
THE VILLAGER

EDITORIAL:

Firstly, apologies for the late issue of this edition. I have been suffering from Old Man v Computer & the winner is obvious! As I write we are enjoying wonderful weather, & it appears that we are slowly coming to terms with Coronavirus. The few who responded to my questions about the future of The Villager were pretty much evenly divided between keeping paper deliveries & moving on line. However, the few had strong feelings both ways, & a number of you have generously offered to fund printing costs for an edition, so for now we stay as we are. Thank you all for your contributions.

As we went to press I was phoned by Pat Laverty. Pat was a porter in Covent Garden market before he & Lydia retired to Murton. Pat served many years on the Parish Council & decided to resign only this year. Unfortunately Lydia passed away recently and only two weeks ago Pat's son Christopher died in a canoeing accident in North Yorkshire. Pat wanted me to publish his thanks for all your help & good wishes & I would like to offer our condolences to Pat at this very difficult time.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS:

Last night (17th May) the Parish Council met at the Institute for the first time since March 2020, a face-to-face meeting at last albeit socially distanced and wearing masks. Fortunately we all have good hearing and the acoustics in the hall helped with communication. Councillors will tell you it was a bit cold as the doors had to be open to allow a through draft.

It was our AGM as well as the first council meeting of the year when we elect our chair for the next year and as I decided not to stand, the new Chair of the Council is John McDarren from Hilton. For those of you who don't know him, John has been a businessman in his past life and is able to bring those skills to the job, chairing his first meeting with panache, enthusiasm and confidence. I am sure everyone attending was pleased that he concluded the business well within the allotted 2 hours which I rarely managed to do! He is also the secretary of Hilton Commoners & currently President of Appleby Rotary. I am looking forward to serving under his leadership this year as a councillor.

This last year has not been easy or pleasant for any of us but the work of the council has continued throughout with councillors working hard on your behalf but using zoom for our meetings. This has not always been easy with our erratic broadband, indeed one councillor showed her dedication on a cold night by using her mobile phone to join

our meeting while sitting in Murton bus shelter. However we have continued to raise the issues on your behalf. Requests for more grit bins and the suggestion of a snow fence were passed to the Highways Dept along with the lists of pot holes, surface water and blocked gullies. This work continues to be raised and we have been assured that the necessary repairs 'are on the list'. Please continue to report the problem areas on the Highways repairs website, giving any reference numbers to our clerk June Watson (clerk@murton.org.uk).

Village environment & Village Greens: At this time of year work begins to maintain our village greens. We are grateful to those residents of Murton who keep the Middle Green tidy for the children to use, and this year for the enormous effort by 2 residents who have tidied the Murton Top Green to help the Council plans to create a wildlife & wildflower meadow. For several years yellow rattle has been planted with limited success but now the green has been top-cut, it needs to be rolled to flatten the large grass clumps to simplify the grass cutting before we decide what to do next. We shall be arranging the annual village walkabout in the summer and we hope you will be able to join councillors to discuss the best use of this area. In the meantime, our thanks to Jim and Alan for their hard work.

We all want to look after our village greens so it is disheartening to find cars parked on our greens, and delivery vans and lorries damaging the verges because of lack of care or speed. Please make sure that cars are parked on the carriageway and do not encroach on our greens.

Cemetery Project – we need your help...

Our cemetery has been well-used in the last 12 months as we have lost too many friends and relatives. Since the beginning of the pandemic, our clerk June has received several enquiries from families with connections to the parish who would like to place a memorial for loved ones who have had their ashes scattered or been laid to rest elsewhere. There are several memorial plaques on the walls of the cemetery already but councillors have decided that this is an appropriate time to build something in the cemetery specifically for this purpose – a quiet corner where loved ones can be remembered.

Therefore we would like your help in designing and building this – we are thinking of a semi-circular structure with a wall suitable for small memorial plaques, with a seat of some kind and built out of local stone. It would be sited in the bottom corner beyond the war memorial, and next to the road so it's visible to anyone walking or driving past. If you would like to be involved or have any ideas or thoughts about the project, I would be really pleased to hear from you (Barbara.Govan@murton.org.uk) We have so many people with building and stone-walling skills, and I already have volunteers willing and ready to take part – we just need the expertise and supervision!

Finally, as this will be my last Civic News contribution to the Villager, I would like to thank all the villagers of the parish for making the last 6 years as chair of the PC such a

pleasure. Please continue to talk to me about any issues when we meet, and I look forward to seeing you all again at the Institute for Coffee & Craic, and the Community lunches when they resume – fingers crossed it won't be too long. In the meantime, stay safe and stay well, take no chances. Hopefully we're coming out of the pandemic and looking to recovery and a new beginning.

Cllr Barbara Govan

LOCAL ARTIST HELPS LONG MARTON SCHOOL:

With home schooling finally over, Val Stamper, an artist living and working in Hilton, happily packed her son off to school and thought she was heading back into her studio.... well, sort of.....

A chat at the school gate with the Head Teacher of Long Marton Community School, led Val to volunteer to donate some time to do an art project for the school, painting one of her Eden Valley landscapes onto the windows of a small former storeroom that the school were transforming into a Wellbeing Room (a quiet place for children to go when they are feeling sad or troubled or just need some quiet time). "Of course, not a problem", Val enthusiastically said. Then the Head Teacher showed Val the space. The paintings would be across the 3 large windows which formed the internal walls.....The biggest one of which is 130 cm (51 inches) square!.....

Well, she liked a challenge!

It's been many years since Val painted on glass and painted on such a large scale. The windows are so large she struggled to find space at home to lay the outline drawings out on the floor!



After some glass painting practice on old windows at home, Val soon realised that small pots of glass paint were just not up to the job – she had to think BIG! So, glass paint and small artist brushes were swapped for large tubes of acrylic and decorator brushes.

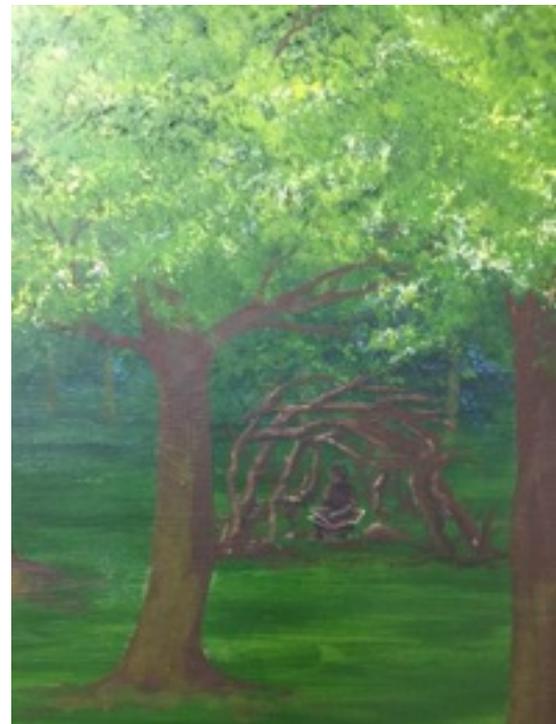
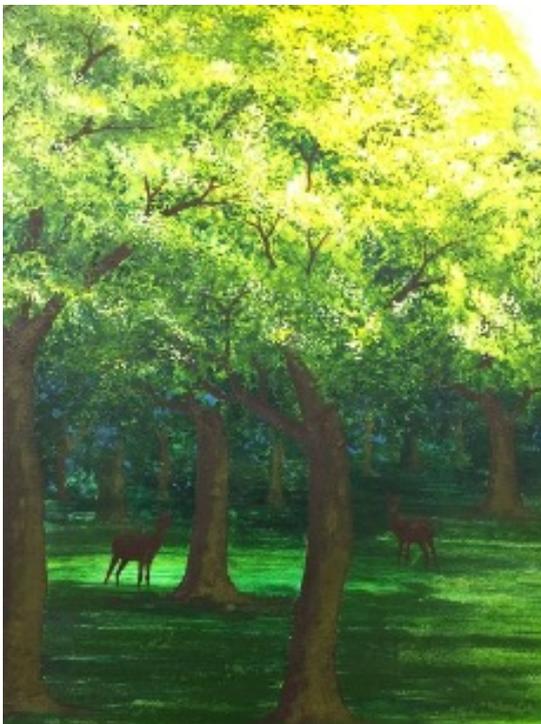


After quite a few glass painting experiments, Val went into school to make a start. The outlines were stuck on the outside of the glass and the first layers of paint went on. Under the watchful eyes of the children, she built up the layers to create depth and the image started to form.



The kids finished for the Easter holidays, but Val headed back into school. She wanted to get the painting completed before the children returned, to give them a lift when they came back from their holiday.

After 27 hours of work, the epic was finished! Hidden within the painting for the children to find are deer, birds and a den.



The children and teachers love the paintings. The children have called the space 'The Den' and they spend a lot of time in the room, looking at Val's paintings and searching for all the hidden animals.

And so, once again, Val thought she was free to head back into her studio, until the Head Teacher gently slipped in another request..... "Val, can you do a mural of a rainbow tree on the outside walls? And could the children work with you this time?" What could possibly go wrong!

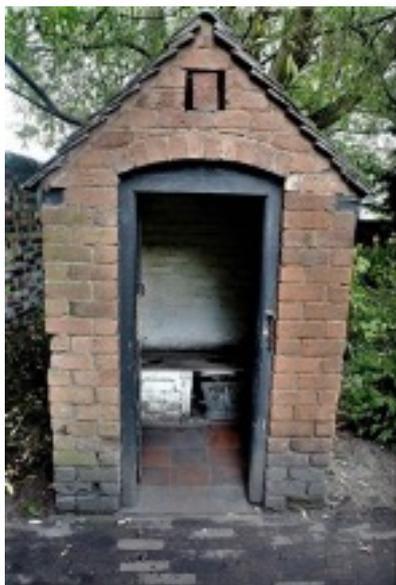
The Hilton Sewerage System. Anon (to protect the guilty!).

Recent questions about Hilton's sewerage system have prompted an investigation into its early history (despite local warnings not to ask where Hiltons sewage goes!).

Up until the early 20th century rural domestic properties would have had outdoor privies or pail toilets and their contents, augmented by ash and dry waste, would be carried away to be used as fertiliser on the land.

At the start of the 19th Century, the London Lead Mining Company took on the lead mining leases in Scordale and they diverted the stream which ran down the centre of Hilton village (probably to supply the smelter). To replace the stream a village drain was created which can be seen on the 1863 Ordnance Survey map running from the Hilton triangle along the south side of the main street, under the road near the junction and into the river near the bridge. At that time there was probably another drain on the north side of the road leading down Mill Lane. The drains catered for rainwater and some domestic waste water (but not sewage). They are not shown on later maps so were probably subsequently covered over.

Pail Toilet



The UK Authorities gradually realised that sewage was a public health issue and disposal systems started to appear alongside indoor flushing toilets. In rural areas the policy was "dispersal by dilution", sometimes via settling or septic tanks and subsequent dispersal on to the land but more often piped directly into the nearest watercourse. The Westmorland County Medical Officer noted in 1914 that "As, with the case of some of the villages, no drawings exist of the sewerage systems, the conditions of some are not fully known, "but from a superficial inspection", they appear to be working satisfactorily".

According to the County Medical Officer in 1914 Murton had a sewerage system; Hilton had none but urgently needed a system. The first Hilton sewer must have been built soon after as in 1922 Mr G. Lancaster of Hilton Hall wrote to East Westmorland Rural District Council (RDC)

complaining that the sewer did not reach the houses in the lower part of Hilton. The County Medical Officer noted in his 1924 Annual Report that the upper part of Hilton had a sewer which discharged into the beck but it was very unsatisfactory. That same year the RDC surveyor proposed an extended sewerage scheme for Hilton but Murton-cum-Hilton Parish Council (who may have had to contribute) considered the £200 cost excessive and opposed it. Later that year the RDC surveyor proposed a revised scheme which would cost only £100. The surveyor also examined the existing Hilton sewer and drains in early 1929 and reported to the RDC that traffic had damaged the pipework and suggested that some sections of the existing sewer and road drains be replaced and incorporated into the proposed new sewerage system. The RDC agreed and the new

Hilton sewerage scheme, again covering the upper part of the village only, was approved and finally completed by the RDC contractors in late 1929. The drain for the lower part of the village was presumably left untouched and it is unclear whether this has ever carried raw sewage. Hilton was one of the first of the local villages in this period to be provided with a sewer but unlike later local village systems it had no settling tank and discharged straight into the beck. Compared with other local streams Hilton Beck is wide and never dries up so dispersal without treatment may have been considered adequate and cost effective at Hilton. The RDC workforce eventually moved on to build a new sewerage system in Murton in 1932 at a cost of £120 which included the highway drains and a settling tank (the costs at Murton were split equally between RDC and County Council). A new sewerage system at Brackenber was installed by the RDC in 1936.

The Hilton (upper section), Brackenber and Murton sewerage systems became Public Sewers on completion as they conveyed sewage, served more than one property and were in existence before 1st January 1937. These sewers would subsequently become known as "Section 24 Sewers" under the 1936 Public Health Act.

However, the "new" 1929 Hilton system was clearly still unsatisfactory and in 1938 the Murton-cum-Hilton Women's Institute wrote to the RDC to complain about the Hilton water supply and sewerage systems. The RDC sanitary officer responded with his comments and a description of the Hilton system (useful as there are probably no drawings of it). The RDC may not have been entirely to blame for the pollution of Hilton Beck as in April 1937 the Parish Council put up notices in the village reminding residents that they should not dispose of offal, dead poultry, cats or dogs in Hilton Beck. The 1936 Public Health Act discouraged the discharge of untreated sewage into watercourses and in 1938 recognising the shortfalls in the recently built Hilton arrangements the RDC proposed yet another new system covering the whole village and with suitable treatment works at the lower end. The Parish Council supported the new scheme but suggested that costs could be reduced by not connecting the new system to the vicarage. This was all agreed in principle by the RDC but had not been started and was shelved in late 1939 at the start of the war.

The Hilton scheme was re-examined by the RDC in 1946 but the projected costs had increased to £2160; a sum considered excessive and in the absence of any major complaints about pollution in Hilton Beck it was again shelved. The RDC also published a list of treatment works in the area which referenced the settling tanks at Murton and Brackenber but made no mention of any works at Hilton (confirming that Hilton still had no settling tank). In 1972 a Hilton resident applied to the local authority to connect their new indoor facilities to the Hilton sewer but despite connection to a Public Sewer being a legal right access was denied. The Hilton sewer was still on the RDC list of village sewerage systems requiring improvement in 1972 when responsibility was handed over to North West Water Authority and ultimately to United Utilities. The Hilton sewerage system then went through a quiet period working satisfactorily with few complaints and little recognition or attention until 2003 when United Utilities proposed improvements to the Murton sewerage system in response to instructions from the Environment Agency. The Parish Council expressed concern that the Hilton sewer was emptying directly into Hilton Beck and they requested a similar system for Hilton. United Utilities stated that numerous schemes were under development but as the Environment Agency had not advised United Utilities of any need for

improvement, Hilton had not been prioritised at that time. They indicated that it could feature in a future Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Hilton awaits their current deliberations.



The Hilton sewerage and drain systems continue to discharge into Hilton Beck and then into the River Eden as they have done for over 100 years and Carlisle still draws its drinking water supplies from the River Eden at Cumwhinton.

So it can still be said that what Hilton drinks today Carlisle drinks tomorrow!

MY FIRST YEAR AS RECTOR: Clive Hicks

I was asked, *'could I write something about my first year as Rector'* for your magazine. This is a quick attempt to summarise some of what it looks like – I hope to reflect again when we find ourselves in more settled times, but in the meantime I do hope to meet more Murton and Hilton residents and families in the coming weeks and months.

Rachel and I arrived in Long Marton, our new home, on 22 October 2019. Our first grandchild was born in Durham in January 2020. On Good Friday, 2020, our younger son, made it back from New Zealand, having been stranded there for several weeks, and has stayed with us right up to the start of June 2021. Each of us will have had personal transitions to make over the last 18 months; any one of these might in an ordinary year have been a stand out highlight and joy. We love our family.

How moving to meet Adrian Palmer's family at his home in Murton, before proceeding through the village to the church of St John the Evangelist, with many neighbours and friends coming to their gates to show their respects there, and later at the cemetery. How special to connect with some of you at the Soup and Pudding lunch, not long before the first lockdown (11 February 2020). The quality of community interest and mutual support is breathtakingly good; you should be very proud.

When I came for my first service in the village, I was taken aback to see my name on the list of vicars for the parish (it usually is done long after you are gone!). I said that the view through the clear glass to Delfekirk Scar and Mell Fell, was one of my

favourites in the area – no need for stained glass when the grass, sky, trees and sheep fill your line of sight. I'm amused by the three tiered structure in the church, for leading, reading and preaching, each one ever closer to the ceiling.

Although the pattern of services has been intermittent, gatherings inside for funerals, and outside early on Easter Sunday, 2021, have each been memorable, and I look forward to the Patronal Festival Evensong on 20th June. Alan plays the organ well, the church is often adorned with simple floral displays, and above all it is small enough to be a warm space in winter. Dave Sampson and Rosemary Mandale make every effort to keep the church tidy and clean. So, I hope you can see, I am enjoying the opportunity to visit, whenever I can, and love the drive from the Rectory, via Fair Hill, up what I call the 'hidden valley' leading to Hilton and Murton. But I have another twelve churches, sometimes I also add St Anne's Almshouse, since we take weekly services there in normal times. So I don't get to Murton as often as I would want to. And this also means it is much more challenging to be the classic vicar popping in for a chat and cup of tea.

Broadly speaking, I lead multiple services across the Eden Valley every Sunday, and some weekdays, as you might expect. There is a vital focus on St Lawrence, Appleby, as this is a significant central church for our area. Supporting this activity – often thirty to forty services a month – is a team which includes my colleague Peter Boyles, and we are well supported by churchwardens and retired clergy in each parish, , as well as a wonderful part-time administrator, Joyce Keetley. Joyce is the first point of contact for weddings and funerals, and lives in Warcop.

My first year was dominated first by the flooding in Appleby, then, of course by Covid-19; and I have appreciated the resilience of people in the face of a very challenging set of problems, but this also was a year of wonder at the beauty of the Eden Valley in all season (I am a keen amateur photographer), As a vicar I saw the great efforts made by our local Foodbank to reach out to people who ran short of money and the basics, I journeyed, as Chair of Governors, with our church school at Warcop, through all the changes, I have been supporting new initiatives to bring hope to people who are anxious and isolated, like the Renew Wellbeing Café.

Each of our buildings needs care and attention, like any building, and the maintenance and development plans are developing in many of the ancient buildings. This is time consuming, and where it involves ancient, Grade 1 listed buildings, a drawn out process of evaluation before anything can be done. But, as they say, the church is not just the buildings, and I am open to many new ways of connecting and collaborating. So you might find me popping up to lead an open air service in the village, I am attending consultation meetings for the A66 re-routing, as it affects a number of Eden communities, I've been asked to be a chaplain to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities by Bishop James (for the Horse Fair, mainly), and pop into Appleby Primary each week to listen to young readers, and above all, this past year, we are experimenting with different ways of introducing church gatherings online, trying new ways of meeting with young couples ahead of weddings, services linking with older residents in Appleby Grange, and bringing people together from across different parts of the area, including a bit of fun and good humour.

So I hope you can see that I have both a very local interest in Murton and Hilton, and a much wider involvement across the Eden Valley (from Temple Sowerby, to Musgrave, from Asby and Ormside to Dufton), so there really can never be a dull moment. It is great to be here, in so many ways.



*Rev'd Clive Hicks
Rector
Heart of Eden Benefice*

St JOHN'S CHURCH

On Sunday 20th June at 6.30 pm there will be a Patronal Evensong service at St John's Church Murton.

It will be the first service to be held in the church this year and it would be lovely to see a good congregation. Covid restrictions will still need to be observed (i.e. social distancing and wearing masks) and it would be helpful if you could let either Dave Sampson (52133 or 07534652873) or Rosemary Mandale (07715817598) know in advance if you would like to attend.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Dave Sampson

FELLSIDERS:

Update . . . Hello ladies, hope you have had your second injections, and now feel more confident about venturing forth.

We anticipate starting our meetings again in September, Covid regulations permitting . . . suggestions for guest speakers will be warmly welcomed.

Fellsiders meet at Murton Institute on the first Wednesday of the month, apart from August, at 7.30pm. . . although it has been suggested that we reduce the number of meetings . . . we would welcome feedback on the suggestion. Fellsiders is open to any lady who lives in the Parish . . . the fee for the year remains at £10 . . . gentlemen are also

welcome at the meetings that might interest them. Any one can come as a guest for £2, and you can pop in as and when you like. More information from Tina on 01768353642 or Dorothy on 01768352798look forward to seeing you . . .

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Regards, Tina Wragg. Email:tinawragg7@gmail.com, Tel:+441768353642.

HIGHLIGHTS:

STOP PRESS: HIGHLIGHTS GETS THE GO AHEAD SAT JUNE 19th, 7.30pm MURTON INSTITUTE . . . limited tickets of 30, Covid social distancing rules apply

OLD HERBACEOUS . . a one man performance of a retired Head Gardener's career in a large garden belonging to a country mansion . . I found this story funny, moving and immensely enjoyable

ADULTS £10 CHILD £5 . . . online booking only via Highlights website <https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.highlightsnorth.co.uk%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C99c1612cc5b442843ccf08d91c8ac043%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637572204512036548%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&odata=%2Bteifehd1ijDI%2FSJ4%2BqxYfgMirJzbS5bFAMzBDarkw%3D&reserved=0> further information from Tina 01768353642

Remember bring your own glasses and drinks there will be no raffle this time

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Regards, Tina Wragg. Email:tinawragg7@gmail.com, Tel:+441768353642.

GETTING BACK TO THE NEW NORMAL:

When I look around the Village & the wider area around Appleby, Kirkby Stephen & Penrith, I realise how far we have come. We have endured 3 lockdowns. We have had few, if any, fierce arguments, & we have pulled together to help others through the Covid crisis. In the first lockdown Low Howgill Butchers, Stephenson's Greengrocers & The Co-op offered to deliver goods to a central point in each village so that villagers could pass the goods onto the customers. This took an enormous amount of time from shopkeepers who were already working long hours. Thank you to everyone who was involved in this effort. In the Parish we organised collection of prescription medication from Boots in Appleby for onward transmission to patients. Thanks to Richard Govan & his team for this. I know there are many other instances of people helping friends & neighbours through this difficult time. Thanks to you all.

So where are we? The simple answer is we don't know! We are out of lockdown & the sun is shining as I write. Yesterday was the first day for many months without a Covid death. However, we are not out of the wood quite yet. Until almost all adults have had both vaccinations there is danger of local outbreaks of Covid. So, whilst we begin to move around more freely, to possibly visit pubs, restaurants & hotels, maybe theatres and sporting events, we need to be sensible & careful about exposing ourselves & others to unnecessary Covid risk.

I admit that we have had our first post Covid big treat by visiting the Michelin starred Forest Side Hotel in Grasmere. Everything was done in a cautious & safe way, but always with a smile & a sense of humour. I recommend Forest Side to anyone who likes to explore food & wine.

Start to enjoy yourselves, but be cautious & stay safe.

Richard King - Editor



