

# The Villager 60

A newsletter for the community of Murton and Hilton  
October 2015



## Editorial

Welcome to the latest Villager.

The most momentous news this month is of course the opening of the new Institute as shown below at the moment Harry Beadle cut the ribbon and declared we were open for business!

This edition has several items of note. The issue of the pitiful broadband service we receive is getting some attention; on page two there's a call for your help. Also with this edition there is a leaflet from Eden DC about dog fouling and a plea from the PC to take control of your dogs if you have them.

We also have a first in this edition as we have a piece of creative writing—there was space to fill and a submission so I

thought, why not? Continuing the literary theme we also have a couple of poems celebrating two aspects of recent happenings. I hope you enjoy them.

This is my last edition of the Villager as editor—new hands are taking over and the newsletter will no doubt take on a new look. The last five years have been great fun and have only been possible through the support of all the contributors and funders and of Jules who has been all of the above plus the much and ever needed expert proof reader. My deep thanks to all of you and good luck to Richard King for the next phase of the Villager.

Frank Price, Editor



# Broadband in Murton-cum-Hilton

Peter Davies and Anne King need your help

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Being on the edge of the finest countryside in the country does not however mean having cutting edge technology at our disposal. Super fast broadband is expanding its coverage to 95% of the UK but the Eden Valley, in particular our villages and countless others like us, are being overlooked.

Anne King and I have been researching into the possibility of extending the Government's push for super fast broadband to our rural community. To that end we have circulated a questionnaire to establish homeowners' need and interest in such a project. We are also in contact with other communities in Eden and are organising a meeting with Rory Stewart in order to see whether pressure can be exerted onto providers and the local authority to supply the requisite facilities.

Those facilities will not be forthcoming however unless we as a community can demonstrate there is a practical need and enthusiasm for the technology to be made available. So I would ask as many as possible to register your interest with connectingcumbria.org. The more people that do that the more likely those with the responsibility of spending funds will do so for our area. This is especially so with those who use Internet for their business or work.

Furthermore, those who have an interest in this project please contact either myself or Anne King with a view to organising a meeting at the village hall to discuss the project. Again the more people who are interested the more likely our MP, the local authority and service providers will be persuaded to assist with this campaign.

Please contact Peter Davies, Fellside House, Hilton or Anne King, Felldodderers, Hilton

## Civic News

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We held our last Parish Council meeting at The Golf Club on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff and members for their hospitality during the construction of the new hall. It was a real pleasure to hold the meetings in the warm and comfortable surroundings of the club house! We look forward to our next meeting in the new village hall!

The poor state of our roads continues to be high on our list of priorities. Since our last meeting in May, repairs to Hilton Bridge have been completed. The cattle grids on Brackenber Moor will be replaced in the next few months and it has been agreed that the potholes adjacent to the grids will be filled in at that time. Unfortunately we are not scheduled for any major resurfacing work so we have to be content with highlighting problem areas. The worst areas are currently being dealt with.

I was pleased to see the new grit box on Spell Hill – not before time I am sure you will agree. This has been raised for a number of years without success (until now) and we do not expect to see any more in the short term.

Last year the Parish rights of way were inspected by Tony Burns as part of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Programme. We have benefited from replacement of fingerposts, improved way marking on the golf course and at Low Bank End, the definition of a PRoW at Brackenthwaite, a new gate by the bridge and benching out near Town Foot, Hilton. If you have concerns about any footpaths, please mention it to one of the councillors and we shall take it up with Tony.

Garden waste skips made a welcome, if delayed, appearance and have been well-used. This service will be reviewed annually by EDC and we shall lobby for their continuation next year.

The improvement of the village greens in Hilton and Murton has continued to be discussed. During the village walk-about to review the Village Green Managements Plan, it was suggested that the upper green areas in Murton and Hilton might be suitable to become wild flower meadows. The North Pennine AONB Pollinator Project will provide seeds and plug plants as well as advice.

Brian Moncaster has continued to liaise with Community Heartbeat about the provision of defibrillators. Finding a suitable location with the required electricity supply in Murton is proving to be a problem and could incur some considerable cost. If anyone in Murton has any suggestions, please contact Brian. The Hilton telephone box has been approved as an acceptable site and we are currently seeking to have an emergency telephone sited there as well.

Broadband provision has become a real problem as internet use is more widespread and increasingly sophisticated. The recent questionnaire has indicated support for an improved service as the parish is not eligible for the Connecting Cumbria initiative. Peter Davies has volunteered to investigate our options, and is seeking a meeting with Rory Stewart MP.

Finally, you may be wondering why a leaflet about dog fouling is included with this edition of the Villager. Over recent months this has become a real problem within the villages and particularly in the Town Foot area of Murton. Not only is this unpleasant for the residents in this area but it poses a serious health issue for children. Please read the leaflet, don't just recycle it, and make sure that if you have a dog that it is wandering unsupervised, that any mess is cleaned up and disposed of correctly.

# Dog Fouling

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There has been an increase in incidents of dog fouling within the villages over recent months. We take a pride in providing a safe, pleasant environment for every one, and reports such as this affect every household.

Not only is it unpleasant for our residents to have to watch where they walk and unpleasant to clean off footwear but more importantly it poses a serious health issue for children.

**Please read the leaflet, don't just recycle it,** and make sure that if you have a dog that it is not wandering unsupervised and that any mess is cleaned up and disposed of correctly. It is no longer necessary to have a dedicated dog mess bin, it can be placed in your dustbin or any public bin as long as it is properly bagged.

Most dog owners are totally reliable and carry bags when they are walking their dogs but there is a small minority who do not think of others and act irresponsibly. Please don't let your dogs out in public areas unsupervised, and always clean up after them. The Dog Warden has provided these leaflets and is monitoring the situation following complaints.

## Bee Friendly

An update on village green matters from Anne King

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Half a dozen Murton and Hilton residents recently met Mandy Oliver, who runs a project designed to create and improve habitats for bees and other pollinators in the North Pennines. She was buzzing with ideas (!) and is obviously very knowledgeable. She has offered to support any events we might like to run in our villages to increase our knowledge of the needs of pollinating insects and to help us make our area a hive of activity for our little buzzy friends.

We are thinking about organising some events over the next year, possibly including a Fellsiders talk and a plant exchange focussing on pollinator friendly plants at one of our Coffee and Craic mornings. Mandy has also offered to lead a bee identification walk through some of our gardens in the late spring. So watch this space for further details and please let me know if you have any ideas you would like to share about things we can do to attract bees and other pollinating insects to our villages.

## News from the Institute

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As everyone will now know we now have our Institute back! At a grand opening on 17th August our new building was opened with great ceremony by our own Harry Beadle who was also 93 on that day. We estimated around 120 folk were there along with the press and representatives of our main sponsors: The Big Lottery Fund, the Hadfield Trust, the Frieda Scott Trust and Cumbria County Council.

We shared some much needed refreshments and our Chairman John Sibson gave a speech of thanks to all concerned with the new development. Most importantly though, John saved his opening remarks to give profound thanks to all those who have kept the Institute going over the years since 1923 when it



The real stars of our new Institute—Adam Knowles director of Eden Stone Work and Paul Thomas site manager. Candid camera at the opening event!

all started; without all of that effort we would not have been in the position to renew in the way that we have.

Following the opening ceremony we also had a splendid opening party where we were unable to count the numbers present. Suffice it to say that we had to wash 96 plates twice in order to feed everyone. Let's call it 300!

Activities have now restarted and the diary is very full with long standing activities, new events, private bookings and new long term activities. One long standing group pleased to be back are the badminton club who are extremely complimentary about the main hall. June Watson reports that "there was a bit of trepidation that everyone would be exhausted after having to run around a lot more than previously, but they were all really pleased with the games they had. One person commented that it was a slower game at times as now the shuttlecock can fly high up into the air and there's now time to get in position for a shot. Someone else commented that it was a much better experience than at Appleby Sports Hall. The group have generously purchased a pair of clocks for the main hall and reception area.

The Fellsiders have also recommenced their meetings at the Institute. The October meeting was a talk given by the Treasurer of the Eden Credit Union. As well as being a place for your savings, the credit union is a source of affordable loans at reasonable interest rates for individuals, small businesses, clubs and groups, especially for small loans and for those who might not be eligible for a loan with the usual High Street lenders. They have an office in Penrith and a presence in Kirkby Stephen but as yet there is no base in Appleby.

The November 4<sup>th</sup> Fellsiders meeting will be an illustrated talk on genealogy and how to go about tracing your ancestry. All are welcome to come along. Members no charge, Visitors £2.

#### **WELL DONE!**

To Lorna Atkinson who made around £300 with her raffle at the last Coffee & Craic and sponsorship for her walk. All in aid of Breast Cancer Care. Well done Lorna and thank you to everyone who supported Lorna in this.

To Abbie Lane who held a sleep over in the Institute this month to raise funds for the hospital that she attended. She showed the film 'Far From the Madding Crowd' and then eight brave souls spent the night in their sleeping bags in the main hall. Definitely a first for the old and new Institute! Altogether Abbie raised over £400. A great effort and thanks to everyone who called in during the evening and stayed overnight.

#### **FOOD HYGIENE**

Ten ladies from the parish attended the day course held in the meeting room this month and all gained Level 2 of the NVQ in Food Hygiene. This in preparation for using our great new kitchen and in line with current food hygiene standards as maintained by the District Council. Certificates will be issued soon to all those who attended.

#### **MURTON PHOTOGRAPHIC**

This year, Christmas Cards of local scenes around Murton and Hilton are available. Packs of 8 cards of assorted views cost £5 with all proceeds going to the Pride of Cumbria Air Ambulance. These are available from Marian in Murton, Frances in Hilton or Lynda at Appleby Medical Centre. Or phone 52145. Please support this fundraiser.



The first badminton night in the new Institute

## Murton cum Hilton & Appleby First Responders

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The Community First Responder (CFR) team was founded in Murton cum Hilton and has been in operation for 12 years. It has seen the number of calls attended increase year on year. In 2014 the team was mobilised by the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to 124 incidents in and around Appleby, the majority of which were in the Appleby town area. All team members are initially trained and assessed by NWAS before they are allowed to respond. Thereafter training is carried out locally every month and team members have to pass an assessment by NWAS every 12 months. With the increasing workload the team are looking for new recruits, *particularly from the Murton cum Hilton parish area*, to join them. Brian Moncaster has stood down as an active responder and taken on the role of Chairman/Secretary, which means for the first time we do not have any responders in the villages, so if you would like to find out about becoming a responder please contact Brian on 017683 53701 or at [brian.moncaster1@mypostrace.co.uk](mailto:brian.moncaster1@mypostrace.co.uk).

**100 Plus Club Lottery:** The 100 Plus Club has been in operation since 2005. For most of that time Dennis and Lesleyann Morgan ran the scheme very efficiently and successfully. They have now left Murton for pastures new and our team members would like to express their appreciation for all of their hard work and effort on behalf of us all in the community. Whilst NWAS staff train and carry out the necessary assessment of team members, the majority of the essential equipment needed to carry out their role has to be funded by income derived from donations and the *100 Plus Club*. Every team member's set of kit costs approximately £2000. The *100 Plus Club* runs over a 12 month period from August to July. Club members pay £20, in one payment, which buys a number – members can buy more than one number. Application forms for the scheme were delivered prior to August and there has been the best response we have ever achieved. 210 numbers were sold which has enabled the fund to now offer five prizes every month compared to three previously. The team are very grateful for the support they receive and thank everyone who has contributed.

The 100 Plus Club winners for September were: Evelyn Sowerby, Ormside; TM Ewbank, Appleby; Michael Harvey, Appleby; Barbara Harrison, Murton and Rachael and David Longrigg, Appleby. For October they were: Mrs Hullock, Appleby, Sally Ridley, Hilton, Tina Robertson, Hilton, Mark Cawson, Murton, Marian Munro, Murton

**C-PAD Campaign:** Your local CFRs have been active in organising the provision of Public Access Defibrillators in and around Appleby. In Appleby there are now five units: one funded by Mr Fred McHugh, two by Age Concern Appleby, one partly by Eden Housing Association and one partly through Story Homes and Appleby Primary School; the balance of the funding has come from individual and group donations. We are still working to provide more units so that there are enough defibrillators readily to hand to help anyone suffering from cardiac arrest. The C-PADs are provided in readily accessible outside positions: opposite the Co-op, in Boroughgate by Stephenson's shop, at Appleby Primary School, at Rampkin House, Scattergate and on Glebe Road. Our team members wish to thank everyone who has helped with this project, your support is very much appreciated.

Plans are in hand for C-PAD provision in both Murton and Hilton. There is a defibrillator at the Golf Club. Age Concern Appleby has provided funds for one unit and the Parish Council are funding the other. We are currently in contact with authorities to convert the telephone box at Hilton to a C-PAD site but, as with so many things, it takes time. Murton is a little more problematic as the ideal site would be the bus shelter. Each C-PAD requires an electricity supply to keep the defibrillator battery at a reasonable temperature during cold weather. Discussions with the electricity supplier reveal that the cost of providing a supply in the bus shelter would be around £3500. Other possibilities are currently being explored and hopefully we can report more progress in the next issue of the Villager.

# The Breathless Hush

a short story by Brian Fenlake

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They had a hard coming of it, the move from town to country, school upheaval and new job finding. The leaving behind of the comfort of friends and the ease of known places, the change to colder mornings and the apprehension of new faces. Through the fogs and mists of aging eyes I watched that coming to the village, saw the entrance of new players on the local scene. My senses were failing then, and I wondered if I was too old to feel the true patterns in peoples' lives. Had I grown too old and turned too cold to live my life through the fortunes of in-comers, to hear their voices, visit their dreams and keep myself alive through easing their homemaking?

That day, it was the last of Brian's many trips made over months to move them (and also on that day a reluctant adolescent) from Yorkshire grime to the northern hills and a glimpse of Lakeland from the bedroom window. Jill as a freelancer had not been tied down so had been three months ahead of them, settling in and getting to know the neighbours. But with the school term over and Brian's new job starting in January, they could all be together again.

Unseen, I watched Brian as he swung the car round the last bend on the way up the valley, and knew how the full view of the fells would leap out to him just there. The steep scarps, the crags high on the pikes and the deep slash of the dale came flashing into sight. I could feel the suddenness of the view and how it never failed to bring a lift to his spirits; there was already a pact between them, between Brian and the place.

I knew they would have seen snow on the tops from when they rose over the Ashton moors, and then, as they got to the last mile of the hill up to the village, it was lining the verges and lying in a deep ribbon up the centre of the road. The packed icy ruts seemed to give some grip for the tyres but no one would want to meet one of the crazy village lads coming down. Brian's concentration, lost to the view, was jolted back by one of the pheasants scuttling and calling across the road, he slowed too quickly and I saw the car slither, but then the wheels caught again and there was no mishap. In the passenger seat, the fish-tail roused Lillie, the reluctant teenager-to-be from her light car-sleep.

'We nearly there yet?', she said.

'Don't start, Lil', said Brian, 'but yes, you know we are'.

'Only joking'.

'Hmm'.

I knew that she did recognise the turn of the valley and the outline of the fells above and that she'd remember it was only a few minutes up to the cottage at the head of the village. I also know this would not make that made much difference. She was going to hate the place. It was miles from anywhere, it was going to be no friends, a crummy new school and not fair. Mingin' was her word for it. And she would need all of my help to grow to love the place. What I cold not foretell was whether I had the enough strength left to be able to make the connections for her.

Pulling up in front of the house, they could see homely lights shining through the kitchen windows and a wisp of smoke slipping from the chimney. It was going to be warm and cosy inside. They were both starving as they'd decided not to stop at the café on the way up and of course they had missed breakfast in the last rush to pack the final bits, bobs and toothbrushes. Brian and Lillie in turn were thinking of cold beer, crispy chips, hot soup and homemade pies. Bursting through the door, the warmth of the kitchen hit them like a blanket, yet turning from the bright red Rayburn, timed to perfection, Jill was holding the biggest pie you'd ever seen. It was crusty topped with gravy drools down the side. Salty chips were heaped in a dish next to a bottle of beer frosted and open on the rough table.

Jill said, 'Hungry anybody?'

'Whoa Mum, cool!.'

'I do my best.'

The three of them stuffed their mouths and hurled questions round the room: it seemed to Brian and Jill like a happy home coming. I wondered if it really was. The adults had always known that it would need some hard work but that they'd settle in time. Neither of them ever imagined what it might take before it happened.

For months, possibly years, they had been mentally moving north. The combined pull of the Pennines and the Lake District had exerted its inexorable charm and finally they had done it. Finding and changing his job had been the tricky bit and there had been many doubts. Maybe the finances would not work out, but well worth a calculated gamble, they had thought. The rent from the Sheffield house, let for 12 months in the first place, just wasn't going to pay the mortgage on the cottage, and that was going to eat into the new and smaller salaries. They had not cared about the lower life style, who cared about all that; the new life was going to be so much better.

Actually, telling Lillie had been the tricky bit. Well, not telling her exactly, more convincing her it would be good thing to do.

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They had thought that their timing was about right: she was about to move schools anyway and most of her group of best friends seemed to be all going on to different ones. A good time to change they had thought, or maybe the least difficult time anyway. At twelve they make friends easily, they're adaptable, they find new things to be interested in. Not so, it seemed. "No I won't" had been her reply, "none of that". Weeks going by and several trips to the new home had done little to bring her round. But on that day they were here for real, so they had to start to make it work.

One night, in their second week, Jill brought it up, I knew she would.

'Do you hear that word she uses, Brian? Everything's "mingin". Good job that pie wasn't, took me ages that did. I think she's being deliberately obtuse.'

'Come on, she doesn't even know what that means', said Brian.

'So now who's being obtuse? She won't even give it a chance. She's known this place for ages now and it's still the same old grump every day.'

'Give her time', said Brian. 'She had a great day yesterday with those kids from over the stile. I reckon that's a turning point. Anything on the telly? Let me guess, no.'

'No.'

'Any wine left?'

'No.'

And it did take ages to even get a glimmer of some better frame of mind. And then suddenly it was all changed. The kids over the back were cool, their house was brill and she was never in. So it was only January and February that seemed cruel, by the time March was in, she was settled at school, playing hockey, going swimming and spending all the weekends either over the stile with Tom and Soph or giggling in her bedroom just with Soph. These two had grown here, I'd watched them. Their parents too, the whole family right back to their great-great grandparents and before were from the village, born and bred.

In that first spring they made a trip up the dale one weekend. The snow was gone and the curlews were calling and quavering up and down the valley. Lillie had never heard one before and for weeks after, waking after all those horrid nights, she tried to imitate their call. Brian and Jill would lie awake in the morning listening to a real one through the bedroom windows while giggling at a "curly whirly" in the next room warbling away without a care. They saw their first lapwings that day too. Called them "flappers" to rhyme with "lappers". Ducking and diving, flying upside down and looping the loop. Lillie thought they were brill too.

That evening, Jill said, 'That was good. Apart from your flippin' holes in the ground.'

'And just what's wrong with old mines then?'

'Good job they were bat-caves and fenced off, you'd have been down them like a shot otherwise. There's no way I could've kept Lil and the others out you know!'

'Mmm, bat-caves are good. I liked playing the vampire.'

'Tom and Soph thought you were mad'...

'... I am, but Lil thought it was cool to have a mad dad,' he giggled.

'But what about those Curricks?'

'They're amazing aren't they?'

Standing like stone men, the Pennine curricks dot the ridge tops like gargoyles perched high on the skylines. You can see them like eagles eying prey in the valleys. Crow black, piercing the clouds as the mists swirl, they watch and wait, guarding the landscapes for the lost generations. Walking by them, people feel their age, the lichens drip and the stones themselves are glued by the centuries. No one now knows where they came from; some say the shepherds built them to mark the folds and shelters in the days when the flocks were watched. Others say the miners made them to mark the ways to the adits and the high stopes. They do mark out the lines of the easy ways across the tops but more, they are the stuff of dreams or the nightmares of the children. They were just sleeping stones by then, left to stand alone and cold. I could feel the draw of the earth and the chilling of my senses too.

For days, weeks, Lillie was troubled in the night.

Brian had said, 'she's scared shitless by those silly old stones you know.'

'Yes, she is', Jill said. 'She's spent weeks half wetting herself at night 'cos of them, and you don't help either, you git! Trying to perch like a crow whenever she walks past.'

'Kids need to confront their demons.'

'They don't need a bigger kid to help them though.'

Lillie's dreams were punctured by perching stones. She woke every night crying and tangled in her sheets. She dreamt she was walking underneath tall cliffs, or sometimes under the crumbling bluffs cut deep into the brick-red red sandstone by the rivers. The stone men were peering over the rocks, watching her. Sometimes she dreamt they chased her, calling in their stone voices that sounded like the clack of the scree as it falls from the heights. Some nights they were in her room, just out of sight behind the door or the curtain, silently waiting for her to move or fall asleep. When she did, the crack of their laugh would jolt her awake and into tears. I was calling into her dreams and for one last time trying to build a bond so I could still live through someone and keep my place. The more I tried though, the more she pushed me away, fighting and afraid. I had to leave her and move off to a distance: I would have to find other ways of bringing us together. For me, this was my last chance of life, I could not stand and let it slip from my grasp, I had to seize it and feel and breathe and live.

So for Lillie, the stone men and the frights didn't last. It was only a few weeks later that the kids went off alone together to find the bat-cave again but Lillie got scared as it was so far up the valley and close to the standing stones. They still sent a chill through her bones and her new friends had laughed and teased her. Just as well they went back down I suppose, the caves are bad places for children. But then, going on might have kept them away from the river bank and the old mill-race that slanted and snaked high over the river bank and the waterfalls. And going on might have kept Lillie from having something to prove.

They were coming back down the track when the Tom saw the old mill-race. Just a sunken runnel really but very inviting for three kids on the look out for trouble. It looked like a small sunken lane cutting across the fell side, flat and level, over-grown and hung with ferns. Their parents had warned about this place, the old mill-race, the shoot for the water that powered the mill where their great-granddad had spent his life. Their great-granddad and his dad and maybe his dad too, who knew? They'd spent their days milling the winnings from the mines. Stamping the rocks into gravel, picking the gangue from the ore, milling the ore for the crucibles. A hard cruel life that stunted their children and leadened their lives.

But that was in the far past, and today the mill-race was an inviting culvert. They crept along, the mud in the bottom soaking their jeans and clogging their trainers. It seemed like they'd found one of the old ways of the stone men: a road that led from a time past to the present, full of intrigue and mystery. The mud gave way to sand, the sand to slimy stone and then they were crawling below the ferns as the sides closed in and narrowed and their walkway became a crawlway and a darker route that clung high to the river bank as the river fell far away below. For the second time that day they gave up on their plan and fled, giggling the way they'd come.

Years later I heard the parents recall the time.

'But if only that had been the end of it. Or if only Lil had told us where they'd been!' said Brain.

'But kids aren't like that. Are they?'

'No, but Tom and Soph knew a bit of the local stuff.'

'You can't blame them...'

'I'm not trying to...'

'...I know...', said Jill tenderly, taking his hand.

They were so keen for Lillie to be welcomed and to find friends that they didn't pick up on the way she'd changed in the new home. They missed the signs that might have shown them that she was under some other influence. She was more eager to chase after new things and places - before she was always quite reticent, but now she was out and about and into everything and they assumed it was because of new friends and a new home. The nightmares over the stone men - she'd never had nightmares before, and they put them down to the new place as well. Brian and Jill could have no idea that she was being pushed and pulled into a new form, into a new way of living a place. The next thing they knew, Tom and Soph were away for Easter and Lillie was off on her own.

That day, the clouds scudded past. Ragged mists held to the fell sides and tore round the feet of the curricks. They were hidden and cold, but I was watchful, unseen and overlooking the river far below. Lillie, bored by the day and lonely without her friends, sneaked out the back door and headed for the shed it seemed; heading for the stile was what I could see. Over the steps, down the bank and through the gap in the hedge, the way they went to the stream and that sunken road. She'd show them when they got back, get right through it she would, who's scared of a few old stones and a mingin' old drain?

In just a few minutes, crawling along the old mill-race, she could hear the loud thump of the river pulling at the banks and boulders in the river bed. The night before it had rained hard and the river was up and chasing the lumps and bumps of its course. The slate bed of the mill-race grew narrower and slipperier as a flush of the stream it was meant for sluiced along its base. Despite being cut off from the river, the mill dam long broken, after a good storm the mill-race still ran with the drain-

age from the fell above. As she moved on, determined to get to whatever end there was while her friends were away, she found that the walls got higher and more sheer and the hanging ferns overhung more and cut out the light. Just then, the outer wall was no longer there, but the river was, streaming past, violent, terrifying and a long way down.

Lillie realised too late that the inner wall too was gone and the base stone of the race was all that was left, bridging across a deep narrow cleft in the hillside. The night's rain had torn along the course of an old ravine, undercutting this section and leaving it hanging in mid air, the side stones had fallen into the river below leaving just the flat stone of the bed slanting and tilting into the new chasm in the valley side.

Years past, the mill workers, Tom and Soph's ancestors no doubt, had built the race to bring the river to the mill. They'd brought it along the best path but over a flaw, known or unknown, who now knows? The flaw was old, a hush, a miners' gulley flushed of soil and debris by the floods of dams made and smashed for the purpose. In their search for the veins and ores of lead and barite, the miners used the power of their own streams to hush out the overburden and show up the lines of their treasure. You can still pick them out today. From where I stand I can see them clearly, pouring down the valley sides. But some lie hidden, and this one, long filled in by the movement of soils and the slip of the scree, was lost for generations; waiting for a storm, and a small girl, lonely and craving the approval of her friends.

Just a few feet away on the far side of the cleft, Lillie could see the last bit of the mill-race as it continued smoothly on, apparently ending only a little way further in a muddy bank. Just then as she moved to turn and back away, the slate she was kneeling on lurched under her weight and tipped further into the cleft. In the mud of the race she slid smoothly on all fours and in slow motion towards the drop to the river. I screeched a warning to those that might hear, but deaf and cold, my fellows were indifferent to the plight of a small one, and was there anyone left that could still hear my call? Lillie scrambled and scratched at the stone bed, screeches ringing in her mind. Spinning and turning to grab the last of the side stones she noticed even in her panic, the glint and sparkle of an ore vein, missed years ago by the miners but then clearly glistening in the back of the cleft. She grabbed at it in desperation and in her last moment clutched a small piece of the mineral as she fell and somersaulted backwards into the air and then into the torrent below that swallowed her in its ease.

Now, Brian and Jill, sitting on the floor of the lounge in the old converted barn, face each other and interleave their legs. Sitting close, their nearness is a comfort and they gaze evenly into each other's eyes.

'Oh God, will we ever forget that day', said Brian.

'Well, we shouldn't', said Jill.

'The day Tom's old nan came to the door, soaked...'

'...with a broken Lil ...'

'...we were all nearly broken.' Tears welled in his eyes.

'Hey, come on,' said Jill softly. 'It's long past, Tom's Nan was there in time. It's OK.'

'God knows why just then though, she hadn't been out of the house for months...'

He smiles and reaches for the wine bottle to refill their empty glasses. And in the loft above, Lillie, now grown, adult and visiting with a new boyfriend, clutches the ore stone hanging round her neck and tosses in a sleep again filled by the old stone men. But now they seem as friends and her dream is of the place she has found and the shadows of older and wiser things who watch and guard the ancient roads and the ways of the people and whose lichens fold them round like cloaks.

Standing high on the ridge alone with my cold curricks beside me I find that through Lillie I have found that new life, I have halted the slide from stone man to cold currick. I can still breathe the spirits of the villagers. I can look again past my feet, and across to the sleeping houses and fill the dreams of the children. I can look up to the skies and once more pull down the flying clouds and wrap them round my rocky bones. And of course, I can look down into the deep earth and see the ore veins held there like ribs in the hard ground.

Do you have a piece of creative writing to share? This is the first short story—will it be the last?

Please send any short stories you have to the editor in the usual way.

## Poetry Corner

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### Community Hub

The lights go out  
The windows are bare  
No shuttlecock flies on a Thursday  
Hundreds of events  
Over many decades  
Many memories of collective fun  
Individual laughter contained within walls  
Like a phoenix it will rise again  
A new building to carry forward  
The treasures of old and the exciting future ahead  
Courtesy of Camelot's dreamers

L Atkinson 2015

### Dry Stone Wall

Years ago we were set in place,  
for season after season held our ground,  
the lowest fast in earth.  
We thought we were here for the duration.

### Mrs Pinafore's Cookery Corner

These brownies are quite simply the best. Really chocolatey and dead easy to make. What could be better?

#### *Mr P's Boston Brownies*

##### **Ingredients (Makes 20 or possibly only 10?)**

3 medium eggs  
275 g caster sugar  
175 g unsalted butter  
200 g dark chocolate (with flavouring if you wish, eg orange or coffee)  
175 g plain flour  
1 tsp cocoa powder  
175 g fresh raspberries (you can use frozen if you wish)

##### **Method**

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C

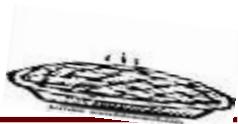
But the beck had other ideas:  
swelling in winter floods,  
swirling over the banks,  
it threatened our foundation.

Men came, tore us away from one another,  
threw us down in a tumbled heap.  
Then they lifted us up, one by one,  
placed us in a new formation.

I was separated from what I knew,  
had to learn this strange disposition:  
the sky seen from a different angle;  
my neighbour's unfamiliar edges.

It was hard labour for those patient men,  
But we knew we were in safe hands,  
Know that in this new location,  
we will stand firm, will endure.

J Eagland 2015



Line a 20 x 34 cm baking tray with baking parchment

1. Whisk the eggs and sugar together until combined and set aside.
2. Melt the butter in a small pan, remove from the heat and then add the chocolate stirring until melted (leave a few small chunks un-melted for extra chocolate yumminess)
3. Re-whisk the eggs and sugar, add the chocolate mix and stir until smooth.
4. Sift in the flour and cocoa and fold in with a spatula.
5. Fold in the fruit.
6. Pour into a lined baking tray and bake for 30 minutes. Leave in the tray to cool. Cut into as few pieces as your dare.

If you have a recipe to share please drop it in to the Villager in the usual way. Happy Cooking.



## The potting shed

Our regular column from Tina Wragg reporting on the Garden Trail weekend

### *Trained fruit trees*

Happy Indian Summer, early morning mists and gentle sunshine to lift the spirits after the grey days of the summer. I have taken the opportunity while the weather has been so kind to explore some of our local larger gardens and orchards. I have been struck by how many of the late flying butterflies, wasps and bees have guzzled their way through fallen apples and pears, then rested on large bracted sedum, the ice plant, late summer heleniums and sunflowers and snoozed peacefully in the autumn sun. Even the smallest of gardens could benefit from a fruit tree, and those that are pruned into restrictive shapes like espaliers and cordons are quite straightforward to achieve.

In order to establish a well shaped tree pruning in the early years is important. It is possible to obtain part trained trees that are two or three years old that make it easier to develop the frame work but it is less expensive to buy a maiden tree, also known as a one year whip. Most trees are grafted onto root stock and this needs to be taken into consideration when buying a tree for a small space. Good fruit specialists and nursery men will advise.

Cordons: this is an excellent way to grow apples and pears in a very limited space. It is also the best way to grow a range of varieties in a small area. Three cordons can be fitted into the same space as one espalier.

Plant a maiden or part trained cordon at about 45 degrees and tie the main stem to a support cane attached to horizontal wires. This should be done in late winter. Prune the central stem to about 60 cm above soil level, just above a healthy bud. The buds below this pruning cut will grow away in the spring. Summer year 1: shorten any side growth that has appeared to above two leaves. It is on these short stems that future fruit spurs will appear.

Winter 2: prune the new leader by 50% to above a healthy bud. The buds below will grow away in the spring. Tie in the uppermost shot to become the new leader. Summer year 2: shorten any side growth to 2 leaves from the main stem.

In subsequent years continue with the winter pruning until the main stem reaches its desired height. Summer prune in August to maintain the form.

More information and advice on creating restricted tree shapes can be found on the RHS website, search "Training trees" and "Summer pruning fruit" for annual pruning of apples and pears. Visit a local Apple Day, organised by the National Trust and book onto a fruit tree grafting or pruning work shop.

I am also taking advantage of the dry weather to cut back as much of the hardy perennials as I can before they turn into a sodden mess. I am mindful of leaving large seed heads, and the tall grasses around the pools to act as over-wintering places for insects and small mammals and invertebrates. If you are building bonfires for November 5th or just to get rid of garden rubbish, please check them for hibernating hedgehogs.

If anyone is interested in joining a group of keen amateurs in a village Gardening Club, please contact Tina Wragg, tel: 01768353642. Happy gardening, whatever the weather!

## St John's Church

News from Gabriel Reid, Churchwarden



We celebrated Harvest Festival on the evening of 11th October with Evensong, followed by refreshments in the new Institute for the first time. We collected generous donations for the foodbank which have been delivered to The Sands. We were able to appreciate the benefit of the new light over the gate, also for the first time, and we are most grateful for the donation which enabled this to be installed.

In the series of Fellside Concerts there was a concert on 13th September given by our Rector Sarah Lunn, soprano, Leigh Harding, organ and Gabriel Reid, oboe. Refreshments were served in church afterwards.

It is hoped that work on installing the Walker organ will start sometime in November.

There are several vases in the vestry belonging to some of those who have decorated the church with flowers for special services. Perhaps the owners could retrieve them sometime.

## With thanks to

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This edition of the Villager was sponsored by Ali and Marian Munro. It costs us about £50 per edition to print The Villager. The piggy-bank is now quite healthy due to some very generous donations but any other contributions will be gratefully received.

The Villager would not happen without your help and support and all donations, items and anecdotes

are really welcome - especially if they have a photo attached. A big thank you to this month's contributors not acknowledged elsewhere: Gabriel Reid, Barbara Govan, Brain Fenlake, Frances Sibson, Tina Wragg & Jules Price. Please keep the ideas flowing and pass through your pictures, news and comments for publication.

From now on the Villager will be edited by Richard King of Hilton. All best

wishes to him for the future.

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Email:

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Website

[www.murton.org.uk](http://www.murton.org.uk)

#murtonvillager

## Dates for your diary



### Ceilidh at the Institute.

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 7.30 pm.**

Dancing to Enoch's Hammer and caller. Bring and share finger buffet and bring your own drinks.

Please come and join in or sit and watch - all profits will be for the Institute Funds.

Organisers:- Carolyn & John Sykes, Town Head Cottage, Hilton  
e-mail: [carolyn.sykes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:carolyn.sykes@hotmail.co.uk)



### Murton Institute Monthly Lunches

**Second Tuesday in the month (starting November 10)**

Served from 12.00 – 1.00

Soup & Sweet £3.00

For information or to arrange transport

Jackie Watkinson 017683 52050, [jlwatkinson@hotmail.com](mailto:jlwatkinson@hotmail.com)

Tuesday Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup>	12 – 1 pm	First <b>Soup &amp; Sweet Lunch</b> . See above
Wednesday Nov 4 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Fellsiders
		Vivian Gates: ' <b>Your Family Tree</b> ' on tracing your ancestry. All welcome.
Thursday Nov 5 <sup>th</sup>		Murton Bonfire. See the notice board in Murton Bus Shelter.
Saturday Nov 14 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	<b>CEILIDH!</b> Dancing to <b><i>Enoch's Hammer</i></b> , coming by special arrangement from Halifax way. Bring & Share supper. See above.
Saturday Nov 28 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	<b>QUIZ</b> with a Bring & Share Supper.
Saturday Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>		Christmas <b>COFFEE&amp; CRAIC</b> 10 – noon