

THE TATTLER

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John Walter

1910 - 2005

John Walter was born in Lewisham. He was a keen sportsman and enjoyed tennis, rugby and many other outdoor activities. Following the outbreak of WW II, he joined the RAF and took part in Operation Torch at Tunis and was involved in the landings at Salerno and Anzio.

After the war, John enjoyed a variety of careers in retailing and wholesaling before retiring to Norfolk. In 1988 he and his wife decided it was time to move north to be nearer to their son and his family. They came to live in Topcliffe and quickly became active in village life being involved with church, carpet bowls and other community activities.

It was at this time in his life, (nearly 80) that John decided to take up a new career. Seeing no news about Topcliffe in the Darlington & Stockton Times, he rang up to enquire "Why not?" He was told the newspaper needed someone to report news and events and "would you like to do it?" And so, John became the D & S photo-journalist for Topcliffe.

The founding of "The TATtler" was another way John put his interest in words and writing to good use. When he decided to give up editing "The TATtler" a couple of years ago, he explained that he'd suggested to Topcliffe PC that the community might appreciate a parish newsletter. Fine, they said - here's £25 and you can be the editor. Asenby PC came up with another £25 and so The TATtler was born. John remained editor of The TATtler and continued to contribute to the D & S for some 9 years.

John married Molly, in 1939 and they had two children, a son Richard, and a daughter Jane who lives with her family in New Zealand.

During his relatively short time in Topcliffe, John made many contributions to improve life in the area and he will be greatly missed. On behalf of the people of Topcliffe & Asenby we send condolences to Molly & family and thanks to John for all he did for our community.

Inside this issue:

School News	3
Topcliffe Parish Council	4 & 5
Village Hall	5
Church News	6
Club News	8

Annual Topcliffe village tidy-up day
Saturday 17th September — see page 3 for details.

Editorial

Despite what seems to have been an indifferent summer Global Warming continues to be a topic of conversation.

In March 2004, the first ever South Atlantic hurricane, Caterina, appeared off the coast of Brazil. Up to that point meteorologists believed that a cyclone in the South Atlantic was an improbable event.

During the last couple of weeks or so we have seen graphic pictures on television of the floods in Central and Eastern Europe whilst at the same time severe drought affects Spain and Portugal.. In the southern hemisphere too Australia has been suffering one of the worst droughts for many years and the El Nino effect is back in the headlines. In fact things are so bad in Australia that a new crime, "water theft" has sprung up.

In the U.K. at present, renewable energy is high on the agenda with wind power generation an almost daily news item and the government talking about re-establishing the Nuclear Energy programme.

Whether you believe it is man made or just part of the greater scheme of things, global warming is a fact as average temperatures inexorably rise and weather patterns become more extreme.

It would be a brave (or foolish) man who was prepared to sit back and do nothing in the hope that things will sort themselves out without any human intervention. What we do may have no effect, but saving energy and reducing the production of greenhouse gases makes good sense for your pocket at any time.

You may feel that there is little you, as an individual, can do to make a change, but here are just a few areas where you can make a difference. Don't forget, every time you save energy, you save money.

- 30% of UK energy is used in homes so energy efficient light bulbs and appliances can make a difference. Reducing your central heating thermostat by a degree will also save you money and you're not likely to notice the difference.
- TV's, computers, Videos, DVD's etc. on stand-by consume up to 50% of the energy they use when in use. Switch them off when you're finished with them.
- Recycle cans and bottles. The aluminium industry can make 20 recycled drink cans for the same cost as one new can.

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- 20% of UK carbon dioxide emissions come from road transport. Of this, more than half comes from private cars. Try - walking the children to school, cycling or walking to work, car sharing, driving slower. Remember that most modern car engines do not reach optimum working temperature for about 4 miles from cold and apart from wasting fuel for short journeys you are reducing the life of the engine due to excessive wear & tear.

If we all do just a little bit more, then maybe our children and our children's children will thank us for taking Global Warming seriously.

Annual Topcliffe village tidy-up day Saturday 17th September — your help needed

Following on from the success of the village litter pick last Autumn Topcliffe Parish Councillors are organising a village 'Tidy-up' day on Saturday 17th September. They are looking for volunteers to come along and help with a general tidy up of the village.

We are meeting at 2pm at the village cross, outside the Post Office and plan to spend no more than 3 hours tidying up. If you would like to help to improve the appearance of **your** village please come along — you will be more than welcome. With plenty of willing helpers it should not take too long to pick up the litter, tidy the verges and generally make Topcliffe look a neater place.

Please make sure you bring some personal protection such as gloves etc. You don't have to stay for the whole period. Whatever time you can spend will be appreciated. If you can't come along how about just tidying up the piece of street immediately outside your house. It wouldn't take you more than 15 minutes. If every household did that the village would look so much tidier.

The Topcliffe Educational Foundation

The Topcliffe Educational Foundation is a charity which makes small grants for the purchase of books, to students who have recently left school and are in their first degree course at University or the equivalent. To be eligible, the student must live in the parish of Topcliffe, which is broadly the area covered by the parish as now constituted together with Marton le Moor.

The Charity's income is fixed and limited, therefore the value of any single grant will depend not only on the funds available to distribute but also on the number of successful applications.

Applications are sought in September/October and the Trustees meet in December to approve grants. Students who have received grants in previous years will automatically receive an invitation to apply for 2005.

Anyone seeking further information, wishing to apply or questioning their eligibility to apply should ring Geoff Hall on 01845 578324.

Topcliffe School

Although the children have been on holiday for much of the past quarter, the end of term was a busy period for all classes. The weather was very kind for most activities and the children enjoyed visits to Hartlepool Historic Quay, Eden Camp and Fountains Abbey.



Class 4 were joined by children from Y5 & Y6 at Alanbrooke and Baldersby schools, for an interesting day finding out about St. Columba's Church with the help of Christine Haddon-Reece. Some of the children also took part in a family service at St. Columba's and it is hoped that this will become a regular event over the coming months.

The good weather continued through the end of term activities and the school "Summer production and barbecue" on Friday 15th of July was a great success, thanks to lots of hard work and much rehearsing! Sports Day on the following Monday went well and on the Wednesday there was a 'Safety Day' which involved a quiz and a visit from a Police officer to talk about 'Stranger Danger'. There was also a School Leavers service at St. Columba's in the afternoon of the Thursday and when school finished on Friday 22nd, the children, teachers and other staff said goodbye to Mrs Linda Fairburn who retired after 19 years at Topcliffe.

A hectic last few weeks of the school year for all and time for a well earned break before the autumn term starts in September.

Topcliffe Parish Council News by Gary Key, Chairman Topcliffe Parish Council

Before commencing the report on Parish Council activities, I would like to take the opportunity to express the Council's condolences to the family of John Walter who passed away in July. John had lived in the village for a number of years and was a staunch advocate of village life, through his support as editor of the Tattler and as a roving correspondent for the Darlington and Stockton Times. John was an ardent campaigner for reducing the weight limit of trucks through the village and the enforcement of the speed limit. The former has been highly successful the latter, somewhat less so. John will be greatly missed and our thoughts are with Molly and the family.

The Toll Booth

Work to refurbish the Toll Booth to Stage 1 has been completed. It now sports full lighting, furniture, 4 computers and a regulation dartboard. I am especially grateful to Pete Brown for fitting the dartboard.

Many of the original youth group who were so instrumental in getting the project off the ground have moved on and there is considerable opportunity to develop the site. It is a useful place to "chill out" with friends, do homework or play music. It is hoped in the short to mid term to remove the animal stalls and install a pool table and or football game. Keys are available from each of the parish councillors, the new parish clerk - Vikki Moores, and during working hours, from the village shop; my thanks to John Mulley. The project is for the whole community so if groups wish to have social events such as coffee mornings please feel free to avail yourselves of the facilities. It may be rudimentary at present but the more it is used the more investment it will attract.

Benches

Many of you will have noticed the arrival of three new benches into the village. The first at East Lea has been put in by the council, at the behest of local residents for use while waiting for the bus. Tracey and Sid Brown have donated the second bench, located in Church Street, in fond memory of Tom. The third, adjacent to the river bank at the Sheep Wash, has been donated by Tracey Butler from Leeds and her mother, in fond memory of her father who was a keen fisherman along that bank.

Most of the remaining benches within the village need some degree of refurbishment, including one in Swale View. This is of wrought iron and is the twin of the one near the school. Both were presented in commemoration of the silver jubilee of King George V & Queen Mary in 1935 and so are of considerable historic value. Funds are available to undertake refurbishment so if anyone is interested, please apply to a Parish Councillor.

Sheep Wash

Continuing with the Sheep Wash theme, work has been done to clear much of the saplings and undergrowth that have contributed to some of the security issues at the site. My grateful thanks go to Russell Smith for his dogged effort with this Herculean task. Some rustic engineering has been carried out to make the fishing bank more accessible. It is worth noting that you can fish the River Swale at this site as it is common land. All you need is a rod license if you are over 16.

We are in talks with 40 Field Regiment RA at Alanbrooke Barracks who are considering applying some manpower and engineering equipment to assist with clearing the site and reducing the height of the adjacent hedgerow. It is also hoped to proceed with a scheme in conjunction with Thirsk Woodlands Trust, to introduce some native species of trees such as Black Poplar to enhance the natural environment. Tracey Brown has the lead on the future design of the area, which could provide a super picnic area and adventurous amenity for the village.

The Playing Field

Recently, the Parish council has for financial reasons, rescinded the lease to the playing field committee to bring it back under direct parish control. A sub-committee will now exercise executive management of the playing field. It is chaired by a councillor (currently Howard Wilson) and composed of willing

volunteers more of whom are urgently required. This action has saved around £450 in annual insurance premiums however the running and maintenance of the playing field is not cheap and any help and / or donations would always be appreciated.

The Cemetery

Work will shortly commence to erect a shelter over the bench at the end of the path in the cemetery. This will not only provide shelter but will also act as a means water collection, thereby fulfilling a long term village aspiration to provide a water supply for use in the cemetery. Soldiers of 40 Field Regiment RA have kindly offered to build the shelter and my thanks go to Lt. Col. Martyn Gamble, their Commanding Officer for supporting the project and for finding time in their busy schedule.

Firework Display

I am disappointed announce that at this time, and despite the gladiators of the "Topcliffe Pyromaniacs" being available, the much vaunted and popular Guy Fawkes Night firework display is unlikely to go ahead this year due to lack of funds. The event last year cost £1,200. About 300 people attended and yet the collection raised less than £300, despite some people putting in £25 each. No one in the village has volunteered to fund raise for this year.

Fortunately, 40 Field Regiment RA have stepped into the breach and kindly offered the village the opportunity to share their bonfire party, probably to be held on the Thursday before. They have even offered the possibility of providing a shuttle bus. There will be a collection on entry as the money for the display comes out of soldier's funds so please give generously. Watch out for further details and dig deep on the night. It seems that 40th Regt. are doing quite a lot for Topcliffe at present so the least we can do is be generous with the firework collection.

A bit of a bonus

The council has managed to obtain a one off way leave payment from BT for lines under the Long Street car park amounting to over £1,800. The council finances were already in good order and are now brimming with health. If anyone has a serious suggestion or a pet project which might attract support please contact the council.

Key Fund

The key fund is a national project to support groups of disadvantaged young people. I have been registered with Thirsk School as a volunteer youth worker and appointed as a Key Fund Assessor. There is money available for sequential projects in tranches of up to £100, £350, £750 and £1,000. Young people groups can propose projects but have to organise, cost and manage their proposal. For further details please contact me on 01845 578900.

Village Hall News

One concert is planned for Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall on Friday 21st October. Courtesy of Rural Arts North Yorkshire we are privileged to have an appearance from Dominic Holland, one of the country's best new comedians.

Dominic has been on television and radio many times with appearances ranging from "The Clive James Show" (Clive described him as "hugely intelligent and enormously funny") to "I've got news for you" and a 'stand up' act at The Royal Variety Show.

This is truly an opportunity to see a world class entertainer so to avoid disappointment, please book early as seats for this show are expected to sell out quickly. The concert starts at 7.30 pm and tickets are available from Lewis Rudge (Tel: 01845 578644) still at only at £5.00 each thanks to an enormous subsidy from Rural Arts.

St Columba's Church Services

Vicar: the Revd Christine Haddon-Reece. Tel: 01845 577939

September	Sunday	4th	Benefice Family Service with Baptisms	10.30 am
	Wednesday	7th	Holy Communion in the Percy Chapel	9.30 am
	Sunday	11th	Holy Communion with Baptism	10.30 am
	Sunday	18th	Holy Communion	10.30 am
	Sunday	25th	Matins	10.30 am
	Sunday	25th	Choral Evensong	6.30 pm
October	Sunday	2nd	Harvest Thanksgiving with contribution from Topcliffe C.E. Primary School.	10.30 am
	Wednesday	5th	Holy Communion in the Percy Chapel	9.30 am
	Sunday	9th	Holy Communion with Remembrance for the crew of RAF Neptune	10.30 am
	Sunday	16th	Holy Communion	10.30 am
	Sunday	23rd	Matins	10.30 am
	Sunday	23rd	Choral Evensong	6.30 pm
	Sunday	30th	Prayer Book Holy Communion	10.30 am
November	Sunday	6th	Benefice Family Service	10.30 am
	Wednesday	9th	Holy Communion in the Percy Chapel	9.30 am
	Sunday	13th	Joint Holy Communion for Remembrance Day	10.30 am
	Sunday	20th	Holy Communion	10.30 am
	Sunday	27th	Advent Matins	10.30 am
	Sunday	27th	Advent Choral Evensong	6.30 pm

Classics at St. Columba's

The next concert at St. Columba's is on Tuesday 6th September at 7.30 pm, when we welcome the Dales Vacation Chamber Orchestra to play Mozart's 'Dissonance' Quartet, Richard Strauss' Till Eulenspiegel - einmal anders! – a brilliantly entertaining arrangement for Violin, Clarinet, Horn, Cello & Double Bass - and to finish, the wonderful Schubert Octet.

The musicians are all final year or post-graduate students from music colleges in the UK and abroad and we can certainly promise a superb evening. Tickets: £8, concessions £6, children £4, are available from John Phillips, Tel No. 01845 577034.

We have been so encouraged by how much audiences have appreciated the opportunity to hear live music at St Columba's and also how much the musicians have enjoyed playing in the wonderful acoustics of our church. We do hope that you will be able to join us for this concert; with the exciting prospect of hearing music from larger forces than hitherto!

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