was often seen with his trusty Bobcat rake in hand as and when it was needed.

Since then, there has been COVID, the building of the new properties, an increase in the number of houses being served by the lane and home deliveries, this together with the speed that drivers go down the lane have all taken their toll. (*see photo*)

We have residents down the lane in need of care twice a day and a resident who needs to use a mobility scooter to get up the street to get shopping.

The lane is well used by people on foot, from young families taking children to school, dog walkers, people going for a walk down the river, taking children to feed the ducks, to see the steam trains, many of the caravanners use the lane as a way of coming up to Benthams for food and shopping.



It is definitely well-loved and well-used. Therefore, we are proposing setting up a community group: **"Friends of Ole Laney"**.

We would like to get professional advice as to the best way forward with regards to:

- The drainage at the top of the lane, what do we need to consider to stop any flooding, and the wearing away of road surfaces? What needs to be considered of any resurfacing, rolling and the maintenance?
- Drainage at the middle/bottom of the lane near Ashbank Villas is also poor and has many potholes and drainage issues, what is the best way forward?
- Do we also need to consider Sleeping policemen on the Lane to slow traffic in specific areas?

These questions are but a start to our conversations and legally, we understand, the lane is "unadopted" which means no one is responsible for its maintenance. What we all agree on is that we need to do something, and we'd like to move that on.

If you can get involved or support us, please get in touch via email:

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Your Garden or Allotment in February

By Joyce Knapp

In the month of February, we should really be starting to see plants breaking back into life after their dormant winter rest. This may be evident in the tiny bulbs pushing up their flowers, regardless of any intermittent frosts, or the buds of trees and shrubs getting ready to burst into life. The bulbs can vary from the deep yellow of Winter Aconite (often the first to appear) to the pure white of trusty snowdrops, through to a wide range of vibrant colours created by crocus. These all have different merits, whilst the Aconite will readily form a carpet and can be used to brighten up an area under a tree or shrub in late winter/early spring, snowdrops can be used to edge any border or bed to create an impression of light in the still dark days of February. Meanwhile, the crocus can be used to create a focal point and is especially effective when planted in clumps at the base of a hedge. February is a good month to take stock, noting what bulbs we may wish to add to our gardens and writing a list of which to buy in the autumn (that is if you can't find a friendly neighbour who is willing to divide their clumps and donate them to you).

We will find that it is not only the trees and shrubs that have developing buds at this time of year as, hopefully, we will be able to see them on fruiting plants such as blackberry and raspberry canes and blackcurrant bushes. February is the perfect month to cast an eye over our blackcurrant bushes, looking for any larger than average buds, as these are likely to have been infected by an insect known as 'Big bud mite'. It is advisable to remove any large buds and burn/discard them, because if the infected buds are left in situ the whole bush will gradually become infected and the only way to get rid of the problem then is to cut it back to ground level and allow it to regrow, taking several years.

Moving over to the flower garden, we may have a plant known as Pulmonaria in our borders and this will burst forth with clusters of flowers combining a subtle range of pink and purple sat amongst its mottled green leaves. These not only provide a much welcome burst of colour for us gardeners, but they are also a much-needed early source of food for any passing bees. Lastly, we can look at pruning climbers this month and if we grow Honeysuckle, it is easily renovated by removing $\frac{1}{4}$ of its old stems at about 1' above ground. Any remaining growths can be tied in and trimmed as necessary to keep it as close to its support as desired.



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People Page

Thanks

Elizabeth Dodgson (Betty) - Margery and all the family would like to express their gratitude to everyone for the cards, kindness and support shown after the passing of Betty. Special thanks to Revd. Canon Peter Greenwood for conducting a memorable service, B&W Funerals and Tara for their excellent care and attention to detail, Bridge House Farm Tearooms for looking after everyone so well and The Ingleborough Nursing Home for giving Betty such professional and friendly care.

Letters

Dear Benthams News,

On 4th January I attended a Benthams Town Council meeting together with about two dozen members of the public wishing to register their opposition to a planned development to the east of Butts Lane in High Benthams. Several members of the public spoke within the limited time allowed with articulate and detailed comments covering a variety of matters relating to the environment, bio-diversity, overall planning for the Benthams area, infrastructure and social issues.

The five councillors present were only able to offer some generalised comments and seemed powerless to take on the larger issues that the members of the community present felt significant. Feelings of frustration afterwards were palpable.

No doubt this is a not untypical scenario in many local council areas; the public wants to have a stronger say in what concerns them in their immediate locality and how it changes, but it is beyond the powers of local councils to stray into territory over which they have no say. This is not to say that they cannot express strong opinions and recommendations, and of course, should.

The feeling of impotence that occasions such as this engender in the minds of the general public serves merely to encourage a 'there's-nothing-we-can-do' attitude and to foster the sort of scepticism about the democratic process that is widespread at the moment.

However, I believe that the opposition to this development, which would eat into the green-belt eastern edge of Benthams and which has previously been rejected by the council, will continue to make itself felt.

Jack Warbrick - High Benthams

Dear Benthams News,

Mary Harrison was such a familiar presence for all of us out and about in Benthams. Whether meeting her on the bus, or sitting on the Police Yard wall waiting for one, or in Mo and Gina's cafe, we all got one of her cheery youthful smiles and a good day.

In particular I remember Mary, who died shortly before Christmas, sitting on the bench near her house, in her big warm coat, shopping bags resting at either side, reading the paper, looking up when anyone passed to share that smile. Each time I go along the Low Benthams Road I feel the gap and think of her.

I was delighted to see the request to the Town Council at their meeting on the 4th of January to put up a plaque to Mary on the back of that bench. You can imagine how deeply disappointed I was when the request got embroiled in a discussion about how Benthams is getting littered with benches, about what sort of precedent this would set, about what the council policy is or should be.

Let's be clear: the bench is already there, it belongs to and was put up by the council, there are no plaques on it already,

although there are on some others of these benches. Is it a money problem? I know that lots of us would contribute to any cost involved.

The plaque would be an opportunity to record how fondly people in Bentham remember Mary. I do hope that the Town Council reconsider their decision and agree to the request. Perhaps you would like to write encouraging them to do so via the Town Clerk at the Town Hall or at townclerk@benthamtowncouncil.co.uk

Annie Neligan - High Bentham

Dear Bentham News,

Our next-door neighbour and dear friend, Mary Harrison, died suddenly on 8th December last year.

It was a big shock to us all as she had been out and about as usual all that week.

Mary was well known throughout Bentham, easily recognised by the quantity of bags she carried, like a rucksack, shopping bag and shopping trolley! She went regularly on the bus into Bentham but really missed the bus from Bentham into Lancaster and to Wray, where she went to meet her sister-in-law and friends for coffee. She had been born on a farm near Wray.

There is a bench outside her house on Low Bentham Road where Mary often sat to read her paper, or chat to people passing by. She was interested in everyone. We thought it would be lovely to install a small plaque on the bench from her friends and neighbours to remember her and planned to purchase one. Out of politeness, we asked Bentham Town Council for permission to install the plaque but have been informed that our request has not been granted! We cannot understand this and hope they will reconsider their decision.

Margaret and Brian Cowling
Sandwood, Low Bentham Road

Dear Bentham News,

Three Peaks for Palestine

In response to the unimaginable violence of the last four months in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, we have been holding regular vigils in Settle market square.

In February we are bringing a couple of events to Bentham which may interest you.

On Thursday 15th February 2024, 7pm to 9pm, we are showing a film at the Looking Well, King Street, High Bentham. 'Israelism' is a film made last autumn.

'When two young American Jews raised to unconditionally love Israel witness the way Israel treats Palestinians, their lives take sharp left turns. They join a movement of young American Jews battling the old guard to redefine Judaism's relationship with Israel, revealing a deepening generational divide over modern Jewish identity'.

We'll ask for a small donation for the cost of hiring the film and the room.

On Monday, 26th February, at 7pm and again at the Looking Well, we are introducing A Little History.

Several people have told us they wish they knew a bit more about the history of Israel/ Palestine.

So we are offering an informal history session. We'll give a short outline of the setting up of Israel and its effect on the region since then. We'll follow with a Q and A session. Amongst us we hope to answer your questions; maybe we'll suggest how to find out elsewhere.

Open to anyone interested.

Annie Neligan
High Bentham





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015242 62455 to book.

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Kew House (just off the A65) Ingleton

Free Online Talk: Breeding Waders of the Yorkshire Dales

By Victoria Benn (Friends of the Dales)



Photo above of Curlew by Ann Shadrake

On **Wednesday 21st February at 4.30pm**, Ian Court, Wildlife Conservation Officer for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, will outline the status of the key upland breeding wader species and how important areas such as the Yorkshire Dales National Park are for them. He will also look at the current threats, detail the habitat requirements that waders need and summarise some of the conservation work that is being undertaken to protect them. Finally, insight will be offered into how the Authority's Nature Recovery Strategies will help to benefit a wide range of habitats and species including breeding waders.

For more details or to book a place: www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/events



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The strength of community spirit planting 2000 trees in nine hours!

By Jonathan Stubbs

You might remember the article I wrote for Bentham News in November calling for volunteers to help with the planting of a new woodland in Bentham – The McNeal Woods. The response has been truly stunning.

Since my November article things have moved on apace. The enormity of the task started to dawn when the tree stakes, canes, mulch mats, pegs and tree guards arrived in two well filled vans. I was quite scared when the driver phoned me to confirm we had a fork-lift truck. We don't.

Woodland Trust and Lune Rivers Trust had devised a very detailed planting plan: Over the eight planting compartments there were 19 different species of tree and shrub. The plan considered the density of trees, wet or dry ground conditions, footpaths and overhead power lines.

Over the holiday fortnight I barrowed the sundries to their locations with help from Martin and Michelle, and also Brian Hewitt. Sarah, my partner, realised that we needed to get organised to avoid chaos when the planting started and set about the planning. Meanwhile, I hammered all the stakes in position.

The bare root trees arrived on the Thursday before the planting weekend. The following day we sorted them out and barrowed them into position. My November article had got a good response, but I was still eager to see how many volunteers arrived on the Saturday morning. I needn't have worried; we had around 40 volunteers from the Wenning River group and the wider community on the Saturday and the enthusiasm and friendly atmosphere was a joy to see.

It was lovely to meet so many new people and it was touching to hear stories from those who knew Dorothy and Lucy McNeal (mum and aunty). By the end of Saturday we had planted 1400 trees and 100 shrubs, which was far more than I had dared to hope for. The following morning, I chipped the ice off the tea urn before the volunteers arrived and we managed to get the remaining 500 shrubs in before lunch. Finished!

My sisters Janet and Deborah, cousins Sharon and Martin, my partner Sarah and I are truly overwhelmed at the strength of the community spirit in Bentham. You have made a weekend that we will remember for a long time and a woodland that will be enjoyed for generations to come!

Photos by Peter Lennard, with many more available to view on the Bentham News website.



Mark Watson

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Events in February



Town Hall

Every Monday

Indoor Bowls 1.00pm - 4.00pm, BR

Every Tuesday

Blue Moose Dance 9.30am-12noon, LH

Craft Club 10.00am - 12noon, WR

Yoga with Suzie Metcalf, 5.00pm-7.00pm, LH

Every Wednesday

Stepping Stones 9.00am-12:30pm, BR

Pilates with Sally Horn 9.30am - 10.30am, LH

Town Hall - Meeting

Monday 5th LH 7.30pm,

Full Town Council Meeting.

Town Hall - Coffee Mornings

These dates were correct at the time of printing but please clarify with the Town Clerk

Saturday 10am - 12noon

3rd - Craft Club for Brain Cancer Awareness

24th - Pet Rescue

Town Hall - Panto *(see page 9)*

Wed 14th - 7.00pm

Thurs 15th - 7.00pm

Fri 16th - 7.00pm

Sat 17th - 2.30pm and 6.00pm

£6 per adult and £4 for concessions tickets

www.ticketsource.co.uk/bentham-theatre-group

Town Hall

Saturday 3rd LH 1-3pm Chris Dancer
Community Drum Circle, Adults, £10

Friday 23rd - 7.30pm,

Bentham Show Annual Quiz

Quiz Master - John Whitfield.

E-mail vallawson@tinyworld.co.uk for further information and to book

Footpath *(see page 31)*

For February walks meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am.

Friday 2nd. Mary Taylor, 61672, Norber Erratics, 6.5 miles.

Wednesday 7th. Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud, 078547 89311, Oxenholme, 7.5 miles

Thursday 15th. Don Cartledge, 64979, Kirkby Lonsdale, 5 miles.

Tuesday 20th. Bryn and Sandra Cragg, 62416, Kettlewell, 6.5 miles.

Wednesday 28th. Peter Lennard, 07474 120898, Dentdale, 5.5 miles.



Bentham Fire Station

Thursday, 1st, 15th & 29th Feb. 10am

Bentham & District Dementia Friendly Community Breakfast Club

Bentham Pantry Club

Wednesday 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th Feb.

11am - 12.30pm and 3.30pm - 4.30pm

Free refreshments available. Entry at side door of the Methodist Church on Station Road. Our volunteer team look forward to welcoming you. Find us on facebook.

Methodist Church

Mondays 5th, 19th & 26th Feb 10am-11.30am

Toddle-In for parents/carers of children from birth to school age. £2 per family includes drinks and refreshments.

WI *(see pages 36 & 37)*

High Bentham - Thurs 1st, 7.30pm, Town Hall

Tatham Fells - Tues 13th, 7.30pm, Old School

Low Bentham and District - Thurs 15th, 7pm, Victoria Inst



Victoria Institute

Every Monday

9.00 - 12.30 Office open, Enquiries/Bookings

11.30am - 2pm Community Link Cafe

Light lunches and activities

6.15pm - 7.45pm Tai Chi

Every Tuesday

10am - 12.00noon Mexican Train - all welcome

4.00pm - 9.30pm Helen Howard School of

Dance - Term Time

Every Wednesday

9.00 - 12.30 Office Open, Enquiries/Bookings

10am - 12noon Post Office Services

12noon - 2pm Community Link Cafe

Lunch Club

4.00pm - 6.15pm Helen Howard School Of

Dance - Term Time

Thursday

Low Bentham W.I. 15th February 7.00pm

Every Friday

10am - 12noon Post Office Services

Every Sunday

11am - 12.30 Cornerstone Church Service

SPECIAL EVENTS

BINGO - Friday 9th February, 6pm eyes down

6.30pm (see page 23)

Ewecross Historical Society

Monday February 26th at High Bentham Methodist Church; Dr David Johnson: *A field survey in the valley of Chapel-le-Dale: piecing together the historical evidence.*

Visitors welcome £3

Bentham Golf Club

Every Friday 11am - 2pm, Age Concern

Bentham Friday Lunch Club

2nd, 9th, 16th & 23rd February.

Pioneer Projects Looking Well Studios

**PIONEER
PROJECTS**

Every Monday - Meet Lairgill carpark 9.20am,

5th, 12th, 19th, 26th Feb. Health Walks for Women.

Every Monday - 10.30am to 12.30pm, 5th, 12th,

19th, 26th Feb. Making Connections Dementia

Group.

Every Tuesday 9.30 - 11am, 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

Feb. Little Notes Music session. In the library.

Every Tuesday 10.30am to 12.30pm, 6th, 13th,

20th, 27th Feb. Creative Community Hub.

Every Tuesday 11.45am to 1pm, 6th, 13th, 20th,

27th Feb. Creative Writing Group face to face

and Zoom.

Tuesday 13th Feb 2pm to 4pm, Book Group in

the Library

Every Wednesday 10.30am to 12noon, 7th, 14th,

21st, 28th Feb. Sing Along to Every Song – face

to face and Zoom.

Every Wednesday 9.30am to 4.30pm, 7th, 14th,

21st, 28th Feb. Barclays Bank

Every Wednesday 2pm to 4pm, 7th, 14th, 21st,

28th Feb. Art for All.

Every Thursday 12.30 - 3.30pm, 1st, 8th, 15th,

22nd, 29th Feb. Community Art Shed.

Every Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm, 2nd, 9th, 16th,

23rd Feb. Barclays Bank.

Every Friday 10am to 12.30pm, 2nd, 9th, 16th,

23rd Feb. 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 Community Library

Telephone 01609 534533

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 - hot drinks, games, computers & of course lots of books!

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

News from our Neighbours

New Ceilidh Club, live music, all welcome!

By Tim Fearon

The Last Thursday Ceilidh Club is starting at Burton-in-Lonsdale Sports Pavilion (on Bentham Moor Road). The first ceilidh is on Thursday 29th February, from 2.30pm until 4.30pm. Music will be provided by real musicians, and there'll be someone to lead you through the dances – no prior experience needed, and you don't even need to bring a partner. Experienced musicians are welcome to join the scratch band. And all it will cost is £3 (approximate, depending on numbers) to cover the hall fee. Bring your own refreshments. So hope to see you there!

For further information please contact Tim Fearon on 07963-308333, or email at tombilly.tf@gmail.com

Lune Valley Probus Club - 2024 meetings in Hornby

By Roger Carter

Our speaker on **February 5th** will be **Christine Conder** to talk about **B4RN 'The Early Days'**

Christine was the driving force that led to the development and installation of the system in our area and many others.

Our speaker on **February 19th** is **Lionel Wilson** on the **'Volcanoes of Mars'**, this is a follow up to the excellent talk he gave us on **'Is There Water on Mars?'**

Please remember friends and guests are always welcome at our meetings.

Meetings are usually held on the first and third Monday of each month in the Hornby Village Institute at 10.15am for coffee/tea and chat before each session.

For further details or any information on this or other Lunesdale Probus Club matters please *contact 015242-22283*



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The Magic of Making Compost

By Jill Franklin

Hollywood star Bette Midler said one of my favourite quotes: “My whole life had been spent waiting for an epiphany ... the kind of magical experience that lets you see your place in the big picture. And that is what I had with my first compost heap. I love compost and believe in it with every fiber of my being. I believe that composting can save, not the entire world, but a good portion of it.”

I believe that, too. What happens in a compost bin is special. You put natural stuff in - vegetable peelings, eggshells, grass clippings etc (more about the list later) - and (ta-da!) out comes compost that is so much more nutritious than the shop-bought equivalent. Your plants will love it. Compost also provides homes for important creatures, reduces waste and helps us appreciate the vital processes that go on around us.

It's easy to create a productive compost bin. You just add a good mix of what's called 'green' matter and 'brown' matter. This doesn't describe the colour but is shorthand for dry things (brown) and those that have more moisture (green). You also need life present. Nature will find your compost bin, but I also gently add big slugs I find in the garden, and, for new bins, I sometimes buy native earthworms online (from Yorkshire Worms or other suppliers). If you have a happy compost bin, worms will flourish and even have their babies in there, speeding up the process of breaking matter down.

There is lots of online help available. The RHS, Garden Organic and BBC Gardeners' World all have good guides, including which container to choose, what to add and what not to add to your bin. Try not to get bogged down in detail, though. Just follow the ingredients lists and see what happens. It will be a few months before you will start to see a change in your bin. But, whilst you are going about your daily life, the creatures in your bin will also be hard at work, creating from your waste a rich mixture which you can grow plants in. And that, as Bette Midler says, is truly magical.



Town Council Meeting on 4th January 2024

By Jane Proctor

These are not official Bentham Town Council minutes but a factual report of some of the matters discussed at the Town Council meeting, although not necessarily in the order discussed at the meeting. The official minutes will be posted on the BTC website in due course.

Councillors Adams, Burton, Gerrie, Hill, Marshall, Paige and Ryan were present for the first council meeting of 2024 with apologies from Cllrs. Stannard and Taylor. There was no attendance by North Yorkshire Councillor Ireton, the Police or Community Safety Officer but in addition to your BN reporter there were 24 members of the public.

Planning Application 2022/24482/OUT – Development of land to the east of Butts Lane High Bentham

Cllr Adams explained the reason for a Thursday meeting was because comments from the council to North Yorkshire in relation to the nine applications before it (see page 30) had been given an initial deadline of 25th December which after some 'email traffic' was put back to 8.30am on 8th January.

What had prompted public attendance was a planning application for a housing development for 20 dwellings on land to the east of Butts Lane. A similar application had been previously made and discussed by the Town Council in February last year (*see BN Issue 437- March 2023*). The Council had been advised that they should judge the current application on the information before them and not be prejudiced by what had been said last February. Cllr Gerrie excused himself from commenting on this application in view of concerns he had expressed previously and additionally said he would not be voting on the application.

At the outset of the meeting Cllr. Marshall had declared an interest in this application along with four other applications before the meeting either in his name or the joint names of himself and his wife. The Butts Lane application for 20 new dwellings was the only one which the public wished to comment on and the only one where the council had concerns.

Six members of the public spoke eloquently of their concerns which included the presence of Great Crested Newts within 500 meters of the site of the proposed development and the lack of any confirmation that the developer had complied with their legal duty to take appropriate measures to avoid or mitigate any damage to their habitat. In addition to biodiversity considerations all the other concerns expressed last year remained in terms of safe access onto Butts Lane from the site of the proposed development, flood risk, surface water run-off and inadequate drainage. Several contributors made the point that the Craven Plan not only envisaged housing development but also local employment opportunities and sought to enhance the local environment generally. It was said that each application made for new houses is apparently considered in isolation and Bentham lacks the infrastructure to support additional development. Whilst smaller in scale to the development considered last year it was in essence the same and ate into the green perimeter of Bentham on its eastern edge.

Two contributors also made the point that they had been unable to properly hear what was being said either by councillors or other contributors who had been asked to stand in

front of members of the public to facilitate the acting clerk (Ms Pillow), who was working remotely from York, to hear.

When the application came to be discussed by the council Cllr Marshall left the room.

The council felt they were getting a bit of a mixed message from the public given that an application for a development of a similar size which had fallen for consideration at the December meeting of the council and had attracted no members of the public despite several of the same concerns being applicable. Nevertheless, all applications to the north of the Main Street caused concerns over flooding as all run off must go through a narrow channel which is at full capacity. All the concerns expressed by members of the public were taken on board and to an extent shared by members of the council.

The clerk made the point that the council were not making the decision on whether or not the development went ahead and were just making comments to North Yorkshire. After discussion all remaining councillors (with the exception of Cllr Gerrie who abstained) voted to seek North Yorkshire ensured that due diligence was given to flooding (including looking at the validity of the document submitted which seemed to make reference to Lakeber Drive), highways (safe access), green issues and biodiversity.

Police Report (*see BN page 42 for report covering 10th December to 12th January*)

A written report was read out which listed 34 incidents between 1st December and 2nd January. They are all listed on page 30. One in particular which occurred between 6pm on 16th December and 7.30am on 18th December concerned the theft from a farm on Mewith Lane of 2 quadbikes, a blue one and a red one, a 12' Ifor Williams twin axle cattle trailer and a Skid Steer bobcat. The police are appealing for anyone who saw anything suspicious to get in touch with them.

Other matters

Defibrillators – it was agreed to purchase a new external defibrillator with a decision about where to site it to be taken in due course, but probably in the vicinity of the playing field. This will bring the number of defibrillators owned to five. Also, Alice Micklemore-Brown, our Fire Safety Officer is to be requested to assume responsibility for their ongoing maintenance.

The Market – in the absence of Cllr Stannard discussion of this was deferred to the next meeting.

Ditch Clearing – Network Rail are to be approached with a request they clear a ditch currently causing flooding at Holmes Farm, Low Bentham.

Name Plaques on Benches – a request from a member of the public to place a memorial plaque on an existing bench was deferred. The council has a policy on this which will be consulted.

Town Hall – it was agreed to obtain a quote for new mugs and replace or refurbish the serving counter in the upper hall.

Notice Board – it was agreed to re-cork the notice board outside the Town Hall.

And finally – who placed the bench beside the Town Plan notice against the wall by Angus Fire about halfway up the hill to the station? No one on the council knew and it is going to be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Town Council Meeting will be on Monday 5th February 2024 at 7.30pm in the Lower Room at the Town Hall.

New Planning Applications considered at the Bentham Town Council meeting on 4th January 2024.

- 2022/24482/OUT outline application for residential development with all matters reserved except for access, Land East of Butts Lane, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7AE (25.12.23 extended to 7.01.24) - due diligence required
- 218.2 ZA23/255442/VAR application to remove condition 2 (Motor Vehicle Repair) of planning permission 08/2007/7045 granted 1 Mar 2007, The Rollershed, Butts Lane, High Bentham, LA2 7JZ (25.12.23, extended to 7.01.24) - No objection
- 218.3 ZA23/25356/FUL Change of use from commercial to residential to convert bakehouse into 2 one-bedroom flats WITHDRAWN
- 218.4 ZA23/25522/FUL Change of use of land for the siting of 6 additional static caravans, Riverside Caravan Park, Slaidburn Road, High Bentham, Lancaster, (22.12.23, circulated) - No Objection
- 218.5 ZA23/25523/FUL change of use of land for the installation of ground mounted solar PV arrays and associated works, field to North of Riverside Caravan Park, Slaidburn Road, High Bentham, Lancaster, (22.12.23, circulated) - No objection
- 218.6 ZA23/25557/FUL Re-surface parking area, Low Bentham Public Hall and Victoria Institute, Main Street, Low Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7BX (4.01.24) – No objection
- 218.7 NY/2023/0120/COU Change of use from a private garden to educational use by the Bentham Community Primary School - No objection provided only during school hours
- 218.8 ZA23/25514/FUL Change of use of land for the installation of ground mounted solar PV arrays. Bentham Golf Course, Robin Lane, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7AG (12.01.23) – No objection
- 218.9 ZA23/25515/FUL Change of use of land for the siting of lodge style caravans, including one warden's lodge and one greenkeeper's lodge at Bentham Golf Course, Robin Lane, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7AG (12.01.23) – No objection
- ZA23/25455/TPO G1- 5 Ash trees on edge of wood fell to ground level because they are over caravans and have ash die back, S1 - Sycamore on edge of wood fell to ground level because it is over caravans and has severe squirrel damage and the top has died, A1 - dead Ash to be felled to ground level Goodenbergh Caravan Park, Ravens Close Brow, Low Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7EU (granted) – no objection

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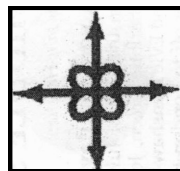
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Bentham Footpath Group - Five February Walks

By Don Cartledge



We have five walks in February and for each meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am.

On **Friday 2nd**, Mary Taylor (015242-61672) leads a 6.5 mile walk from Clapham up to the amazing Norber Erratics. Parking in Clapham, we follow the field footpath to Austwick then it's along the Horton Road until a bridleway leads to the hamlet of Wharfe. We continue left as far as the old sheep wash dub and left again down Crummack Lane as far as the stile on the right which leads up to the Erratics. It's then downhill to Thwaite Lane and back to the start.

Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud (07854-789311) take us on a 7.5 mile walk on **Wednesday 7th**. Parking in a lay-by on the right-hand side of the Sedbergh Road (Hayclose Lane) just up from Oxenholme Station, we walk up to Windy Hill Farm and onward to reach Hawkrigg Farm. Then it's down past Strawberry Bank to a footbridge across St. Sunday's Beck to the Old Hutton Road where we take a track to Low Blease Farm. Passing a syphon well building we enter Blease Hall Wood and on to Helm End where we climb over The Helm (good views) and re-cross the Old Hutton Road returning to the cars.

There is a fairly easy 5 mile walk from Kirkby Lonsdale on **Thursday 15th**. The leader is Don Cartledge (015242-64979) and the start is from Devil's Bridge car park. We initially walk up the lane through High Casterton before reaching the Roman Road where we take a path past Bindlass Farm and reach a wide cross track to turn left. We continue along this track for just under

a mile then turn left passing Langthwaite Farmstead and on to Casterton, from there it's easy walking back to the start.

Kettlewell is the start for the **Tuesday 20th** ramble, the leaders are Bryn and Sandra Craggs (015242-62416) and the walk covers 6.5 miles. Parking is at the Kettlewell YDNP car park (free with a permit - charges elsewhere) and public toilets are available. Taking quiet roads through the village, we reach the Leyburn Road and continue onto Top Mere Road track. Climbing up to Cam Head and the Starbotton road there are great views over Wharfedale and Great Whernside, then it's a descent to Starbotton hamlet before crossing a road and the River Wharfe, where we follow the river path back to Kettlewell. This walk has a prolonged ascent and descent but has a flat second half.

Peter Lennard (07474-120898) is leading a 5.5-mile Dentdale circular walk on **Wednesday 28th**. Walk details are not known at the time of writing but please access our website:-

benthamfootpathgroup.co.uk
for a description nearer the time.



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Viv Barclay's 'Mumentous' Atlantic Row 2024 update.



On December 12th 2024, I'll be taking the first oar strokes of the World's Toughest Row from San Sebastian de la Gomera in The Canaries towards English Harbour in Antigua. The last thing I'll see as I row over the start line is a massive banner reminding me I've got 3000 miles to go. As if I'll need reminding!

Arriving on the other side, apart from being sleep deprived and relieved, I will no longer have to lookout for rogue marlins with their sword-like beaks or be slapped in the face by flying fish, I will have been at sea for roughly 60-70 days. Taking my first wobbly steps on the quayside, a banner will be thrust into my hands saying 'New World Record' because, at 59, I'll be the oldest woman to have done this solo – ever!

Training - I had a couple of days on a lake aboard my boat last summer, which was very useful. The boat is currently on the Atlantic taking part in the

2023 event and it'll arrive back in the UK March/April. I then plan to practice up and down Windermere before moving to Hartlepool for skills and drills on the North Sea.

On land, I visit the gym to row and weight train plus I row at home. My mini trampoline helps with joint strength and stamina and I use resistance bands for shoulder and hip flexibility. Consistency is key and a plan is keeping me on track.

Goals - Interim goals are helping with fitness *and* funds. One of my sponsors, Booth's Supermarkets, has agreed to host me for a 24 hour sponsored row in-store. More details will be posted on my socials so please do follow me on Facebook: www.facebook.com/vivienne.barclay or Instagram: www.instagram.com/mumentous.atlantic.row

Publicity - Since I last wrote for Bentham News, I've been interviewed by Jeremy Vine on BBC Radio 2! I am trying to persuade him to follow my progress on the run up to and during the challenge – fingers crossed for that. I've also got a number of speaking events lined up – follow my socials for details.

Sponsorship - Obviously, this is an incredibly hard challenge and the coming months will be intense. To row past that ominous 3000 mile banner, the



very hardest bit is getting to start at all.

At the time of writing I'm delighted to say in addition to Booth's, Greystonegill Distillery, Bentham is sponsoring me plus Lonsdale Health Ltd, Ingleton, CRS Communications Ltd, David Cussons Doors & Windows Ltd, Yorkshire Housing and 'MadeofMore' Skincare. More are in the pipeline and each one will play an integral part in helping me achieve this New World Record. Every sponsor's package is individual but all will receive branding on my boat, feature on my website and in posts and be gifted a photobook of the row.

Would you like to play a part in this adventure of a lifetime? I'd love to welcome you aboard. To become a sponsor, or to make a donation, please visit www.mumentous.com or email viv@mumentous.com



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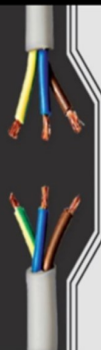
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Low Bentham and District

By Kathryn Brownsord



Our December Christmas Party was held at the Victoria Institute, which was beautifully decorated, and we had a very tasty Christmas lunch provided by Mandy of 'Simply Delicious. As always it was superb.

Santa was too busy to attend our party, so we had a lovely Christmas story read by Jacquie van Ryssel. This story told us all which way to pass the Christmas gift. All of us had taken a gift, and as the story ended, we had all received a gift. After our story we had another two games – pass the Brussel sprout and pass the Christmas pudding which enclosed forfeits and jokes.

Our President, Christine Jennings, followed the games with a demonstration on how to make chocolate truffles. She made it look so easy, but anyone who has worked with chocolate knows it can be difficult. Coffee was served to end our afternoon of fun and laughter with a selection of the tasty truffles that Christine had made. We all then made our way home after spending a lovely afternoon among friends.

Just to remind you that our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (15th February) and visitors are very welcome. We are always open to new members, why not make it your New Year's resolution to join us in the WI? That just leaves me to wish you all a belated Happy New Year and to hope that 2024 brings us all good health and happiness.



Tatham Fells

By Mary Taylor

Ruth Gibbons was just the tonic Tatham Fells Women's Institute members needed on January 9th, a cold winter evening.

She had everyone singing and taking part in her Old Fashioned Musical Evening. Laughter filled the room as one half sang Pack up your Troubles, and the other half sang It's a Long Way to Tipperary at the same time. They attempted other songs, some with actions. Ruth interspersed these with hilarious tales, one being about a husband buying a bra for his wife. Everyone was warm by the end of the singing when secretary Jenny Herd thanked Ruth for a wonderfully entertaining evening.

During the business meeting, vice president Carole Thurnham informed members of WI events and the 2024 Resolutions to be voted on for the National Federation Annual meeting to be held in June were read out. These were as follows; dental health matters, impacts of poor housing conditions, say no to gambling advertising and improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system; All the votes were counted and are to be sent to the Federation. Dental health received the most votes.

Ruth judged the many entries in the competition for a musical instrument; Liz Whitfield won with an accordion,



second was Carole Thurnham, and third Sue Dodgson. During refreshments provided by Jenny Batty and Olive Beard, members bought items from the sales table run by Ruth Holden and Mary Kidd. The next meeting in the Old School on February 13th will feature Nicola Hatking on the subject of Bee Keeping.

High Bentham

By Jan Stuver

A belated Happy New Year to all our members and friends in Bentham. Early in December the High Bentham WI enjoyed a fabulous Christmas meal, provided by Mandy of 'Simply Delicious'. The meal certainly lived up to the company name! Thanks to the committee members for arriving early and making the hall look festive with Christmas lights and tinsel. Our first meeting in January was an evening of board and tabletop games. There was something for everyone, from old favourites to something completely new, but, sadly, I still failed to find anyone to teach me how to play backgammon! Our next meeting is on Thursday 1st February at 7.30pm in the Lower Hall of Bentham Town Hall (unfortunately just before the February Bentham News is published), when our speaker will be Peter Rimmer with a talk on Morecambe Bay entitled "The Tide's the Very Devil". If any one in Bentham

would like to attend any of our meetings, they are very welcome to do so. We are always happy to greet guests.



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Run, Eat, Recycle & Repeat

By Nick Armstrong, Benthams Beagles

It's been a busy Festive Season and January for the Beagles. Firstly, three of our members braved the wind and rain to finish the 7-mile Christmas Pudding Run at Longridge near Preston. Their reward for completing was unsurprisingly a Christmas Pudding and Pudding themed medal.

December also saw many of our members and other local runners completing Run Every Day in December challenge also known as RED. Well done to all those who were dedicated enough to get out and consistently complete their runs every day of the month.

Beagles' member met up on Boxing Day for our now traditional run to Big Stone followed by hot drinks and some tasty treats. Thanks again to Sue & Steve Arnott for being fantastic hosts of this annual event.

As part of our January club night schedule, we organised a few different evenings. We were very pleased to welcome guest speaker Gavin Jennings from the CHEK Institute who gave members a talk on essential tips for increasing running ability and how to keep injury free. We also enjoyed a Run & Curry Night at the George & Dragon in Wray for one of our planned away nights.

Finally, club member Angie Tarlton has been helping coordinate a recycling drive of members old running shoes. Our unwanted shoes are sent to JogOn who then reuse or recycle them. Over 33 million running shoes end up in landfill each year so anything we can do to make a difference helps reduce the impact of our sport on the environment. For more information on this initiative check out www.jogonagain.com and you can send them your used shoes.

We have plenty going on for club nights over the next few months. If you would like to come along then please check out our training schedule on our website www.benthambeagles.co.uk and if you have any questions then email us at benthambeagles@live.co.uk



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The Farmer Network - Working hard to deliver a positive message!



For almost 20 years the Farmer Network has proudly supported farmers to react to every challenge and every opportunity. As an independent, not for profit organisation, funding to enable the Network to operate can be difficult to secure. The fact that farmer membership continues to rise each year, shows that the Farmer Network is needed by the farming community more than ever.

“We try and fill the gaps in support” says Chair Rob Hitch. “We are led by farmers and so we have an understanding of what is needed, and we then look to deliver it”.

The Farmer Network supports farmers to look at their business incomes, save business costs, providing critical knowledge and information to farmers and promoting the value and benefit that farming delivers in a positive light to the public and those with interest in rural affairs. Now, with so many changes in agricultural policy and support payments on the horizon, more farmers are turning to the Network. In January 2024 a new Northumberland Network is being launched alongside the Cumbria and Yorkshire Dales networks.

Within the last year the Farmer Network has delivered a breathtaking array of farm related projects covering business support, grants and other funding, changes to legislation, fund, animal health, support for Young People in farming and other meetings to look at health and wellbeing.

In 2023 the Farmer Network moved to larger office premises within Penrith Auction Mart which remains an ideal central location from which to administer the three networks. From the office the team continues to operate the popular fuel buying scheme which last year again topped more than 4.7m litres of fuel secured on behalf of members. Yorkshire Dales Farmer Network Chair Richard Stockdale says “As a farming family in the Dales, we’ve enjoyed hosting Network meetings and sharing our experiences with other farmers including the young people who will be the future of farming and foremost in looking after the natural environment. The network wants to support them as much as possible”.

Cumbrian upland farmer James Raine of Fog Close says “We all know our farms better than anyone, but there is always something new to learn. We cannot stand still and attending Network events such as those within the Fellfoot Forward Programme recently, gives farmers confidence to at least look at new and innovative ways to farm and manage our land”.

In looking forward to 2024 Farmer Network Managing Director Adam Day thinks farmers are facing a particularly challenging time with much uncertainty within the industry and a lack of appreciation towards the work that farmers do.

He says, “As a team we are confident in future that the value and benefit that farmers bring to food production, the environment and as an essential part of rural communities, will grow stronger. Wherever we go, we will be working hard to deliver a positive message despite the current uncertainties, and supporting our farmers to where and when it is most needed”.

News from the Fells - A festive round up and onto 2024

By Helen Wilkinson

The constant rain made December a very dark and dismal month but it meant that all our Christmas events were able to take place which included a dry evening for our carol singing around the village. We were pleased to be able to share some carols and a glass of mulled wine with Mick and Sue Bourne as sadly Mick passed away at the end of the year. Our sympathies are with Sue and her family. The carol service was well attended and a good number of people ventured out for the midnight service where the old gaslights were lit adding a warm glow to the church.

Other parts of the country seem to have suffered more than we did in the winter storms. I have seen a few trees brought down in the fields however, whilst the bridge on Ringstones Lane may look like it was washed away by flooding, I think the reality is that modern machinery is sometimes just too big for narrow old bridges (*see photo*).

There is no sign of any work being done to the cattle grid on Aikengill Road. It is still supported by sand bags, but the road closed signs seem to have fallen over and the road is in use as normal.

The wet weather has meant we've seen very little bird life but colder dry days have brought the barn owl and kestrel out, although I haven't heard the tawny owls for a while and there haven't been too many buzzards either. The woodpecker seems to be getting an early start on testing the percussive properties of the telegraph poles and there are some other early signs of spring appearing. In the first week of January a few snowdrops in the shelter of the stone wall were already open, at least a week earlier than normal.

Apologies and correction for November issue - Dorothy Blades should have read Mary Blades



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Bentham Police News



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36 incidents were reported between 10th December 2023 and 12th January 2024.

These included: Burst water main on Robin Lane, sudden death, public patrol, lost property, false alarm sounding, highway disruption with an abandoned vehicle and vehicle obstruction at Springfield/Butts Lane.....

4 reports concern for welfare – joint partnership working.

7 reports – domestic dispute/violence – joint partnership working.

5th and 28th December – Shop Theft

15th December – Harassment

19th December – Missing Person – found safe and well.

28th December – Theft of money from person in Main Street

18.12.23 – Burglary – Appeal following High Bentham burglary

We're appealing for witnesses and information about a farm burglary that occurred near High Bentham. It happened at a property off Mewith Lane between 6pm on Sunday 17th December 2023 and 7.30am on Monday 18th December 2023.

The following items of high value farm machinery were stolen during the burglary:

- A Honda quadbike Fourtrax 300 in blue - A Farr quadbike in red with alloy wheels.

- A 12-foot Ifor Williams twin axle cattle trailer. - A Belle 761 Skid Steer bobcat

We're now appealing for information about any suspicious vehicles that were seen in the area around that time, in particular a cattle trailer which was seen being towed by another vehicle.

Anyone with information that could assist the investigation should email ruth.daley@northyorkshire.police.uk You can also call us on 101 and ask for Ruth Daley. Reference number 12230239237.

Contact Information:

- 1 - Ring 999 in an emergency or to report a crime in progress
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Friday 8th March 12.30pm at The Victoria Institute, Low Bentham

By the Hip Joint Team

'Hip Joint' always brings you a range of experiences from near and far. Following our January event, which was a special musical experience evoking our beautiful Morecambe Bay, and taking a break in February for pantomime season, in March we are taking you on a musical journey around the world.

Entertainment: Howard Haigh, whose brilliant guitar-playing has filled the room and our hearts at 'Hip Joint', is back. He will be performing music which evokes landscapes from around the world and will be accompanied by one or two other musicians.

Food: To accompany the music, we will be celebrating international cultures through the food we share. Expect a multi-cultural feast!

Simple Booking: Tickets go on sale on 21st February.

The cost is £12.50 plus a 15p ticket fee. Buy tickets by card or use PayPal.

Go to www.trybooking.co.uk/C2VI.

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

There is the option of a £7 ticket if you are on a reduced income, for this please email hipjointbentham@gmail.com to obtain a ticket. Tickets must be booked a week before the event for catering purposes. There is no need to print out your ticket as we will have a list of those who have booked.

If you haven't been to a 'Hip Joint' party before, be prepared to be amazed! Hope to see you there.

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Tatham Fells CE (VC) Primary News

By Fiona Ip, Headteacher

Happy New Year to everyone. As we look forward to all the events to happen in 2024. We can now offer free Nursery places for all 3 and 4 year olds all day on Thursdays and Fridays from 8:20am to 3pm. Please email bursar@tathamfells.lancs.sch.uk for details.

Our Little Explorers club on Friday afternoons will continue this term with sessions being held even in unfavourable weather as we also have the cabin classroom available. All toddler and pre-schooler families are welcome. Please see posters on our facebook.

Our Year 5 and 6 Pupils showed their amazing teamwork in the Lune Valley Rugby tournament and won gold becoming Lune Valley District Champions. Our Year 2 and 3 pupils enjoyed a fantastic interactive morning thanks to Lancashire Fire and rescue service. KS2 thoroughly enjoyed their Judo and fencing sessions this half term.

At the end of the Christmas term we enjoyed our traditional Christmas Fair in school with lots of games and families joining us for tea and mince pies. Some stalls sold out in a few minutes. We are also very grateful to the friends of the school who at The Bentham Christmas mart served mulled wine and mince pies and raised funds for transport for our school visits.

The whole school enjoyed a visit to the Dukes theatre to watch a Christmas Carol. It was a musical which we all enjoyed and Year 5 and 6 are learning about the novel in their English lessons so it was perfect timing.

The Nativity in church at the end of last term was amazing! The singing was wonderful, the children were all involved in telling the Christmas story so well and we had real life donkeys to enhance the experience.

RICHARD TURNER & SON

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Forest of Bowland Set to Sparkle in February

By Sandra Silk (email sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk or phone 07973-923142)

The Forest of Bowland National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) celebrates its 60th (diamond) anniversary this year and is marking the occasion with a brand-new photography exhibition alongside its annual Dark Skies Festival.

Diamonds in the Landscape is a special exhibition of 30 images, all of which were chosen from entries submitted to the Forest of Bowland photography competition during autumn 2023. From far-reaching moorland vistas and stunning wildlife shots to majestic woodlands and atmospheric pastoral scenes, the talented photographers have perfectly captured the variety and beauty of the Bowland landscape. The exhibition will open at Clitheroe Castle Museum on February 10th and run until April 28th before moving to The Folly in Settle.

Saturday February 10th also sees the start of the annual **Bowland Dark Skies Festival**. With stargazing, photography tips, family crafts and a dark-skies inspired food tour on the menu this year, this week-long programme offers a touch of late winter sparkle and half-term fun. Events will be taking place both online and at venues across the National Landscape. Booking information and full details of Bowland Dark Skies Festival are available on the Forest of Bowland National Landscape website at: www.forestofbowland.com/festival-bowland

See photo on back cover of 'Gisburn Hub Milky Way' by Robert Ince

Bentham News voluntary donations and payments may be made to our Barclays Account:
The Bentham News, sort code 20-47-61, account number 43975843.

Bentham News is published by a voluntary committee consisting of Jon Brook, Shirley Brown, Peter Hardy, Dawn Johnston, Kathleen Kelly, Anne Preston, Jane Proctor and Pam Woof. Every effort is made to ensure that information contained in the paper is correct; however, Bentham News is an open access community publication and views and opinions expressed and adverts included are not necessarily endorsed by the committee. The decision as to whether a contribution is published is at the discretion of the committee, which also reserves the right to edit contributions. Bentham News is willing to withhold names on request, but names, addresses and telephone numbers must accompany all items for publication.

Bentham News does not have a postal address, but the co-ordinator is Denise Henshaw, who can be contacted at info@thebenthamnews.co.uk or 07770-801591. Emma Greenep, advertising manager, can be reached on ads@thebenthamnews.co.uk or call/message 07971-830257. Bentham News aims to acknowledge all emails and telephone messages promptly, so if you do not receive a reply, please contact us again as your communication may not have been received.

Copy deadline is 12th February for the March edition.

Please note we cannot guarantee the inclusion of any articles after this date.

Printed by John Mason Printers, Skipton

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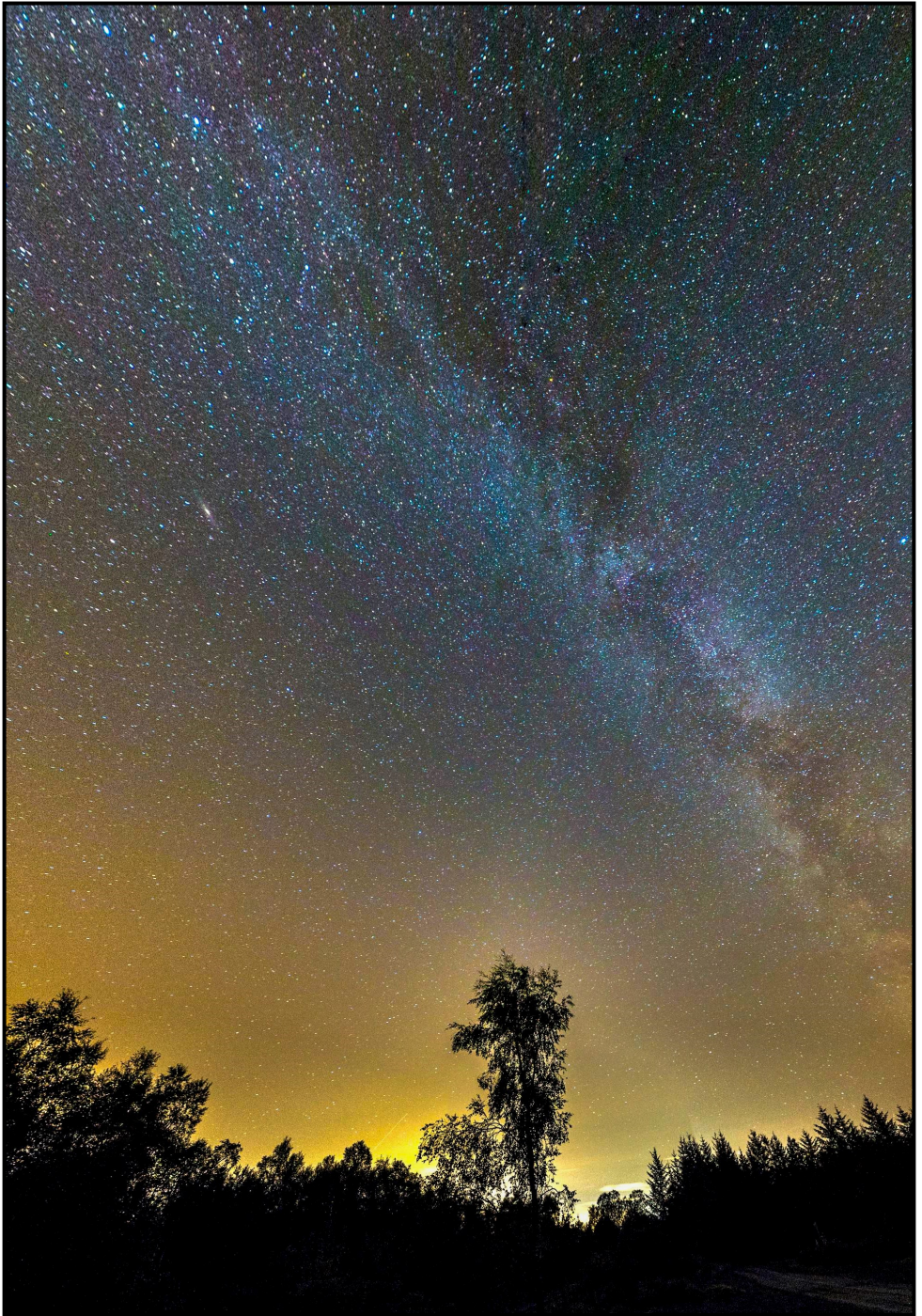


Photo of 'Gisburn Hub Milky Way' by Robert Ince—see article on page 46