

pontnews&views

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bus stop victory

380 prizes up for grabs
at annual flower show

Police offer advice
to thwart thieves

Petals and praise at church festival

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Main photo: Kay Errington, 10, tries her hand at plate spinning. Inset: Linda Bowles and Pat Wright put the finishing touches to a floral display at St Mary's Church.

Circus acts, singers, floral displays... a festival fit for a Bishop!

By The Reverend Peter Barham

From circus performers to singers, a 400 year old Bible and numerous visitors - the St Mary's Summer Festival had a feast of entertainment fit for a Bishop!

The biennial event was launched on July 29 with performers Marty and Emma Bloomfield of Circurama teaching circus skills to a marquee full of excited children in the vicarage garden.

There was a wide variety of art on display, and special thanks go to June Colvin who has now retired having started the Festival 30 years ago and organising 15 art exhibitions. We are very grateful to her.

The highlight of the history tent was when a 1613 King James Bible was brought in.

Many said the stunning flowers in the church were the best yet. St Mary's was also the venue for an excellent concert from Bailiffgate Singers and other musical events.

We had a full church for Sunday morning and nearly 100 people for an evening Songs of Praise, when we heard the bible read in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Latin, and several old English translations.

Our guest The Rt Revd Frank White, Assistant Bishop of Newcastle, was very impressed on Wednesday morning when he visited for the Holy Communion.

Photos and cover shot by Barry Pells.

Hundreds of prizes up for grabs at annual flower show

There are 127 classes, over 380 prizes and 22 trophies on offer for entrants of all ages.

From chrysanthemums to carrots, ugliest vegetable to oil painting – the 34th Ponteland Parish Flower Show has it all, with classes for flowers, vegetables, cookery, handicrafts, wines, photography and fruit. Classes for children include photography.

The popular show is being held at Ponteland Memorial Hall on Saturday September 10, with doors open from 1pm to 4.30pm.

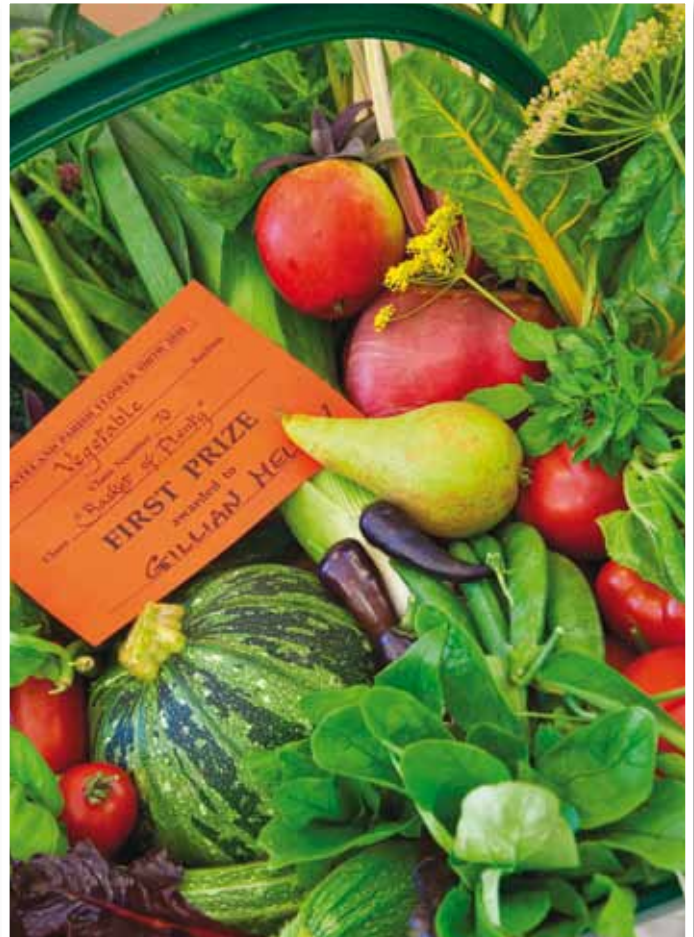
Competitors can bring their entries between 7pm and 9pm on Friday September 9, or from 8am to 11am on Saturday September 10. Judging is from 11am until 1pm, when the doors open to the public. The trophy presentation ceremony is at 4pm, followed by the auction of produce and flowers and the drawing of the raffle.

The Floral Art Exhibition is entitled My Favourite Film Or Play and arranged by Ponteland Floral Art Club and Callerton Garden & Flower Club.

Schedules are available in the Library, from the secretary Les Dinning (01661) 821941 and from Syd Cowan on (01661) 824459.

Full report in the October issue.

Photo from the 2010 show by Trevor Walker



Exam success proves pupils are top class

Pupils at Ponteland High School are celebrating success at A-level with results showing a big jump in those gaining top grades.



Twenty youngsters achieved three or more A* or A grades - up from 14 last year. It represents more than a quarter of all those who sat exams.

Fifty three percent earned A*-B grades, while three quarters gained grade C or above.

Ten youngsters taking BTEC Business courses also achieved double distinctions, the equivalent to two A-levels.

Headteacher Stephen Prandle said: "All our A-level students deserve congratulations for their performance. It is great to see such an improvement in achievement across the board from the already high standard set in previous years.

"Our magnificent performance this summer is indicative of the quality of teaching and learning that goes on at Ponteland High, and I would like to congratulate the pupils, and their teachers, for their tremendous efforts.

"Parents deserve praise, too, for working alongside teachers to motivate, encourage and support their youngsters."



'BAG FOR LIFE' BUYERS BRING PLAYGROUP JOY

Toddlers using a Ponteland playgroup will benefit from a £100 donation from the local Sainsbury's store.

The Community Grant will go towards the cost of a colourful canopy for Ponteland Under Fives Playgroup. The grant scheme is funded by sales of 'Bags for Life' and last year it generated £159,000 worth of donations, nominated by store managers and colleagues across the UK.

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Collingwood Crescent, Darras Hall

- Three Bedrooms
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- Garage
- Mature Rear Garden

Guide Price: £465,000



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PROJECTS LIST

The list of projects included within the budget for 2011/12 was circulated. It was noted that the speed signs were built and ready for installation and the company were hoping to carry out some preparatory work for installation in week beginning August 22. The basket trees at Broadway had been erected and comments had been favourable. The owner of Barclays Bank had indicated he would be prepared to meet with representatives of the Council to discuss the project for enhancing the area next to the bank. This would hopefully be held in the near future.

BUDGET WISH LIST

Councillors were asked to submit items they wished to see included within the budget for next year, if they had not already done so. An initial informal meeting would be held at the beginning of September to discuss these items.

HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

A meeting had been held on July 20. The Chairman of the Working Party referred to the Local Transport Plan for 2012/13 and stated that this had to be submitted to the County Council by September 30. A further meeting of the Working Party would meet to discuss this on August 24.

Councillors were asked to give consideration to what they considered to be the top three priorities for Ponteland prior to this meeting.

ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

The Working Party had met on July 18. The Chairman reported that a meeting was to be arranged to discuss the overgrown vegetation in the river at the bridge next to the Diamond Inn.

REPLACEMENT SEAT AT BROADWAY

Following installation of the basket trees at Broadway it was agreed that the existing bench seat required replacement. The Clerk submitted various options for seats and the installation of two steel seats which required no maintenance was agreed.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillor Richard Dodd reported on the current situation relating to Thornhill Road. It appeared that it was not going to be possible to install planters etc to reduce parking. It was proposed that the yellow lines be extended but this could take time due to the consultation period. He also stated that the County Council was currently tackling the issue of 'unkempt' properties. They were also looking at the issue of empty properties. Councillor Mrs Jones reported that a full Council meeting had met to discuss the car parking strategy. She also reported that the Local Government Improvement Agency would be looking into the provision of services for older

people in the county. This would be on a consultancy basis and would be free of charge and this work would start later in the year. The County Council had been asked to look at this issue of speeding on Western Way. Councillor Mrs Jones also reported on the Love Northumberland awards, where the pond project at the High School had received a runner up prize and the Darras Hall First School had received a first prize.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported that he had attended the opening of the Barclays Bank in Ponteland on July 20 which had been most enjoyable. He had been delighted to attend the 104th birthday celebration for Sybil Harvey, a resident of the Manor on July 22. The Mayor had also opened the Ponteland Art and Flower Festival on July 29 and this week long event had been a great success. He had also attended the Morpeth Town Council Civic Dinner on August 5 and the Mayor's Civic Service and Parade in Berwick on August 7.

This report is based on the minutes of the Ponteland Town Council meeting held on August 10.

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Keep your hedges and trees trimmed - or risk council charges

Now that the growing season is nearly over, the Town Council would like to remind residents that hedges or trees that grow over their boundary line are their responsibility.

In some cases the growth is such that passers by need either to duck to get past or move over to the edge of the pavement. Those pushing prams probably come too close to the edge of the road.

On some corners it is also becoming difficult, if not dangerous, for car drivers. The drivers need to come out beyond the line of the road to see what may be coming; this is a potential accident waiting to happen.

If the growth is such that it becomes a danger or nuisance the County Council will probably come and cut the growth, then charge the householder for doing so.



Gardening club students plant the flowers donated by Cowells Garden Centre

Donation helps school gardeners win award

A sponsorship deal for Ponteland First School is set to blossom after a £200 donation of flowers and vegetables helped it clinch a school garden award.

The generous gesture from Cowell’s Garden Centre in Woosington comprised flowering bedding plants and a variety of vegetables including beans, peas, rhubarb and potatoes.

The flora were planted within the school grounds on Thornhill Road by its own gardening club, made up of eight and nine-year-old students and Year 4 teacher Mr Vincent, who have scooped a silver award in the Northumberland School in Bloom Award for the second year running.

The school gardening club was established in a bid to create a fun and interesting way for the pupils to learn about food and where it comes from, whilst also promoting the school’s healthy eating scheme.

Mr Vincent said: “The generous donation from Cowell’s Garden Centre not only helped us achieve silver in the School in Bloom awards, but also provided our gardening club with vital resources to help us teach food and cultivation principles.

“The vegetables that are grown in the garden will be used in our school dinners, and marked on the menu that they are Ponteland First School produce – we usually see a great uptake on these dishes, which is a great way to promote healthy eating.”

Cowell’s Garden Centre manager Martin Cowell added: “We’re delighted to have helped our local school’s gardening club win another award. I hope the flowers and vegetables we have provided will encourage the students into a lifetime of interest.”

Fiona Hall MEP Lib Dem MEP for the North East

Please get in touch if there's anything I can help you with. Best wishes, Fiona.

How to contact me:
By post:
 55a Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN
By email:
 fiona@fionahallmep.co.uk
By phone:
 0191 383 0119

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Hospital manager Shelagh awarded new promotion

By Sarah Hall

A high performing private hospital manager from Ponteland has received a fresh promotion.

Shelagh Alderson, from Darras Hall, has been promoted to head of clinical services at Spire Washington Hospital after significantly improving staff retention and consultant satisfaction in her former role as interim theatre manager.



The qualified physiotherapist, who “embodies clinical excellence”, first joined the hospital in 1994 and has risen through the ranks with positions also including paramedical service manager.

Shelagh now has responsibility for leading the hospital’s clinical strategy, which means ensuring the highest quality healthcare is provided, while at the same time maintaining sound financial performance and delivering the corporate vision.

Silvie Adams, director of Spire Washington Hospital, said: “Shelagh is a longstanding member of staff and embodies clinical excellence in everything she does. The role of head of clinical services includes deputising for the hospital director. It’s hugely reassuring to have someone so capable as a second in command.”

REP SOCIETY OPEN NIGHT TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS

Ponteland Repertory Society will be holding their Open Night on Wednesday September 7 in the Coffee Lounge at the Memorial Hall starting at 7.30pm.

We always need new members - both on stage and off - and if you're interested in finding out more about our plans for the next season, please come along. Everyone will be welcome. We look forward to seeing you.



Sybil celebrates 104th birthday with the Mayor

Ponteland’s oldest resident celebrated her 104th birthday with a tea party and a visit from the Mayor.

Coun Peter Cowey and his wife Sheila dropped in to Ponteland Manor care home to wish Sybil Harvey many happy returns with a bouquet of flowers.



The centenarian enjoyed a birthday party organised by staff at the home with friends and her only child, daughter Jill.

The great-grandmother of seven, who hails originally from West Sussex, has lived through two world wars and seen five monarchs and 20 Prime Ministers since she was born in 1907 in Bognor Regis.

This was the year the farmland Darras Hall estate was built on was purchased, taxi meters were introduced and Rudyard Kipling got the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Sybil, who went to school in Chichester, was married to municipal engineer George in 1935. They lived in North London and Dartmoor, where George worked as borough engineer and surveyor. They were married for over 40 years until his death in 1976.

She retired to West Sussex, where her interests included golf, bridge and working with the WRVS.

Sybil moved to Ponteland in her centenary year to be near Jill, who lives in Darras Road. She said: “We had a tea party at the Manor in the afternoon and the Mayor came with the Mayoress and a huge bunch of flowers.

“A lot of residents came and some of my friends - there must have been a couple of dozen people in the lounge where the staff prepared a very nice tea for us. It was a very pleasant afternoon and my mother certainly enjoyed it.”

Coun Cowey said: “It was a lovely occasion and we were delighted to join Sybil to celebrate her birthday, which has become something of an annual fixture in the council diary! It was marvellous to see the village’s oldest resident in such fine spirits.”

Photo by Trevor Walker

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Secretary Greg Waugh at:
secretary@thepontelandgolfclub.co.uk
Tel: 01661 822689



Photo Society welcomes new members

By Denise Weatherburn

Whilst the summer weather may leave a lot to be desired, there will be lots of new images and interesting workshops and talks to participate in during the new season of Ponteland Photographic Society.

The club has a varied syllabus that includes guest speakers, tutorial evenings and a large variety of competitions to keep everyone busy. A monthly newsletter is provided to members that gives lots of articles about photography and techniques, and there are also outings during the year for the more adventurous.

So if you're interested in photography, why not pop along and see what's going on and join us? It doesn't matter about your experience or quality of your camera.

We meet every Monday from 7.30pm in Merton Hall Ponteland, starting from September 12.

If you need any further information, contact me at denise_weatherburn@hotmail.com



Campaign secures new bus stop for Broadway

By David Gambles

Public transport users in Darras Hall are making good use of the new bus stop erected recently on Broadway.

The move follows a campaign by residents, who previously had to walk some distance to the nearest bus stop on Middle Drive.

Those from Old Station Court and Darras Mews now have a convenient bus stop just a short walk from where they live and passengers who are travelling by bus to the shops on Broadway also benefit.

A further piece of positive news is that Stagecoach have introduced more modern, low floor buses to the Ponteland routes that allow wheelchair users and passengers pushing baby buggies to enter the bus without encountering any steps.

Ponteland and Darras Hall X77/78 daytime services offer a Stagecoach bus every 30 minutes, Monday to Saturday, to the centre of Newcastle where the buses drop passengers directly into Eldon Square Bus Station.

Go North East also run their 74 service, using low floor buses, every two hours from Eldon Square to Hexham via Ponteland and Darras Hall. This service also runs on Sundays and Bank Holidays (to Matfen only) with the first bus to Newcastle departing Middle Drive at 9.50am and Ponteland village at 9.55am, calling at the airport terminal and Kingston Park shops on the way to Newcastle.

For full timetable details, visit www.traveline.info

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Your letters

Inconsiderate motorists and horse riders come under fire in this month's letters...

Farcical parking on Broadway caused by delivery drivers

Having read Mr Parkinson's letter in the August edition of Pont News, I assumed that the parking situation at Broadway could not get any worse.

We are all familiar with Transit vans and the odd three ton truck parking and delivering to the front of the shops. Today (August 5) the ante has been raised as a 10 ton lorry reversed into the car park up to the front of the newsagents and proceeded to deliver.

The action completely blocked the entrance, prohibited traffic movement and any further use of the car park. On completion of his delivery the driver came out of the shop and proceeded to drive out in the wrong direction of the indicated traffic flow of the car park. He actually had no choice as the lorry front was virtually on Broadway.

As the service road at the rear of the shops seems to be ignored by the people who it is intended for, I suggest that we, the customers of these shops, surrender the front car park and use the service road area instead.

The landlord could paint new bays that fit Range Rovers and vehicles of that size and we all could be free of vans and lorries. The shop owners in turn could provide new rear entrances to allow customers access to their premises.

The present situation is a farce and we the customers should demand action before someone is injured or a vehicle is damaged.

Ian Marr
Errington Road
Darras Hall

Young horse riders should consider elderly pedestrians

I wish to complain about the filthy paths in Callerton Lane caused by horses ridden by young girls from the local riding stables on the footpaths, from the main roads, fouling them as they go.

People with walking sticks and walkers have enough hardship picking their way among the holes in the path, without coping with manure too.

Betty Griffiths
Athol House, Callerton Lane
Ponteland

School run drivers also a problem on Callerton Lane

Reading a recent article about drivers and anti-social behaviour around Ponteland High School, I thought I would write with my concerns.

Cars are parking on both sides of what were once decorative grass verges (now muddy and unsightly) on Callerton Lane.

This carries on all the way around the corner, past the roundabout towards Rotary Way, and also on the road in Dunsgreen - making this street effectively one way traffic which, when all is considered, must be dangerous for both children going to and from school - and drivers.

I was under the impression that the school had a separate parking facility. Why can't parents be made to park and wait for their children there? Surely safety is and should be the prime concern!

Martin Harland
Dunsgreen
Ponteland

Have your say on national planning policy consultation

On July 25 the Government began consultation on the new National Planning Policy Framework, a process which will finish on October 17.

The Civic Society has placed the relevant documents on its website at www.pontcivicsociety.pontelandonline.co.uk and Ponteland Town Council has paper copies to see at its offices at 1 Meadowfield Court. The various ways of responding are given in the "Consultation" section.

We are told that your views will be welcome on any aspect of the draft framework and you don't need to complete all of the extensive questionnaire to respond.

This framework will affect the way our environment develops for generations to come, and all readers are urged to have a look at the proposals and respond as they think appropriate.

Philip Ham
Chairman, Ponteland Civic Society

Letters on all issues are welcomed by Pont News & Views but the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

The Editor reserves the right to amend any submitted letters for legal or other reasons. All letters submitted should include the writer's name and address.

October issue deadlines: The October issue will be delivered on October 3 and 4. Deadline for all copy and adverts is Monday September 19. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the October issue.

What's on...

County Council surgeries

Your local Northumberland County Councillors Richard Dodd, Peter Jackson, Veronica Jones and Eileen Armstrong are available to meet constituents on the first Saturday of every month from 10am-11am at Waitrose supermarket, Ponteland. Their next surgery is on September 3.

Ponteland's weekly market

Ponteland's weekly market at Merton Way shopping centre is on between 9am and 4pm each Friday.

Northumberland Fuchsia Society

Our next meeting is on Thursday September 1 from 7.30pm at St. Matthew's RC Church Hall, Ponteland.

Ponteland History Society Help Desk

Are you doing a school project, researching family history, needing historical information on a date, building or person in the Ponteland area, or looking for an old local photograph? Then perhaps we can help. Our free help desk is open at Ponteland Library from 2.15pm to 5pm on Friday September 2, where we can give access to our own archives. For more information, see <http://www.ponthistsoc.freeuk.com/page12.html>

Annual duck races

Sunday September 4 at Ponteland Park from 1.30pm to 4pm. First race 2.15pm. Fun for all the family with pony rides, bouncy castle, fairground organ, children's games, refreshments and displays. Race tickets available from Mackley & Steven optometrists, John Hallam dental surgery or any Rotarian. Proceeds to Rotary charities – local and international.

Legacare Festival

Saturday September 10 at Ponteland Park from 12noon onwards. Entertainment includes a tombola, hair and beauty salon, pony rides, face painting, stalls, bbq, magician, rides and slides, raffles, live entertainment, refreshments, visit from the fire brigade, golf putting competition, treasure hunt, coconut shy, ice cream, popcorn and candy floss, and a Star Wars parade.

Ponteland Flower Show

Ponteland Memorial Hall on Saturday September 10, with doors open from 1pm to 4.30pm. There are more than 120 classes for flowers, vegetables, cookery, handicrafts, wines, photography, fruit and 380 prizes on offer for

entrants of all ages. For more information, contact Syd Cowan at syd.cowan@btinternet.com or call (01661) 824459. See article on p4.

Railway Films in the Church Hall

Saturday September 10, 3pm and 7.30pm - Railway Films in the Church Hall on Thornhill Road. Building engines - steam, diesel and electric. Admission free, donations please. Doughnuts in the interval.

Belsay Fete

Saturday September 10 from 3pm to 8pm, Belsay School Field. Village fete with stalls, plant sale, table top sale, children's sports, egglympics, tug of war, terrier racing, bbq, bar, hog roast, and band Razor Sharp.

Ponteland Penguins at St Mary's

Sunday September 11 at 4pm. Ponteland Penguins for children meets in St Mary's for an hour.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

The next meeting is being held at Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm on Monday September 12. Speaker Col Alec Johnson will hold a talk entitled 'A Sapper's War'. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every month in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm. Membership is open to gentlemen aged over 55 who are not in full time employment. The annual subscription is £10. For further details contact, Donald Lloyd at donaldfloyd@sky.com or on (01661) 872661.

North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

We would like to welcome all existing members and anyone new who would like to come along to the start of our new season of talks. Monday September 12 is our first meeting and we are delighted to welcome back John Richards, Emeritus Professor of Botany at Newcastle University, who is going to delight us with 'Alpines of the Lake Garda Region' – a wonderful part of Italy with some beautiful plants. Our meetings take place in St. Mary's Hall, Thornhill Road. The doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. The charge to visitors is £2 per meeting. Details from Terry Teal at t.teal@btinternet.com or (0191) 4132574.

Join our weekly netball session

Did you used to play netball? Or are you new to the game? Come and join us for a fun and sociable workout. All levels welcome. Every Monday, starting Monday September 12 from 8pm-9pm at the Sports Hall, (behind) Ponteland Middle School.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

Tuesday September 20 from 7.30pm at Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road.

Harvest Festival at Holy Saviour Milbourne

Tuesday September 20 at 7pm - Harvest Festival at Holy Saviour, Milbourne.

Ponteland Embroiderers' Guild

Our next meeting is on Monday September 26 at St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland from 2pm to 4pm. It is our AGM, which is a short business meeting and "Sheila's Annual Quiz". There will be sales tables from Phoenix Cards and Kates Kloths. Tea or coffee and biscuits will be available. Everyone welcome to come and meet us. Further information from Sheila Armstrong on (0191) 2667873.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Ponteland supporters of Macmillan Cancer Support are holding a fundraising coffee morning at St Mary's Church Hall on Thornhill Road, Ponteland at 10am on Friday September 30 and are looking for as many people as possible to support it. There will be cakes to take home, as well as to eat with your coffee. Second hand books will also be on sale, along with gift cards, all of which will help raise funds for the charity. There will also be a "guess the number of coffee beans in the jar" prize. More information from Julie Barham on (01661) 822140.

Quiz night at St Mary's Church Hall

Saturday October 1, 7pm - Quiz Night in the Church Hall on Thornhill Road, Ponteland. More details at www.pontelandstmary.co.uk

Harvest Festival services in St Mary's

Sunday October 2, 10am and 6.30pm - Harvest Festival services in St Mary's.

Bridge drive and afternoon tea

A bridge drive and afternoon tea are being held to raise funds for the Memorial Hall appeal on Thursday October 13 at 1.30pm for 2pm. Tickets cost £7.50 and there will be a raffle. For more information, contact Anne Morgan (01661) 822640, Margaret Tunnah (01661) 872677 or Kate Ross (01661) 824436.

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Where	SEPTEMBER Dates	Time
PONTELAND MEMORIAL HALL	MONDAY 5 th 12 th 19 th 26 th	8.00 9.00pm
	WEDNESDAY 7 th 14 th 21 st 28 th	6.45 7.45pm

Contact **Price to Party**
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At Home with... Helen McArdle Care

A Home Care service tailored to each individual

As life expectancy continues to rise, many of us will begin to need assistance in our everyday lives to help us maintain our independence.

Helen McArdle Care, a North East based care company, is currently operating a bespoke service in home care to provide older adults with a range of services that are tailored to meet all of their needs.

At Home with... Helen McArdle Care differs from other home care providers in the region, in that Helen McArdle Care can utilise the experience of their Home Support Team and the resources of their 12 care homes to ensure that clients can rely on them for everything, from personal care, to DIY, to short breaks. Thus giving them the peace of mind that At Home can always help with life's challenges and their families and friends can relax in the knowledge that there is always someone to help out if they need a break.

Aileen Alexander, Home Care Manager, said: "The aim at Helen McArdle Care has

always been to provide choice for our clients and now that we operate in day care and home care, as well as residential care, we are well prepared to deal with any eventuality based on your lifestyle choices."

Aileen joined Helen McArdle Care from Age Concern Northumberland and has had over 23 years' experience in domiciliary care work across the statutory, voluntary and private sector. She is committed to providing the highest quality of care and an excellence in customer service. Aileen believes that choice is the most important factor in living independently and happily. At Home will always try to tailor the services we provide to suit your needs.

"If we don't currently offer a service you need, we will do everything we can to provide it. We have recently introduced respite care services as result of requests from some family members who needed a break from caring for their loved one. This is now a permanent feature of our service which we can tailor to the carer and the person being cared for, to maintain their routine or to provide new activities and interests."



Aileen Alexander, Home Care Manager for At Home

The services currently run in Ponteland, Morpeth, Jesmond, Gosforth and East Tynedale.

For a free, no obligation consultation and support plan please call (0191) 461 8861 or visit www.athomewithhelenmcardlecare.co.uk

Testimonials

"Julie was a delight to have in the house. I have to admit to being nervous about having a carer but the whole experience was really enjoyable. Julie was an excellent choice for me, lots to talk about. She really is an excellent worker and companion."

Sarah Lewis – client who used At Home for respite whilst her partner was away.

"Thank you so much for helping my mother-in-law. She so enjoyed the wedding and meeting everyone. It was also good for James to have his granny there. Everyone we spoke to about your company's service were so full of praise for your service."

Phil McNally – client's son-in-law. At Home helped his mother-in-law to pack and get to a wedding in Ireland.

COMMUNITY PRIDE NEEDED

The PCP Environment Sub-Committee carried out a "Walk around Ponteland Village" survey and what saddened them most was the generally untidy unswept look of paths, gutters and refuse areas.



Unfortunately, we do not have anyone to carry out a cleaning service for the village and, as we all know, there is no money in the coffers with which to secure a machine and the manpower to operate it.

So this is a plea to all residents and retailers to please maintain the areas around their property, including verges and hedges and show community pride in the appearance of our village environment.

THE SEVEN STARS SHINE AGAIN

Paul Gibbs has an emotional attachment to the Seven Stars Inn, since he was landlord for eight years until 2001 and remembers his children growing up there.

He has stepped in to take on the challenge of a pub that closed earlier this year and was starting to look derelict. A complete redecoration, repairs, new patio furniture and colourful flowers in the planters have given the popular pub a great lift. Main Street looks much better for it.

Paul Gibbs and his daughter Claire stand cheerfully in a packed and noisy bar, recently reopened after a complete makeover.





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With over 20 years experience of working with older adults, combined with an array of unique services and a dedicated team of Home Support Assistants, At Home will provide you with everything you need to enhance your life and maintain your independence.

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www.helenmcardlecare.co.uk

 Helen McArdle Care

Farming links with our rural past are broken

By Muriel Sobo



Frank Carmichael (top) at the Mart and Bobby Meek (bottom)

About 60 years ago, before the development and enlargement of the Darras Hall Estate with its mansions and 4x4s, Ponteland was an agricultural village as it had been for hundreds of years.

There was a farm in the centre of the village and a weekly mart for the sale of all things agricultural with the railway taking fat cattle to Newcastle. The recent deaths of two of our local farmers break the links to this rural past.

Robert Meek died recently aged 84. His great grandfather signed the lease for Eland Hall Farm in 1854, when the estate was owned by Matthew Bell of Woosington.

Bobby as he was known, born in 1927, went to the Ponteland schools and started on the family farm during the war when horses were still used and they had a dairy herd.

He sold up the cows in 1975 and went to mainly arable with fat stock and sheep which is still what his son Gordon is doing today. Bobby retired in 1984 and went to live in The Crofts, where he lovingly tended his garden and more than once won the prize for the best-kept garden!

Frank Carmichael also died recently aged 96 years after a lifetime of farming at Middle Coldcoates, just a mile up the A696 from Ponteland.

He moved there in 1932 as a tenant of the Milbourne Estate and was able to buy the farm in 1957 when the Estate sold off the farms. It was just over 250 acres.

Today his daughter Carron and her family are continuing to farm - she started organic farming in 1999. She is a past chairman of the Northumberland National Farmers' Union, NFU, and is full of ideas for the future of the farm.

PONTELAND LIONS CLUB ELECT NEW PRESIDENT

John Morris is newly elected President of the Club for the next year, taking over from the joint presidency held by two lady members, Anke Jackson and Muriel Sobo.



In the past year the Club, which has 14 active members, raised more than £11,000 from the local community – mainly from the Swimarathon, the monthly bookstall, a Chinese meal and a flag day at Christmas.

The main beneficiaries in the last year were the Great North Air Ambulance, awarded £2,500, and the Memorial Hall which received £1,000. Smaller amounts went to the Calvert Trust, Sick Children, Ocean Youth and others to support work with the young or disadvantaged.

John said: "I am grateful for the past generosity of the people of Ponteland and during the forthcoming year I wish to ensure Ponteland Lions continue to serve the local community and raise funds for local charities and other worthy causes."

 A colorful advertisement for Zumba Boys Northeast. It features a smiling woman in a black top with a white lace-up detail. The text includes:

- ZUMBAboys NORTHEAST**
- EVERY THURSDAY, 6PM**
- RICHARD COATES MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- ONLY £3.50 PER CLASS**
- Contact Chris Pentland on: 07862 249846 or email: chrisharrypentland@yahoo.co.uk
- NO NEED TO BOOK JUST TURN UP!**
- FIND US AT ZUMBA BOYS NORTH EAST ON FACEBOOK**



Crime prevention advice on offer to thwart opportunist thieves

By Insp Kevin Oates
East Tynedale Neighbourhood Inspector



There have been 12 crimes in Ponteland over the month to August 15.

They break down as follows:

- two burglaries to sheds/garages
- one house burglary
- two shoplifting
- one assault
- two theft from motor vehicles
- one theft of motorcycle
- two criminal damages
- one harassment.

Suspects have been identified for several of these crimes and three arrests made to date. Further arrests will follow.

Several of these crimes have been opportunist, eg, items left on display or where security could be improved. Ponteland is an area of very low crime and we need to keep it that way by removing temptation from the dishonest elements of our society.

From April 2011 to date, there have been 34 fewer victims of crime than the same period last year in Ponteland.

Any member of the community who would like advice on crime prevention or security, or can pass on any local information or community intelligence, please get in touch. The following are direct opportunities to speak face to face with a member of the Neighbourhood Team:

- The mobile police station will be in Merton Way from 10am on Wednesday September 14 and in the Broadway from 1pm the same day. Any local policing issues can be raised.
- Local Ponteland police surgeries are regularly held by Pc Paul Henery and CSO Jill Ruddick. The next surgery is on Friday September 9 at Ponteland Library between 11am and 12noon.
- There is also an opportunity to raise any issues with local policing team and council officers at the SureStart Centre, Thornhill Road, Ponteland on Tuesday September 6 at 9.30am.



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