



Remembrance Sunday

The Remembrance Service was held at Columba's Church with members of the 9 Regiment Army Air Corps Workshop, Dishforth Airfield, in attendance. The impressive array of medals gained in recent action was a reminder of the unrelenting battle for democracy.

The Rev'd Christine Haddon-Reece and her husband, David, are pictured with members of the 9 Regiment Army Air Corps Workshop after the service.



Time to Move On

Topcliffe residents have been saying their farewells to the Rev'd Christine Haddon-Reece and her husband, David, who are leaving the village after almost twelve years. Their last service was, perhaps appropriately, on Remembrance Sunday.

The Rev'd Christine Haddon-Reece didn't leave school with a religious career in mind but began work at sixteen first in an office and then a children's library. She eventually decided to go to Theological College for a year, then went on to take the entrance exam for Nottingham University, completing her degree in 1981. She started her theological career as a deaconess but in 1994 she was ordained as one of the first batch of women priests - a move which would have been controversial at the time and suggests her softly-spoken and gentle manner belies a focused determination.

The newly-ordained Vicar worked in Sunderland, Hartlepool and the Lastingham group of churches before moving to Topcliffe.

(Continued on page 2)

Halloween Fun in Topcliffe

- by Lauren Atkinson

The Spooky Disco, held in the village hall to raise funds for the new play park, was a great success. Lauren and Charlotte would like to thank everyone who came to show their support, in particular thanks to the volunteers, without whom it would not have been possible.

We had some incredible pumpkins and very scary costumes! We hope everyone enjoyed the evening.

We are progressing with the grant process for the new park and at this initial stage, any letters of support showing a need for a park and children's designs of what they would like would certainly add to the strength of our application.

If you would like to get involved or have any queries please call Lauren on 578989.



Time to Move On (Continued)

There have been many successful projects during her ministry in the Topcliffe Benefice. She was moved by the dedication of Baldersby St James' embroiderers who provided their church with a beautiful communion kneeler whilst the St James' spire underwent massive restoration work. The re-lighting scheme at St Columba's was well under way before the Vicar and her husband arrived but his expertise and enthusiasm provided some fresh energy and motivation. The tower restoration project was also a truly overwhelming task but on a sunny April day in 2005, an unforgettable service of thanksgiving, commemorating its completion, was presided over by the Bishop of Whitby. Meanwhile a committee from the choir undertook a scheme to replace the organ with the wonderful Father Willis instrument which had been rescued from a collapsing church in Sheffield.

Whilst the many projects and auctions, quizzes and concerts have been memorable, Christine insists that working with children in the village schools or preparing them for Confirmation has been supremely rewarding. She has felt privileged to share happy family occasions such as weddings and baptisms, but has also empathised with the bereaved and the sick. Her words of comfort and concern have touched the lives of many in the area and she will be greatly missed.

During her years working in the Lastingham group of churches, the Vicar lived in Rosedale and it was during this time, she met her husband, David. He trained for the Ministry and became a Reader but he is also the lighting advisor for the diocese of York and a fully qualified electrical engineer. He shares many of his wife's hobbies, walking, gardening, reading, the theatre and cinema and visiting historical buildings. He is also keen on ancient languages and heraldry and, in the past, worked for English Heritage.



Christine and David acknowledge they'll miss the good friends they've made in Topcliffe and the surrounding villages but feel that the time is right to move. Thinking ahead, they look forward to their eventual retirement in the Rosedale area - but say that's in the future. For now they have more rewarding work to undertake, more projects to oversee and more kind words and prayers to share with their new congregation.

Asenby Fishing – by G. Marsden

Any Asenby residents (or their relatives) wishing to fish our river *must* be in possession of one of the four official licences. Each of these displays the name and telephone number of the holder. These licences can be obtained by contacting Grahame Marsden at 578156 (48 hours in advance). People wishing to fish *must* be in possession of a valid "rod fishing licence" (obtained from the post office). Both licences must be carried whilst on the river bank. N.B. There is no fishing allowed (by law) for coarse fish between 15th March and 15th June incl.

Surgery Hours **Christmas & New Year**

The surgery will be closed
**Christmas Day, Boxing Day
and New Year's Day.**
It will be open usual hours
on all other days.



FUN, SUN & Pumpkins

by Les Chapman

Allotment holders from Asenby held a pumpkin growing competition to add a bit of fun to the day-to-day toils of working an allotment. Each owner was provided with two pumpkin plants, which had been grown from the same packet of seeds. The plants had to be grown on the allotments but there was no restriction on feeding or watering patterns.

Saturday 20th September had been selected as the competition judging day and against all the odds this so-called summer, the day turned out to be a lovely warm sunny day. The wives carried out the judging and awarded rosettes for the heaviest, the best display, the prettiest and the ugliest pumpkin.



The photograph shows the winners of the competition with the winning pumpkins.

Following the judging, members enjoyed a wonderful lunch, provided by the organiser's wife.

Due to the success of the competition, it was agreed to make it an annual event. The 2009 season's competition will focus on marrows.



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Topcliffe Pharmacy under attack?

- Not yet! - David Pilgrim

In early November, you may have received a leaflet from the local Conservative Party, suggesting, that as a result of a Government review, the pharmacy at Topcliffe Surgery was under threat of closure.

Whilst the information given in the leaflet may have been relevant to dispensing doctors in towns where other pharmacies are in existence within a mile of a practice, it does not apply to Topcliffe, as the nearest pharmacy is about 5 miles away. There is no immediate concern that the Topcliffe pharmacy will close.

In April of this year, the Government published a white paper entitled "Pharmacy in England". This document describes how the Government sees the development of pharmacies to provide improved services. The paper includes several suggestions for removing some of the anomalies in the current system for the regulation of pharmacies, and amongst these is a proposal to obtain a better spread of pharmacies by preventing "clustering". It is this proposal which, if implemented, could result in some pharmacies, including those of dispensing doctors, being forced to close. However, these closures are most likely to take effect in local market towns.

The situation for Topcliffe is very different, as there is no other pharmacy nearby. Currently, Topcliffe Surgery can dispense to all registered patients who live more than one mile from a pharmacy. This means that the majority of patients pick up their medication at the surgery. One of the proposals in the white paper suggests that doctor's pharmacies should be allowed to dispense to all of their patients, irrespective of where they live, provided there is not a pharmacy within say, one mile of the surgery. This would mean that all patients registered at Topcliffe could get their medication at the surgery.

As with all change, there will be winners and losers; there is no guarantee that things will not change in the future, but it would appear, that if the proposals in the white paper are adopted, then Topcliffe is in a winning situation. There is even a proposal in the white paper that dispensing doctors will be allowed to sell "over the counter" medicines which could save you another trip into town.

Topcliffe Surgery is doing well, providing a service which is significantly above the national average and the pharmacy is very much open for business.

**Just a reminder that
dogs are NOT allowed
on the playing fields
in Asenby and Topcliffe!**



Christmas fun at the Swan Inn

by John Heidstrom

Firstly, I'd like to say thank you to all the residents who have given their support to us at the Swan Inn since we opened. Do come along in the month of December for our Christmas karaoke nights. The Swan will be open on Christmas Day from 11.30am until 1.00 lunchtime, and 8.00 until 11.30 in the evening. We shall also be open lunchtime Boxing Day until 6.00pm but closed on Boxing Day evening.

Many thanks from John and Carrie Anne

Hibernation off Village Hall Agenda

– by Linda Nuttall

If you have been using the village hall, we hope you have noticed a few subtle differences. The most obvious has been the new surface to the kitchen floor to replace the cracking and lifting tiles, so please note users: no excuses for leaving a dirty floor! Less obviously the chairs have been "re-shod", hence when you shuffle about, the chairs won't be so squeaky and more importantly they won't scratch the floor. An invisible change has been the under coating of the roof with insulation, which hopefully will cut down on heating costs and prevent the condensation problems we were experiencing in winter. Plus we should feel a little cosier.

All of this work of course has had a significant cost and eaten into our reserves. If the hall keeps being well used, giving us a healthy income, we hope to absorb the costs. You can help the charges remain low by supporting the various clubs and activities which use the hall regularly. As winter draws in, it's very easy to slump in front of the telly, so please remember to get out there and keep going to the same sessions you went to before the hibernation season set in. Even better, start a new group. Rather than curling up at home, turn your central heating down and come and keep warm with some friends!

The committee has welcomed a new member, Peter Mitchell from Asenby. It would be nice to match this addition with a new member from Topcliffe, especially from one of the newer estates, who aren't represented at the moment. Meetings are not very onerous and usually alternate months, plus it is very rewarding to see so many activities available. You will soon be able to pick up a leaflet about the hall around the village, so keep your eyes peeled.

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Crime Report

Since August, there has been a dip in criminal activities in the Topcliffe area, although three burglaries and a car theft have taken place. Reasonably priced security timers which link up to lights are an excellent deterrent, if your house is left empty during the day, and can be bought at most diy stores.

In the Hambleton area there has been an increase in "2-in-1" burglaries whereby a house is broken into during the night, car keys are removed and the occupant's car stolen. Obvious prevention techniques are (a) lock all doors and windows, (b) take handbags, wallets and car keys upstairs when you go to bed (c) if you have an alarm, SET IT!

We're fortunate, however, in that North Yorkshire remains one of the safest counties to live. If you do wish to report any non-urgent matters, ring the control room on 0845 606024 7. Emergencies – 999.

PC Sarah Jobe

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School Lane – by Mark Bowen

As a frequent user of School Lane, I am disgusted at the amount of dog dirt to be found on the grass verges and even on the path itself. I know the lane is popular with dog walkers and the majority of dog owners are cleaning up after their pets. There is only a minority not cleaning up the mess. It is up to us, the users of School Lane, to be vigilant and look out for these dog owners and if need be report them.

Losing Our Head

Not only has our vicar decided to spread her wings, but now the headteacher of Topcliffe School, Mrs Lyn Chatwin, has announced that she will be leaving at Christmas. This is a very sad loss for children and parents.

Mrs Chatwin is taking over as head of two schools in Norfolk, one with 38 children, the other with 166, so she certainly isn't thinking of slowing down towards retirement. She has no intention of losing touch with our village school and says that she hopes to set up an emailing system so that the children of the Fens can learn about Yorkshire folk and vice versa.

Having been brought up in Thornaby, Mrs Chatwin went to college in London, not so much because of her burning ambition to be a teacher, more to sample the bright lights. However, on her return to Thornaby she was offered a job at a catholic school, which was noted for its particularly inspiring headteacher.

By the time ten years had passed, she was a wife and mother and the family moved to Geneva where her husband, Gary, worked for Caterpillar and where their daughter, Holly, was born. They eventually returned to England and Gary started his own business, while Mrs Chatwin taught part-time then later full-time. She accepted an acting headship in Grewelthorpe and later applied for the headship at Topcliffe where she has worked for four years.

Mrs Chatwin's happiest times at the school have been pantomime trips. She loves the whole performance of picnics on the hall floor prior to setting off on the coach, the excited atmosphere and the pride she feels in the exemplary behaviour of the children. She says it's like taking a huge family on a grand day out. She loves the bbq in the summer and the touching innocence of the nativity service in church.

Music, food and location – utter bliss

Imagine being surrounded by the splendour of Topcliffe church, whilst listening to the rich tones of the 1st Royal British Legion Brass Band. What a delight! This memorable evening took place in October as just one of the many fundraising events in aid of the church roof.

The band showed their amazing versatility by playing songs ranging from the delicate "Edelweiss" and the moving "Annie's Song" through to the rousing "When the Saints Go Marching In" and Henry Purcell's stirring "Trumpet Tune and Air".

Band members range from Ruby at 8 years old to her grandma who is almost 80!

Also unforgettable was the incredible spread of delicious food provided during the interval. This was certainly an evening to remember.



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Reading and walking are favourite hobbies but the very best thing of all, are meals with her family. Mrs Chatwin's three sisters live in the south and she's looking forward to spending more time with them. Her son, Alexander, works in London at Barclays and daughter Holly is in her last year studying biochemistry at Edinburgh.

The new headteacher, Wendy Shepherd, is from Bedale. Everyone will make her very welcome so read the next issue of The Tattler to find out all about her!

Topcliffe gets busy

- by Izzy Gould and Laura Durkin

Topcliffe C.E Primary school has a hive of activity as usual, throughout this term.

Class 4 has been busy with their topic on micro-organisms and the industrial revolution on 1842 Leeds. They visited the Thackray medical museum in Leeds on the 15th September. They also paid a visit to Crucial Crew about staying safe on the 26th of September.

Everybody got busy for the harvest festival which the school raised £86.00 for funds to World food day. The whole school also made shoeboxes individually for Romania and also had a 'Children in Need' day, raising about £150.00.

Class 3 visited to Harrogate art gallery as part of their History topic about Egyptians on the 17th November and also had a great Egyptian day at school on the 19th November.

A fire brigade came to visit classes 1 & 2 on the 8th October with their fire engine for the children to look around. Class Two also paid a visit to Thirsk multiskills, they did many activities including: Football, Tennis, a ball game and a jumping game which they all enjoyed very much.

Before Christmas the school is planning some carols at school on the 12th December 6:00pm with some refreshments and Santa. KS1 will be acting the nativity play at school on the 15th December 2:00pm and also at St Columba's Church on the 16th December 6:00pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

At Topcliffe CE School we are never bored!

Christmas Competition

In previous years, since the arrival of the green bin/black bin/blue box mularkey, HDC have been thoughtful enough to take away all our domestic rubbish, in the good old-fashioned way, every week during January/February. This was grand and we loved that feeling of no pressure. Having to think – which bin – did I forget and put a bit of newspaper in there – how the flippin' 'eck will I get this lid down. It was great. Just like old times.

But just you look at that bit of orange paper they stuck on the bins ages ago – no, not the one they pushed through the door recently – this is the one you're not supposed to read. It says *no* collections will be made on those quiet weeks when we're not gardening during winter.

Topcliffe Parish Council news

- by Garry Key

This past year has seen great progress in some areas and less so in others. The installation of the new greenhouse at the school has started and our thanks go to Severfield – Reeve Projects Ltd for agreeing to install it. If anyone wishes to donate seeds, plants, grow bags and tools etc, I am sure that they would be gratefully received by the school.

The replacement of the play park swings has not progressed as quickly as we would have liked. We have had several quotes, ranging from merely expensive to stratospherically expensive, so we have invited re-tenders. We may now have to await the spring for installation, which brings grant funding from Hambleton into doubt for this year, as all projects have to be completed by 10 March. The playing field sub-committee has great ambitions; some drawings have been done and fundraising activity is underway, although in the current financial climate, it is likely to be tough going. The committee is always looking for volunteers, so please contact Lauren on 578989.

The sheepwash is available for fishing, and if anyone is inclined to help, it needs some care and maintenance, especially around the benches and the fishing areas. This is a rare and valuable resource, so please use it much as you can. Rod licenses can be purchased at the Post Office.

Volunteers are to cut the playing field grass next summer.

The parish council has approved the budget for next year and frozen the precept.

As the weather turns more inclement, a reminder that sandbags are available in the Toll Booth. Finally, from all the parish councilors and clerk, enjoy a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Editor's comment: *The latest news is that the council and fundraising committee have agreed to pursue a £25,000 project. If successful, this will provide the playing field with a complete new set of playground equipment designed by the children who will be using it.*

So, on your behalf, we rang HDC and were told the staff would be doing "other essential work."

What could that be? All suggestions to the usual email address or telephone. Nothing too rude obviously. The prize for the best answers will be a year's free subscription to The Tattler. Second prize is two years' free subscription. Results will be in the next issue.

Squaring up for a Community Project

Topcliffe pupils have created two fantastic pieces of artwork with the help of parents, staff, friends and the organisation, Rural Arts. At the front of the school, on the grassy bank, is the larger piece of work, depicting various views of the village from the bridge to the church, tractors and the school. It's something the participants will always take pride in and will no doubt be there for future generations of school children to enjoy.

Outside the nursery is another smaller mosaic showing butterflies, insects and birds. This was the work of the smaller children and their band of grown-up helpers. On the day we visited, a very earnest small boy was happily scrubbing away with mop and bucket, sadly missing the tiles completely but making quite an impression on the surrounding grass and mud.



Mrs Lyn Chatwin, Headteacher, says that the best part of the whole project was the way in which parents and the school community were brought together. People would call in to help for half an hour after school and end up staying half the evening as they became absorbed in their work. Everyone got chatting and a genuine feeling of camaraderie developed.

A shared interest and working on a collective undertaking can bring together an uncommon mix of people. It might be in all our best interests to come up with A Plan to develop a similar project in the village. Ideas very welcome!

www.Topcliffe.net

Keep up to date with Parish information, meeting minutes, a colour version of The TATtler and all the pictures of Topcliffe and the surrounding area.

Neighbourhood Watch

by Dave Bowman

Sadly, there was an incidence of vandalism on Friday. The police were informed and came and took fingerprints, and hopefully the culprits will be caught.

The No Cold Calling Zone is now in operation.

Snooker Club



We are still looking for members, new and old. Membership costs £15 and members must be at least 18 years old.

Football



The football club is struggling this year and is near the bottom of the table, so the only way is up.

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We Were the Weakest Link

Happily, our gang-of-three toddled off to the quiz in the village hall. The smiles on our faces reflected the knowledge that we were going to be contributing towards a fundraiser in aid of the church roof, the fact that peas and pies were going to be served and also the secret that we had a pretty strong team. Oh, we didn't look much at all, then again, that was part of our cunning plan.

Bolstered with fine Yorkshire grub, we set about answering the questions. We couldn't help but smile as we filled in more and more correct answers. As time grew closer to the final count, we congratulated each other as we were presented with "The Cup". Oh what an evening..... then suddenly, there was a shout from the back. There was to be a recount since one unfortunate team hadn't had chance to tot up their scores. Well, you can surely guess the rest. "The Cup" was wrested from our hands, wiped clean of our grubby handprints and handed over to the other team.

We wiped a few tears from our cheeks but were happy a wrong had been righted and the deserving team won in the end. We are nice like that. It was a really enjoyable evening with lots of fun and laughter, despite the fact we didn't win anything in the raffle, either.

Please keep your trees...

Please keep your trees and bushes trimmed. Branches which overhang footpaths cause both inconvenience and a danger to the public when they have to step into the road to get past.



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Alanbrooke Christmas Shopping On December 8th

Free parking and no Christmas stress at Alanbrooke Nursery's Christmas Shopping Event where stalls will be selling handbags, shoes, jewellery, children's clothing and lots more. Entry is free but proceeds of the evening will go towards new nursery equipment.

Normal Services Resumed

- Richard Byas

Things were looking bleak with the departure of Christine and David Haddon-Reece and looking decidedly busy for the church wardens, who were faced with the task of finding a vicar each week to conduct the services in the Topcliffe benefice. Fortunately, however, Richard Byas, a vet at the local Veterinary Office on Long Street, was licensed as a Reader on November 15 and this will enable him to take Matins and Evensong and, very importantly at this time of year, carol services.

Mr Byas is originally from Beverley but worked in a general veterinary practice until 1997. He has been living in Topcliffe for twelve years and started training as a Reader three years ago.

The ceremony at York Minster, which was taken by Archbishop Sentamu, could not have been more timely for the congregation of Topcliffe.

Local Telephone Numbers & Websites

Topcliffe Surgery - 577297
www.topcliffesurgery.co.uk

Friarage Hospital - 01609 779911
www.southtees.nhs.uk

Gas Emergencies - 0800 111 999
www.nationalgrid.com/uk

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www.northyorkshire.police.uk

Hambleton DC - 01609 779977
www.hambleton.gov.uk

Harrogate BC - 01423 568954
www.harrogate.gov.uk

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