Newsletter Snapshot

The Nookin approx 1900
Caption competition: supply a caption for this photo. Winning entry appears in the next Newsletter.
Photo: courtesy Brenda Duffield

Christian Aid Week
Juliet McDougall

A big thank you to everyone who gave to Christian Aid Week this year. Husthwaite raised in excess of 800. Our money will be used mainly to help educate young people in Ethiopia so that they understand about HIV/AIDS.

Plants for Sale
Frances Petty

Plants are on sale again this year in aid of St Nicholas Fabric Fund at Sunnybank, Low Street, Husthwaite. If anyone has spare plants they would be happy to donate for sale. I'd be very grateful.

Easingwold Taxis
07763 234080

Committee Outlines Plans for Halls Appearance
Husthwaite Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee

Over the past two years a number of internal improvements have been made to the fabric of the Village Hall, and at this time the Committee would like to outline future plans.

The successful fund-raising events that have taken place over the last two years have enabled us to build funds to a level where we believe we will very shortly be able to apply for equal grant funding from a number of different organisations. The aim of these grants is to improve the visual impact of the front of the Hall.

From the feedback and comments made to us, the visual impact of the front of the Hall, and the overdue need to improve it, has consistently been the No 1 priority for the Committee, and indeed for the majority of Husthwaite residents.

Our aim is to re-surface the amenity area to the front of the Hall with a tarmac surface. To achieve this we will have to undertake a number of other works, notably: re-siting the drainage system; building a retaining wall to the front and northern boundaries; re-building the two sets of steps to the front; and improving and grading the ground levels prior to the new surface being laid.

By altering the ground levels we will be able to improve both the pedestrian and vehicular access to the Hall by reducing the slopes at the two entrances.

It is also our intention to have raised beds built between the steps to the front, enabling us to introduce selective planting of shrubs that will soften the visual impact of the brickwork and ensure that the building is made to look as attractive as possible.

Other plans for the exterior of the building include fitting new fire doors and painting the windows, which is badly overdue.

The key point for the work listed above is to take forward the village's original decision, which was to retain and improve the existing Village Hall on its present site.

Deadline for your material in the next Newsletter: Sunday 17th September
School and Village Hall Can Work Together

Husthwaite Primary School Drama Clubs wonderful production of the musical Honk is reviewed in this issue of the Newsletter. One of the most satisfying aspects of this achievement was that the School brought the children, singing, through the village streets on their way to rehearsals. It was a confirmation of the vibrant nature of our community.

The use by the school of the villages Hall was another significant step forward. As the Hall improves its facilities, lets hope that we can attract the teachers and the children to bring more of their work out into the village.

The Newsletter takes this opportunity to wish Miss Thatcher every success at her new school.

On the subject of drama, Easingwold Players have cast their Christmas production, the blockbuster musical, Annie. As usual, Husthwaite is well represented in the cast, including stars of our recent pantomime, Rebecca Scarce, India Wentworth and Stephen Barker. Tickets will go on sale in the autumn, and will be available from Alternatives in Chapel Street and from the Galtres reception.
Parish Plan Makes Promising Progress
Peter Davison

Following Richard Woods comprehensive report of the Parish Plan Consultation Launch in the May edition of the Newsletter, it is appropriate to say a big thank you to everyone who came along to the Village Hall. The attendance of nearly 100 clearly revealed a very high level of interest and support. A fascinating range of photographs, taken prior to the launch, captured many key features and inspired much interest and discussion, as well as providing an impressive pictorial impact.

Ideas supplied by the children of the Primary school were quite amazing, and these, together with all the other suggestions made, are beginning to shape priorities for our Parish Plan. Such a high level of commitment across the whole community is greatly appreciated both by the Steering Group and the Parish Council.

As everyone is aware, we have now moved on to the next stage - circulation of a questionnaire to every household. Hopefully, by the time this Newsletter is received, everyone (is that too optimistic?) will have completed their responses to questions raised. Although the Consultation Launch has helped to identify emerging priorities, completed questionnaires will provide the statistical database needed to give credibility to the final document. It is, therefore, important to achieve our target response of at least 80%. If any questionnaires are still outstanding, it will be appreciated if these could be completed soon and handed in to the village shop. Don’t forget, all returns go into the Prize Draw, which will take place in late August/early September.

It may be of interest to note that the anonymous responses to the questionnaire will be analysed and fed into the production of a draft document. At this stage we are on course for completion by the end of the year. Such promising progress has been achieved as a result of widespread interest and support. May it continue!

Photo: one of the hundreds of shots of Husthwaites charms submitted to the Parish Plan Launch

Good memories needed
One of the tasks is identification of people in old photographs, so here is one of Alan Hutton with the children at the Friday Fellowship which started in 1976. If anyone can give a date for this photo and/or identify the missing names please let Angela Ovenston (868347) know. This new booklet is now well underway and hopefully will be ready for sale by Christmas. If anyone would like to make further contributions please contact Angela or Stephen Barker (868259). We would particularly welcome memories of those who grew up in the village over that period and also of the W.I. If anyone has a copy of the jubilee booklet (probably 1977) made by the W.I. or audio recordings of villagers made around then for us to borrow this would be really helpful.
GUIDE DOG TRAINER
Katherine Howarth

In 1985 when thinking about a change of career I saw an advertisement for Apprentice Guide Dog Instructors. I seemed to have the right qualifications and was intrigued so sent off an application despite not knowing what an Apprentice Instructor might be!

I was used to seeing Guide Dogs around, especially as there was a training centre in our nearest town, but I knew nothing about the process which changed a cuddly little Andrex puppy into a highly trained dog, trusted to lead a blind person safely along busy streets. To my delight I was asked to attend a 2 day assessment and interview at the Wokingham training centre, 200 miles away!

I was one of 4 interviewees and we soon realised it was to be a very intensive couple of days. We met the Training Manager who outlined the programme. In the morning we would each be allocated a dog which would be with us night and day for the rest of our stay, we would be working with the dogs, writing essays and finally facing a formal interview. What a prospect!

The next morning we were shown the kennels and introduced to our dogs. I was given a big bouncy Labrador called Irene, shown how to put the Guide Dog lead on and set off for a walk with the trainer. This was fascinating as I learned the basics of how the dogs are taught to turn left & right, go forward or stop on command and to stop at all kerbs and steps. After the walk the dogs went back into their runs and we had a lesson in guiding a blind person. We took turns being blindfolded and being the sighted guide. It takes a lot of courage to trust someone else to be your eyes!

Day two saw us learning about house obedience - the dogs have to be perfectly behaved indoors and are taught to stop at doorways and stairs, to lie quietly under the table at mealtimes and generally to be a pleasure to have around.

We then said goodbye to our dogs and went indoors to face an exam paper. We had to write about each aspect of the activities we had undertaken and then devote a page to the questions of why we wanted the job and what we could offer to the GDBA. Everyone hates those tasks!

The last and most nerve-wracking session was the formal interview. A panel of 3 senior Training Managers gave each of us a real grilling. I had a particularly tough time as they had never before considered a married woman for an apprenticeship and there were lots of politically incorrect questions about child care arrangements and how my husband would feel about the requirement for apprentices to live at the training centre for the first 6 months. I felt I had no real chance of getting the job but hoped that I had made a good impression. I set off home to await the verdict.

Ursula Duncan is a member of Husthwaite Parish Council.
Youltons Corner Hides a Gardening Gem

Mike Wells

Youlton is the hamlet where you turn right for the Aldwark Toll Bridge, thats all. Or so I thought, until the Gardening Club visited one warm July evening.

Right on the corner is a delightful garden called Maidens Folly. The Oxford Dictionary defines a folly as a foolish act, want of good sense and a costly structure. Perhaps the third idea is true here (the garden is crammed with perfect nursery-grown perennials), but Maidens Folly is certainly not the result of foolishness.

The White Garden shows how a flat lawn can be transformed into an intimate outdoor room. Enclosed by a square trellis festooned in white roses, the monochromatic theme continues to the centre, where there is a York stone raised bed of white flowers. In the centre is a statue of a woman. In a previous life she lived in Bradford and her blackened stone contrasts with the surrounding flowers.

The twin herbaceous borders provided endless interest for the plantsmen (or more correctly plantswomen) amongst us. We moved slowly down the central path, stopping every few feet to examine a flower, or to wait as someone in front recounted a story of how a similar plant succumbed to slugs in their own garden.

A lovely evening finished with a welcome cuppa and an enormous slice of cake. We swapped gardening stories, watched over by a dove sitting bravely on her eggs. A nervous wagtail flitted from branch to branch, a hapless insect wriggling in its beak. Eventually the bird dived into a creeper, to feed the hungry family.

So next time you negotiate that bend in Youlton, glance to your right. Purple lavender flashes by, then a plain green hedge. But now you know that hedge is hiding a gardening gem: a Maidens Folly.

Treasure Hunt Settled on Penalties

Stephen Barker

This years Treasure Hunt was solved by following photos of the route, which went from the Village Hall to finish with a BBQ on East View Green, via Baxby Mill, the old Husthwaite Gate Station, the disused railway line, High Leas Farm and Paddy Lane.

Fittingly, with the World Cup in progress, the winners were decided by a penalty shoot-out between the Barkers and the Baileys, the Baileys just taking the trophy by a single goal.

Thirty three adults and 23 children did the walk and a profit of 220.02 was raised for Village Hall funds. A consensus of opinion from entrants was that the pictures were not as good as the normal clues. This will be addressed when next years Treasure Hunt is organised.

Recognise the picture? You could do well on next years Treasure Hunt.

Simple Messages from our 31X

Catch Me If You Can - Use Me or Lose Me

Brian Clark

Few people seem to want to catch the bus in Husthwaite. Perhaps its because the buses dont go where people want to go when they need to go there. This is definitely true on Sundays, when there are no buses. Actually you can get to Helmsley on some summer Sunday mornings and sometimes on the odd other summers day by the tourist Moorsbus, but by the time youve worked out which days it runs it will be the end of summer.

The villages motorists are paying for the real bus, the Stephensons 31X, whether they use it or not because the service has to be subsidised from public funds. If you dont have your own transport and have to rely on a bus, then getting to work could be a problem as there isnt a bus out of the village until 10.00 am.

Finding a timetable for the 31X has never been easy, especially as there are no bus stops in the village on which to fix one. However, this is better than in Coxwold, which has a bus stop in the centre of the village but the bus doesnt stop there. In fact, the 31X doesnt pass it, as some visitors discovered the other day.

The 31X will stop anywhere if you ask it to, but its worth knowing that sometimes it gets lost in the mysterious Husthwaite Triangle, and misses out the Nookin. It could be Englands only express bus that stops anywhere you want. But waiting for one is not recommended, as there are only three a day through the village, and you might have just missed one.

The 31X is probably Englands only express bus to use a bumpy, unclassified, single track road. This way it gets from Husthwaite to Easingwold via Claypenny thus avoiding the even bumpier main road.

One of the 31Xs runs only on school days and another only when it is school holidays. These dates change all the time. There is a public transport phone number, but its not ideal if you want to plan or consider the options. Nor is the bus much use if you cannot return the same day.

Even if you have a car, I think its worth trying to catch a 31X for a trip to Helmsley or York if the times fit (even more so if there was an earlier and a later service). You may reach central York five or ten minutes quicker by car but by the time you have parked or parked and rode theres nothing much in it. The same increasingly applies to Helmsley, one of the few towns left where a double yellow line signifies a parking spot.

Also, if you are over 60 and have the pass, its free. I fear that if we dont use the 31X, then ultimately well lose it.
Honk Shows Off Primary Schools Fabulous Talents
Alex Wright

In the backwaters of England I found a multitude of ducklings, geese, froglets and other such interesting creatures. Indeed, I found Husthwaite School Drama Clubs production of Honk! A modern day telling of the story of the Ugly Duckling.

A production could be judged, but it far surpasses a primary school production. Therefore we must look at it from an almost semi-professional angle. As a musical, Honk is an incredibly ambitious project, but that ambition is clearly backed by a huge amount of young talent. From the leading roles, such as Ugly (Matthew Batten) and the Cat (Chris Gambles), to every member of the chorus it was clear that each individual was putting 110% in to their performance and were enjoying every second, and it was also clear that this love had been cultivated by the enthusiastic director, Miss Thatcher. Its no mean feat to elicit such a good performance from such a young cast and all credit to her for doing so.

Technically, their performances may have been hindered by the use of hand-held radio microphones, but despite this these were suitably incorporated and detracted little. The vulnerability and innocence of Ugly was, at times, almost heart-breaking, a high point of his character, and indeed the whole show, being the duet Now Ive Seen You between Ugly and Penny (Georgia Ward), with Pennys voice shining through. The Cats suave and cruel nature was clear but endearing, excellently juxtaposed against the deadpan humour of the Bullfrog (Becky Skinner) and the classic English pomposity of Graylag (Thadeus Shipley) and his Squadron.

Overall I was incredibly impressed with this ambitious production and with all the work that had gone in to it. It was a genuinely impressive and enjoyable piece of musical theatre. All credit to everybody involved, children and adults alike, and good luck to all of the Drama Club in future productions, definitely worth watching out for.

Alex Wright is an Easingwold High School 6th Former and a member of the Easingwold Players drama group.