

Swarland Village Action Group Committee:

Chairman: Neil Mansfield, Secretary / Editor: Bryan Stanley,
Treasurer: Susan Richardson.
Committee Members: Robert & Sue Brotherton, John Richardson,
Suzanne Stanley, Caroline Thomas.

Write it Down Now !!!

Please supply information to the Editor for
inclusion in the February issue by
Thursday 25th January 2018.

The cost of production of this issue of

The Column has been met by

**Newton on the Moor
& Swarland Parish Council**
and
Swarland Club

The Club now operates the newspaper service for the area.
All **daily newspapers** are catered for along with the sale of
bread, eggs and milk.

This service is open **from 7.30 to 11am**
Monday to Sunday inclusive.

Newspapers and magazines may be ordered and reserved.
All vouchers accepted.

Post Office on Mondays and Thursdays 8am till noon.

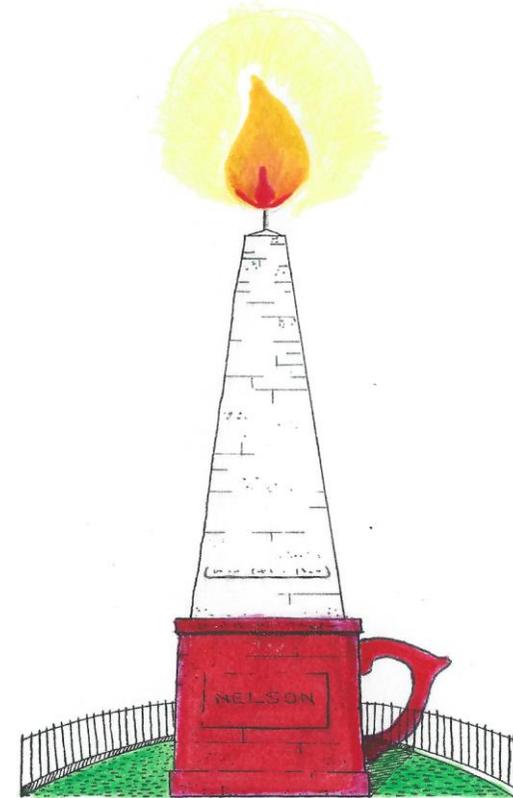
**SWARLAND VILLAGE
WORKING MEN'S CLUB**

Available for private parties by arrangement.

Tel. 01670 787 825

Swarland Club is pleased to sponsor *The Column*.

The Column



December 2017

**Swarland Village Action
Newsletter 92**

**We send everyone Seasonal Greetings and
wish you all the best for the New Year.**

Welcome to your last issue of **The Column** for 2017 and if you're new to the area, welcome to you too. If you wish to put something into the next issue **please supply it for inclusion in the February issue by Thursday 26th January 2018. Send it to: the Editor, Bryan Stanley, on 01670 787 916 or by email at maxitoby1@gmail.com .**

Swarland Village Action

Sale of Golf Balls

Golfers please note that golf balls are available at the excellent price of **20p** each. **Please knock at No.5 The Square, Swarland.** Proceeds go towards SVA related community projects. [See "From the Archive" Ed.]

Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group

It was good to welcome guests as well as almost all our members to our October meeting when Dr Christine Harrison gave a fascinating talk on the history of paper-making. Christine's speciality is making paper from natural products such as leaves and nettles and the examples passed around were amazing. A number of members thoroughly enjoyed trying their hand at making a sheet of paper afterwards.

On 14th November, the talk was by David Jones of the Coquetdale Community Archaeology group. David's talk was entitled "Old Routes through the Cheviots" and focussed on the drovers' routes Salters Road from Alnham and Clennel Street to the Scottish Border. It was an excellent introduction to hollow-ways, hill-forts, abandoned villages and fields, and the history of Cheviot communities from the Iron Age to the 19th Century.

We have recently submitted an application for funding for the oral history project to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This grant, if we are lucky enough to get it, will enable a DVD to be made of oral memories together with photographs of those who lived here and those who came to Swarland from Tyneside in the 1930s with their parents as part of the Settlement. The Swarland Settlement was unique in that it was the only Land Settlement privately funded.

Trained members of the Heritage group will do the recordings and learn to archive them. A professional film maker will then produce the DVD and copies. I will keep you updated with our progress.

There will be no meetings in December or January 2018. In place of our December meeting there will be the Christmas Dinner at Nelson's.

We meet again on **Tuesday 13th February** at 7.30pm in the Village Club when our speaker will be Mr **Derek Greenacres** who will be entertaining us with "**A Thrill in the Dark – an Authentic Victorian Magic Lantern Show**".

Our **March** speaker will be Mrs **Eleanor George** who will be talking about "**Broomhill Colliery – the Growth of a Community (1850 – 1910)**".

Membership from February will be pro rata, i.e. £6.25 and guests are £2.50 / session. It just remains for me to wish all members, guests and villagers a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the SMLHG Committee.

Caroline Thomas

Neighbourhood Watch Update October - November

Swarland / Longframlington. Nothing to report to date.

13/10/17 Please be aware of scam / fake calls, demanding unpaid taxes. The caller claims to be from HMRC, and in one call asked for £3,900 which had to be paid by 3.00pm the same day. If this was not done the person would face a fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for tax evasion. The caller stresses that the person being called must not tell family, friends or bank, and that they will be called later in the day with further instructions on how to pay. Genuine requests from HMRC are not made in this way. Ignore any calls like this. For further advice on scams etc. go to www.actionfraud.police.uk .

10/11/17 Suspected poachers, (3 males) with lurcher dogs seen at approximately 22.45hrs in the Longframlington area. It is possible that they were travelling in a silver Vauxhall Corsa.

14-15/11/17 Reports of a red Subaru Forester being used for poaching in the Alnwick, Wooler and Berwick areas. Any information, please call 101 Ref. 375151117. [N.B. **17/11/17** A silver Subaru Forester has been seized and uplifted by the police from a field in Wooler. The occupants were believed to have been poaching. Damage was also caused to the crops.]

21/11/17 A suspicious vehicle - white Transit van registration YM06*** was seen in the Felton / A697area at approximately 11.00hrs. Some males were in outbuildings supposedly looking for scrap metal. Any information, please call 101 and use ref. no. 313 211 117.

If anyone has information or suspicions regarding any crime, past or in progress, please dial 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (Emergency). I am happy to receive any such information but only after you have informed the police. To contact Rothbury Police, e-mail alnwick.npt.northumbria.pnn.police.uk , phone 101 ext 61353, or call in at the office on Front Street, Rothbury. If the office is unattended please use the yellow phone on the wall and an officer will be able to assist with your enquiry.

*NW Co-ordinator, Harold Hinchliffe, 2 Nile Drive, Swarland.
Tel.01670 783 669 or Mob.07713 097 250*

St Michael's & All Saints Church, Felton

10th December – Christingle Service 4pm

17th December – Nativity Service 11am

22nd December – Carols @ The Square & Nelson's, Swarland
Starting at 6pm In The Square and moving on to Nelson's
for more carols & refreshments

24th December – Holy Communion 8am

Christmas Eve - Carols by Candlelight 7pm

25th December – Christmas Services 8am & 11am

Recycling Corner

Why not recycle your unwanted items through The Column? Recipients of free items are asked to make a small donation towards this newsletter's running costs. Items for sale? – If successful, the seller is asked to make a small donation towards our running costs.

Tassimo Coffee Maker by Bosch. New this year and hardly used. **Cost £100. Accept £40.** Contact 01670 787 359.

I have a **printer** I would like to give away. It's an **Epson Stylus Office BX305FW PLUS**. It's in full working order, does colour, has extra inks, hand book, software CD. Needs a USB lead to connect to a PC. To be collected from 1 The Coppice in Swarland. Please ring 01670 783 613 before coming.

Large-wheeled wheelchair, as new for sale. Recently bought for **£260**, **accept £150**. For further details, please contact 01670 787 200.

Swarland Village Hall Activities

Run as a community charity (Reg. No 1058471) the Hall (SVH) offers seating space for up to 120 people, a stage with lighting and a modern sound system (plus hearing loop), kitchen and toilets. Its PRS Licence means hirers can legitimately use music at their events. **If you wish to book the Hall** for a group or private event use **please contact Bryan Stanley**, details elsewhere. Current activities in the Hall include the following:

Archery Practice at 7pm on Mondays till end of March 2018 (there may be occasional summer sessions). Taster sessions, beginners' course and coaching are available at very reasonable costs. The group can supply all equipment. Contact Steve Woolfrey on 01670 787 883 or Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com.

Karate Classes on Tuesdays 5.30 - 8.30pm. Contact Gary Davidson on 07930 838 872.

Qi Gong (Chinese Energy Exercise) Class on Wednesdays 10 - 11am. £3.50 per session. No sessions after 13th December, restarting on 10th January. New members welcome. For more information please contact Anne Raine on 07934 425 844.

Swarland Craft Group on Wednesdays 1.30 – 3.30pm. New members always welcome. For further details ring Margaret 01670 787 705 or Joyce 01670 787 855.

Swarland Carpet Bowls on Thursday evenings from 7pm. New members are always welcome. If you would like to give it a try, just come along. For more information, contact Jack Dobson on 01670 787 836.

A resident is offering the possibility of Modern Sequence Dancing classes in SVH next spring. **Anyone interested should first get in touch with Bryan Stanley to help decide whether such sessions could be held during the day or in the evening.**

NotM & Swarland Parish Council

The Parish Council met on Wednesday 25th October and 22nd November.

One Vacancy

There is still ONE vacancy on the Parish Council (PC). Applications are sought for co-option, in the form of a CV or letter explaining why you think you should be co-opted to the PC. The PC is keen to have a good gender / geographic balance so is particularly looking for applications from women living in Swarland or the Hazon / Hartlaw area, and also for people who can commit some time to helping run our Vyner Park. If you think you have got what it takes, contact the PC Clerk.

Road Safety at A1 Junctions

We have learnt that Highways England is exploring possible ways to improve the layout and signage of the 3 Swarland junctions on the A1: Guyzance crossroads, Rasherap and Davison's Obelisk. In the meantime, they have issued a statutory 'recommendation' to the County Council not to determine the current Percy Wood planning application before this has been resolved. The notice will last until 12th December and it can be renewed. We are seeking further details. Also, Highways England is awaiting the outcome of the inquest into the fatal collision on the A1 just south of Newton on the Moor, before deciding whether (as the PC has requested) to improve the signage to alert drivers approaching the dual carriageway. The PC has asked the Northumberland Coroner's office to keep us informed about the inquest.

Gas in Swarland

We have contacted Northern Gas Networks (NGN) about the possibility of supplying mains gas to Swarland. NGN has confirmed that it would require user contributions, the cost being dependent on the number of households that are connected: £4,163 per household for 100 properties; £9,563 per household for 40 properties. If there appears to be some interest, we will conduct a more formal survey. At this stage, to help us gauge whether this is worth pursuing further, please inform our Clerk, Jan, before 20th January if you are interested.

Repairs

The PC has arranged for repairs to take place shortly to the 'names' wall in The Square Swarland, and the raised stone planter by the School.

Budget and Precept

We have started to plan our budget for 2018-19 and, as with previous years, we would welcome ideas and proposals from local groups and residents for new projects and / or changed priorities. We aim to finalise our Council Tax precept at our 24 January 2018 meeting.

Bus Service - Changes to Wednesday Service

PCL Travel continues to offer a Monday to Saturday bus service, except Wednesdays, when NEED provides a shopping bus for which users have to register and pay both an initial membership fee of £9 plus a £6 return fare – Phone NEED for details 01665 605 780. Residents should note that because of funding changes by NCC, concessionary passes are not accepted on the

Wednesday shopping bus.

Timetables are on the PC noticeboards and the PC website at: <http://newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk/dial-a-ride/> .

Christmas is Coming . . .

. . . and so are the trees. The PC has ordered one for The Square in Swarland and one for outside the Jubilee Hall in NotM. Brush up your decorating skills (if you wish to help) and let's hope it's not windy this year!

If you have comments or queries, please contact the Parish Clerk – Jan Anderson on 01665 575 145 or janandersonpc@gmail.com .

Felton & District History Society

Two brilliant talks have kicked off the 2017/18 programme of events. In September we had Nick Lewis, National Trust House Custodian at Lindisfarne, who told us all about the history of the Castle and gave us a sneak preview of the recent renovations. More to come in a promised future talk! This was then followed by Eleanor George's talk on Acton House and Hall. Well, to say it was an enthralling saga would be an understatement; let's just say Downton Abbey had got nothing on this. We have had bumper turnouts to both talks and welcomed many new members. Thank you to all of those who have come along.

By the time you read this, we will also have welcomed another local speaker in the form of Neal Skelton who, on **Monday 20th November**, enlightened us (hopefully) on the formation and role of the Police Helicopter Service in Northumberland.

There is no December meeting as such but The Running Fox has been booked for lunch on **Monday 18th December** and all who wish to come along and join a convivial Christmas lunch will be most welcome.

2018 kicks off with yet another local when **Monday 15th January** brings Tim Maxwell to tell us more about Felton in the 1200's. Some of you will recall that he gave a really interesting talk earlier this year which gave a fascinating insight into the lives (and characters) of the people living in Felton in the Middle Ages. The next instalment is eagerly awaited.

Tim is then followed on **Monday February 19th** by Andy Stewart with a talk entitled "Frightening the Horses: The British Air Service in WW1". Those of you who were lucky enough to come along to the summer trip to Boulmer will recall that Andy was a really entertaining and engaging speaker (we happily outstayed our welcome by two hours) so that is definitely one to put on your calendar.

To find out what other interesting items are in store, you will have to come along to a meeting. If you haven't already joined, please consider it. It's £15 for a year and for that you get monthly meetings, summer trips as arranged, free tea and coffee and even a glass of wine at the AGM! Alternatively, you are very welcome to come along as a visitor to any meeting for which there is a small charge of £3. Meetings are all held in Felton Village Hall at 7.30p.m. It is wise to get there early to get a good seat!

Alison Jackson, Secretary 01670 787 527

Code Club Comes To Swarland Junior School

Code Club is a nationwide network of volunteers and educators who run free after-school coding clubs where young people aged 9-13 build and share their ideas, learning along the way.

There are currently more than 10,000 clubs in over 100 countries, and club projects have been translated into 28 languages.

The projects are easy to follow step-by-step guides which help young people learn Scratch, HTML / CSS, and Python by programming games, animations, and websites. The projects gradually introduce coding concepts to allow young people to build their knowledge incrementally, which also means there's no need for the adult running the session to be a computing expert.

Northumberland County Council (NCC) supports active clubs with a range of extra resources, including training, programmable robots, Raspberry Pi kits, other programmable kits and regular support meetings.

Code Club in the UK was founded in 2012, and in 2015 joined forces with the Raspberry Pi Foundation, a registered UK charity. Code Club is a key educational programme for the Foundation, working to help many more young people learn how to build their ideas with code.

Swarland Primary School now has a Code Club running on Tuesday afternoons from 3pm for one hour. We are looking for volunteers to come and help the club leader so that every young person can get the best experience possible. You don't need to be a programmer or a computer expert, just computer literate and have an hour or so to spare each week. The course coincides with the school terms. For safeguarding reasons, all volunteers will have a DBS check carried out by NCC.

If you would like more information or wish to volunteer, please contact the club leader, Roger Brunning on 01670 787 506.

Red Squirrels Update

Since October there have been more Greys reported in the area and also sightings of Red Squirrels. Many of the Reds are in areas from which Greys have been removed.

If you want to check out / use the Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrels website, go to www.lcreds.org.uk . Please continue to report your sightings of Red or Grey Squirrels (alive or dead) anywhere in the area by **going to the website, or phoning 07779 690 406** (ideally with an OS Grid Reference or at least a precise location) so that we can record your sighting(s) as a part of the RSNE region's quarterly figures.

If you'd like to get more involved, please contact Ron Lightfoot on 01670 787 059 (lightfootq@gmail.com) or Rosie Mould on 01665 570 129 (rosiemould@hotmail.com).

Bryan Stanley

Amble Outreach Post Office in The Club

Since new PO terminals were supplied to all PO branches, Brian Hewson from Amble PO has been having a problem with the unit he brings to Swarland on Monday and Thursday mornings. It seems that, after much effort, this was resolved finally when a technician noticed that Swarland had not been included as an Outreach site for the unit! All your Christmas mail and other needs can now be dealt with locally again. *Ed.*

Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor

Church Services in the Hall: third Sunday of each month at 12 noon.

Every Tuesday evening is Carpets Bowls night - new members are always warmly welcomed so come along & give it a try. Contact John on 07717 700 011 for details.

The Musical Evening on **Friday 1st December** promises to provide really great entertainment, with supper provided by the Hall Committee. Alex Swailes will comper the evening, with the Riff Raff Ukelele group, Wooler recorder group and the Hall Fiddlers. There will be a bar and a raffle; doors open at 7.00 for a 7.30 start, and tickets, which include supper, are £5.00 at the door.

Our Christmas Coffee Morning will be held on **Saturday 9th December** from 10.00am. There will be stalls full of goodies to eat, including ice-it-yourself Christmas cakes, mince pies, and a raffle for some gorgeous hampers. Coffee as always, scones & cakes to eat in or buy, and it is rumoured that bacon butties may be available too.

The **January** Coffee Morning will be on **Saturday 13th**, so come in out of the cold and recover from the festive season with our excellent coffee and cakes.

There's to be a very special event on **10th February**, when we shall have a gin tasting evening. Following up the current interest in gin, William Riddell of Hepple Gin will present a talk on gin with tastings. Bread & cheese will be provided, and a non-alcoholic option for drivers/abstainers. The cost will be £10, payable at the door, and there will be an opportunity to buy the gin. It would be helpful to have an idea of numbers so please email clancowen@outlook.com to let Alison know if you would like to come. To book the hall please call Liz on 01665 575 680.

Alison Gallico, Jubilee Hall Secretary.

For Sale on behalf of Vyner Park Charity: Harvard Football table.

Dimensions: 143cm x 78cm x 88cm high. Detachable legs. Currently standing on end in locked room at VP Pavilion. Any reasonable offer accepted to support the Charity. To view, contact Suzanne on smstanleypc@gmail.com or on 01670 787 916.

Broadband problems in Swarland

I would be interested in hearing from anyone who is currently having problems with their broadband - fluctuating speed, poor up-load or down-load etc. BT tends not to investigate individual problems which are not continuous, so in order to improve their (and others) service, households with connections that are variable need to be able to show that their problem is present elsewhere in the community. Contact Bryan on 01670 787 916 or maxitoby1@gmail.com.

Building noise in Swarland

Residents should be aware of the legislation relating to noisy building works in the village, as there is an ongoing problem with some builders / contractors breaching these times, as well as playing their radios and disturbing residents. Builders will be well aware of these regulations and if they are breached Northumberland County Council can take action.

The specific legislation is the Control of Pollution Act 1974 which can be used to control construction site noise. The legislation allows the local authority to set out specific times for contractors to produce noise relating to construction or demolition.

These times are: Monday to Friday – 8am to 6pm
Saturdays – 8am to 1pm only
Sundays / Public Holidays – prohibited

We all have to endure the building work noise that is on-going through the working week, namely diggers, electric saws, reversing alarms, banging, shouting and loud radios, to name but a few. But, we are also surely entitled to some respite on an evening / weekend to enjoy the peace of our homes, gardens and village.

Concerned Swarland Resident

Felton Relief in Need Charity

The trustees of the Felton Relief in Need Charity decided that the time was right to dissolve the Charity. Although it has been able to do some good in recent years, applications have been minimal and it has been a struggle to think of suitable ways to use the money.

As the PCC at St. Michael & All Angels Church already had a system for dealing with cases of hardship, an approach was made to see if they would accept the funds and administer them for the original purposes of the Charity. This they agreed to do.

The Charity was set up to operate in the Parish of St. Michael's (which covers Felton, Thirston, Swarland and other hamlets). It is therefore appropriate for it to be administered by the PCC.

The funds are still there for the benefit of **ANY** in the parish who are deemed to be in need. If you know anyone who needs help, please speak to a churchwarden (Angela Smith or Alan Ferguson) or to the vicar (Rev. James Harvey). Any suggestions would be in strict confidence and names will not be notified to the full PCC.

Roger Watts, Clerk to the Trustees

**Deadline for items for the February issue of
The Column: Thursday 25th January 2018.**

The Bridge Singers Pack a Festive Fruit Punch

The Bridge Singers' of Felton and Thirston, Northumberland will again present Christmassy recitals in Longframlington and Felton in December. Their zesty personalities and sweet vocal tones will pack a fruity and potent punch in recitals entitled "Bananas Are Not The Only Fruit", in which festive and other delicious repertoire will be served with gusto and musical delicacy. It's surprising how many Christmas songs do indeed contain one fruit or another, but we will add some other morsels too! As usual we will deliver a cheery range of styles to suit all tastes including 15th century motets, folk music, early 20th century music hall numbers, some Christmas classics from Benjamin Britten and we are attempting our first foray into a reggae style! The salad of fruit represented will of course include bananas, and also apples, cherries, gooseberries, lemons, oranges, prunes, plums, pears and berries, because as we know, "Bananas Are Not The Only Fruit". These recitals will take place on **Monday December 11th** at **Longframlington Memorial Hall** at 7.30pm and on **Sunday December 17th** at **Felton Village Hall** at 3pm. Tickets for these events are £5 and will be available from November from any member of the choir or to reserve some, email us at bridgesingers@gmail.com. Also, tickets for the Longframlington concert are available in the Longframlington branch of The Running Fox, and for the Felton concert at Gallery Forty5. Our Christmas concerts have been sold out in previous years, so please do not leave it too late! The Running Fox is kindly sponsoring our concerts and will be providing mince pies in Longframlington. This year our chosen charity for audience donations will be St Oswald's Children's Service.

Cheryl Camm

Bottle Tops: RVI Cancer Appeal at Swarland Club

The community is still showing great support for the Cancer Appeal. I'm sure there are a lot more milk bottle and other plastic tops out there which could earn money for this good cause.

At present NCC does not offer any way for us to recycle the sort of plastic bottle tops we get on our milk bottles which have the recycling code 2. Currently these have to go in our green land-fill bins. Why not save on land-fill **AND** help add to the funds of a very worthwhile cause. Clean plastic bottle tops can be left in the container on the bar in Swarland Club. **Periodically these go to the RVI to help raise funds for its Cancer Appeal.**

Alnwick and District Choral Society

CAROL CONCERT

Conductor Peter Brown, Organ Alan Gidney

Sunday 17th December at 3pm
St Paul's Church, Alnwick

Admission £12 to include Mulled Wine and Mince Pies
Students free

Bonfire Night at Vyner Park

We think we had a record turn-out on 3rd November, and even the weather was perfect. A huge thank-you to the Firing Team, the Bonfire Team, the stewards, bar staff, Nelson's catering, all other volunteers, the Vyner Park team and all of you who attended for making this a happy, safe and successful event. Swarland Primary School pupils provided a stout Guy, who, after a quiet couple of weeks resting (and frightening the unaware) in the men's changing room, had an exciting few minutes on top of the bonfire and added to the sparks. The financial success of the event was aided by sponsorship from Percy Wood Country Park, Fraser Scott, Rix Petroleum, Swarland & NotM Show, Swarland W.M. Club (and also all of you who kindly popped your small change into the collection tin there), Gaye Blewitt and Derek Baugh, and by great raffle prizes from David Blackshaw, Kavli, Laidler's, Jan & Greg Anderson, Nelson's, and members of the VPC management team.

Unclaimed prizes: Search your pockets now for raffle tickets **Yellow 91** (Bottle of rosé fizz), **Pink 416** (Bendick's Chocolates), **Pink 846** (Box of John Smith's beers), and **Green 131** (Elmo soft toy). Contact me on 01670 787 916 or at smstanleyvc@gmail.com.

Prizes still unclaimed by Friday 8th December will be raffled on **9th** at the Jubilee Hall's fund-raising Christmas coffee morning.

Suzanne Stanley, VPC Management team

Hedgehogery

I wonder if anyone else has noticed a big increase in the hedgehog population this year. Don't know why as the number of birds, bees, and butterflies seem down this year.

For many years, we've had one or two hedgehogs visiting the garden, but this year there has been up to 4 at a time. At the beginning of the year, we noticed one large and two small (which we assumed were the offspring) and the total number has stayed mostly around 2-3, but as far as we can tell the actual individuals change from time to time. We put out our own food mix for them (sunflower hearts, raisins, peanuts and dried mealworms) and they arrive each night mostly around dusk.

At the moment (late October) we see only the 'normal' sized one, and the tiny one (who is luckily getting bigger by the day). We're keeping an eye on him / her as a couple of weeks ago we weighed it and found it to be 440 grams. We believe that it should ideally be over 500 grams. To add to the concern, the little one has occasionally appeared during the afternoon. Maybe it has to do that to find enough food.

We recently put out a couple of hedgehog houses, but there's no sign of occupants yet.

Sadly not all is good news, and a couple of months ago we found a very sick looking hog in our summerhouse, presumably looking for somewhere safe to hole-up. We took it along to the Hedgehog Rescue, but don't give much for its chances.

...a hedgehog supporter

Hedgehog Trust

We've had our busiest year ever here at Northumbrian Hedgehog Rescue with many of the hedgehogs coming from Swarland throughout the year. Not all have survived unfortunately which can be due to many reasons, not least that they are very secretive animals and don't appear unless in need of help. We frequently remind people that, if they see a hedgehog out during daylight hours, it invariably needs help urgently. So often people tell us they've been watching a hedgehog coming out to feed under their bird table for several days before they realise it shouldn't be there; sadly, they're usually the ones we have the most difficulties with, as hedgehogs go downhill very quickly when not well.

If you do see a hedgehog out in daylight hours please pick it up, wearing rubber or gardening gloves, and put it into a large box or cat carrier with a towel to hide in and a warm (not hot) hot water bottle or plastic bottle filled with warm water. Change the water frequently and don't allow it to go cold as that defeats the purpose. Even on the hottest summer day a hedgehog can suffer from hypothermia due to having such a large expanse of skin for such a small body. Warming it is crucial as it will also help with any stress caused by being picked up. The container should be brought indoors and the hedgehog offered food and water, although it possibly won't eat immediately. Once the hedgehog is safe please contact us on 01665 570 911 and we will make arrangements to take care of him / her for you. We are open daily from 9.00 am until 12.00 noon, but outside those hours you can go to our website www.hedgehogs-northumbria and check under emergency care to see exactly what you can do to help.

At this time of year a hedgehog needs to weigh a minimum of 450g to survive the winter. If they are frequenting your garden during the hours of darkness and look small, it's best to check their weight on kitchen scales and, if they haven't reached the optimum weight, they do need to be cared for. In the meantime we suggest putting out food and water nightly as it could still be a few weeks before they're hibernating and, even then, they still pop out from time-to-time. I put out food all year round and the blackbirds benefit in the morning if anything's left.

I would just like to say thank you to all those in NotM and Swarland who have supported us with donations, both of cash and food. It does cost a great deal of money caring for these amazing animals (approximately £50 during their first 4 weeks here including food and medication); everything here is done on a completely voluntary basis and every single donation goes to the hedgehogs. All the volunteers, without exception, give their time freely and sometimes, when a person is unable to bring a sick hog to us due to lack of transport, will collect a hedgehog, bearing all the costs themselves. We are extremely lucky to have such a dedicated team of people helping us.

We be attending the NotM Coffee Morning on Saturday 9th December, so if you are looking for an unusual Christmas gift for that person who has everything, please come along and enjoy delicious home baking whilst browsing our beautiful gift ideas. Please help us to continue caring for these truly, amazing animals.

Carole Catchpole

Vyner Park news

Goalposts on the horizon: Great news for the community: the VP Charity has been awarded an NCC Community Chest grant for £2025, which is 75% of the cost of buying and installing good quality standard goalposts, a wheeled junior set, and corner flags. The 25% balance can comfortably be paid from the surplus made on Bonfire Night. As soon as the money is with us we'll order the equipment. The junior set means Under-10s coaching can start next year, having had to be deferred this year.

Sit for a bit: A generous Swarland resident has offered to pay for a new seat for the east end of the Park as a new neighbour to the existing one. We aim to have it in place for early spring.

Dog poo disappointment: We're seeing more evidence on the Park of people not picking up after their dogs. Please do, for the benefit of all other Park users, particularly children (remember the dangers of *Toxocara canis*). And when you bag it, bin it - it isn't a tree decoration! We'll soon be installing an additional bin in the car park and will ask **dog-owners not to put dog waste in the bin right next to the children's play area**; in warm weather particularly that isn't a good idea. There are also three red dog waste bins, at the north entrance gate, outside Jubilee Garden opposite The Square, and on the way into the woods just past the golf pavilion. We'll be getting a supply of bags from NCC and will decide where to make them available, and we're also going to test using fluorescent spray.

Money matters: Management team member Stephen Gallico is taking on the role of Treasurer to the Charity, leaving Jan Anderson free to concentrate on the Secretary's role. Our thanks to Jan for dealing with the finances after Helen Handyside stepped down from the team in May 2016.

The next VPC Management Team meeting is on 5th December at 7.30pm in Nelson's.

Suzanne Stanley, VPC Management Team

The Swarland Winefest: an Update

The 20th Winefest, held on 28th October 2017 in Swarland Village Hall, was a great success, raising about **£300** for the Village Hall funds. Nearly 60 people attended, each having the opportunity to taste and then score around a dozen bottles of wine and share in a pot-luck supper. Len Coates' Ding Bats were, as always, very popular - but no one this year achieved a 100% score! As well as seeing many well-known faces, it was also nice to welcome a number of new people to the event.

I would like to thank all those who helped with the organisation, in particular Ken and Barbara Long, Len and Pauline Coates, Master of Ceremonies - Malcolm Nesbitt, Sheila Woolfrey, Jack Dobson, the staff at Nelson's for selling tickets, and, of course, the evening's Marking Team.

Thanks also to all the Village Hall User Groups for donating generous raffle prizes. We look forward to seeing you all at the 21st Winefest!

Steve Woolfrey, Chair, Swarland Village Hall

[The quality of reporting has declined in 10 years Steve! See "From the Archive" overleaf. Ed.]

From the Archive – The Column, December 2007

Not just a load of old balls!

Golf balls are still on sale, at 5 The Square, Swarland in aid of Swarland Village Action. Proceeds from sales so far (about £1,400) have provided £500 towards the Show tents, 4 dog litter bins, 3 seats in the village, and crockery for the Show and Sports Club. [Didn't we do well the. Ed.]

From Our Erstwhile Wine Correspondent - 'Five glasses too many' O'Leary, offering his own critique of some of the wines at this year's Swarland Wine Fest.

A rich, lush, somewhat plump Burgundy with hints of almond, wild strawberries, fence posts newly treated with creosote. A vibrant, seductive number that could easily send you to an early grave.

A good earthy Italian with impeccable manners. It leaves you with a fleshy ripeness on the palate and chemically inconvenienced after two glasses ...

Is this a Chardonnay or are you just pleased to see me?

There is an old Polish saying that goes "you can't leap over a ravine in two steps" - unless you've tried a glass of this ravishing red from Romania.

A venerable Mother Superior of a Riesling. Bold, assertive, looking you straight in the eye. This is no novice but rather a wine with the reliability of old habits and heavily stained wimples. It leaves a cloistered aftertaste of missed opportunities and faded geraniums with the sound of bells beckoning you onwards to vespers.

A mischievous white of unknown origin that reminds one of romantic nights on the waterfront at Tierra del Fuego.

This wine needs ageing for as long as possible then sold for use as an industrial floor cleaner.

The fragrance of this deceptive Riesling reminds one of running through Bavarian meadows on a mid summer's evening trailing endless rolls of Andrex in the setting sun.

Ruby Wax once said "bitterness is a real good preservative". Why not try this revolting little number as an alternative?

A delicate bouquet to this gutsy little number - curmudgeonly seems too good a word.

And finally - this delightful pink Californian has it all. One is seduced by its West Coast aroma of cashew and grapefruit and its amazing concentration of flavours. A wine that would sniff airily at any passing "Blossom Phil" but would be happy at being tasted on the downhill ride on one of San Francisco's trolley buses heading towards Pier 39 and the Bridge ...

[Does anyone remember who wrote this gem? Ed.]

**Deadline for items for the February issue of
The Column: Thursday 25th January 2018.**

Swarland Primary School Lunchtime supervisor required

This is a permanent part time post. Term-time only. 6 hours a week. Band1 Points 5 to 9 (£12,435 to £13,725 p/a pro rata - £1,832-£1,910). The Governors of this popular, happy school require a Part-Time Lunchtime Supervisor as soon as possible. This is an opportunity to work as part of our team supporting pupils during lunchtimes.

We are looking for someone with excellent interpersonal skills who can communicate positively with children and respond to the needs of each individual child, developing their personal, social and emotional development.

The role will include supporting children in the dining hall and leading games in the playground.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post.

For further details and an application pack, please contact **Mrs Hall** in the school office. Further information about the school can be found on our website at www.swarland.northumberland.sch.uk.

Swarland Primary School Office: Tel: 01670 787 346
email: admin@swarland.northumberland.sch.uk.

The Swarland Craft Fair

Thanks to everyone who contributed to and / or supported our Christmas Fair. It was very well attended and we were able to send a generous cheque from our raffles to the Great North Air Ambulance.

The Swarland Craft Group will be closed for the month of December. It will recommence on Wednesday, 3rd January 2018, when new members will be most welcome. Enquiries to Margaret on 01670 787 705 or Joyce on 01670 787 855.

Swarland Craft Group

Mobile Library Dates

The NCC mobile library comes to the parish every other **Wednesday** morning.

It stops in **Swarland** opposite **The Square** from **10.00 - 11.00am** and in **Newton on the Moor** from **11.10 - 11.30am**. It's also in **Guyzance** 11.40am – 12.00 and **Old Felton** from 12.15 – 12.35pm.

The next few dates are as follows: **6th & 20th December, 3rd, 17th & 31st January and 14th & 28th February**. If you value this service - "use it or lose it".



