

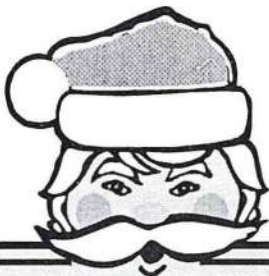
ISSUE NO. 22

DECEMBER 1998

THE KEY

 **A NEWSPAPER FOR NORTH SKELTON & LAYLAND**





Editorial

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers!

Grateful thanks to regular writers Dr Neville-Smith, Eddie Hartley, Gordon Fowler, Stuart McMillan, Colin Berwick, Jeff Templeman and all others who have taken the time to sit down and write an article for me.

I am now very happy to announce we have a new treasurer, Stuart Fawcett. It's wonderful to be able to hand over all monies and bills, knowing that they are in excellent hands. Thank you Stuart.

Finally, I would like to thank you, our readers, for all your support and donations.

Norma

A Christmas Prayer

Happy Christmas Everybody!

Here is a little prayer to help us make Christmas happy for everybody everywhere:

*'When the song of the angels is stilled;
When the star in the sky is gone;
When the men from east go home;
When the shepherds are back with their flocks;
Then the work of Christmas begins!
To find the lost
To feed the hungry
To free the oppressed
To rebuild the nations
To bring peace among the people
To make music in the heart.'*

All joy and peace be yours now and in the New Year!

Rector Tom

THE PARISH WARDEN

Local man, Geoff 'Fudge' Evans, started working for the Parish Council last year.

Geoff was born in Carlin How and attended the primary school in the village, the junior school at Skinningrove and Rosecroft at Loftus. He served his time as a plater at British Steel, Skinningrove, on the FAB plant, before moving to Canada. After some time in Canada he returned to his roots and now lives in Lingdale with his wife and two teenage sons.



'Fudge' Evans

Geoff has been a keen footballer all his life and has run a number of local football teams as well as being involved in promoting junior football in the area. He worked for East Cleveland Community Programme at Loftus for a number of years as a supervisor on the sport and leisure project.

Apart from an interest in rock/blues music and sport, Geoff enjoys gardening and walking his dogs. A keen fisherman, he can often be found fishing off Skinningrove beach and other local fishing spots in his spare time.

In his work as Parish Warden for Skelton and Brotton, Geoff has a number of duties including keeping open public rights of way, tidying the War Memorial and Sparrow Park and assisting with allotments at Brotton Park, Spring Gardens and Cemetery Field. He was pleased to be involved with the North Skelton In Bloom project this year.

If you know of any local footpath in need of clearance, please contact the Parish Council Office (tel. 01287 653848) with details.



50 Golden Years for Ken and Norma



1948 was a special year for a very special couple, Ken & Norma Marsay. They got married that year and so celebrated 50 'Golden Years' together on November 27th, 1998. Congratulations from all of us to you both!

Love from Anne, Allan & family

Cover Picture

Cover PictureSpecial thanks to Harold 'Pip' Harrison for the beautiful painting on our front page. The background scene is from a photograph taken by 'Pip' one day down 'the slack'.

MEMORIES OF MY EARLY YEARS IN NORTH SKELTON

by Lee Ingleby

I would like to share with you a few memories I have of my early years as a child in North Skelton. Many people have spoken about the strength of the community, but to me North Skelton was like one big family.

My mother and father, Vera and Harry, bought in a newspaper round in the early 1950's and then sold newspapers and sweets from the front room of our house in William Street before moving to the shop on Vaughan Street in 1955.

As everyone who remembers will tell you, North Skelton was a busy village when the Mine was in full flow. I am told that I spent many mornings from 5.30am being looked after by retired miners who sat round the War Memorial. My early life centred round my two best friends, Mario Tokarski and Terry Marsay. The three of us were born within months of each other and ended up going right through school together.

The 'Pit Yard', the 'Plantation', 'Wilks's Wood' and the 'Slack' were our play areas even before starting school - how society has changed! We caught or collected frogs, newts and tadpoles, mainly from the reservoir behind the pit. We always took them home to the shed in our back yard. I had a superb collection of bird's eggs believing at the time that if there were more than three eggs in the nest it was OK to take one! We would climb trees, bring the egg down in our mouths, prick the shell with a thorn and blow out the yolk!

Our parents would have had a fit if they had known some of the things we used to get up to. We would crawl through tunnels under the pit yard, spit down the deep mine shaft, jump off moving trucks before they were filled with ironstone and smoke Woodbines in log camps near the shale heap. On many occasions we dammed the small stream above the bankside between the two railway bridges causing the main road to be flooded. I think the stream came from an outlet of the mine and will no longer be there. (It was known locally as the 'duck pond' - Ed)

Life then was a series of mini adventures and we were never bored. Peter Hall, along with the Murphy brothers, Colin and Bernard, were among our first 'paperboys'. It was Peter who first gave me my nickname, 'Tunch', which stuck with me through school, though I'm not revealing why!

I have vivid memories of my first days at North Skelton Junior School. Our teachers, Miss Shippey, Mrs Readman and Miss Pybus terrified us. I remember getting into serious trouble, along with Mario and Terry, for throwing snowballs from the railway bridges onto Miss Pybus' car as she drove past! Alan Sanderson ('Sandy') may be able to tell a story about a certain barn catching fire between North Skelton and Brotton - I have very painful rear end memories from that incident!

I suppose I could mention almost everyone in North Skelton because, whilst writing this article, many memories of the village and its people have come flooding back to me. I'll never forget how devastated my brother, Guy, and I were when we moved to Skelton in the Easter of 1964. To this day we still consider ourselves North Skeltoners.

Lee Ingleby



Bet you didn't expect to see this one Lee! (Ed)



Lee more recently!

You Can't Win 'Em All!

by Colin Berwick



In previous editions of 'The Key', credit has been given to the achievements of North Skelton Football Club, particularly the 1953/54 team which won four trophies, including the North Riding Amateur Cup.

Over the years North Skelton has had some excellent sides containing players who have performed at a higher level, the outstanding example being Derek McLean who signed for Middlesbrough F.C. and played alongside the likes of

Brian Clough and Alan Peacock, both of whom represented England.

It was a regular occurrence in those days for North Skelton to reach the quarter finals of the North Riding Senior Cup where they met such sides as Whitby Town, South Bank and on one memorable occasion, York City, who probably didn't relish coming to play on the sloping, wind-swept, Brotton Road pitch where the 'grandstand' was a flat cart with chairs for the officials! York won that game 3-2 but only after a hard battle which was decided in the last minutes of the match.

Sadly, there came a time when financial problems took over, and only two or three years after the successes of the early 1950's the village football and cricket teams were disbanded. Fortunately, help was close at hand. Negotiations took place with the management at North Skelton Mine and, in the following season, both the cricket and football teams were resurrected under the name of Cleveland Mines Sports Club. The football section had an excellent committee

(male and female) which gave strong support to the team. A black and white strip was provided with a new badge, designed by yours truly, and all was set fair for the future.

The team did not disappoint. Ably led by Bob Slater, a dominant centre half, Cleveland Mines became champions of the Teesside Football League from 1959 to 1961 during which time the Brotton Road ground, christened 'Turf Moor' by the players, became a fortress. The regular team was Bill Fraser (goalkeeper): Harry Carver and Geoff McLean (full backs); Neil Berwick, Bob Slater and Jim Ramage (half backs); Colin Berwick, Bill Leybourne, Derek Arden, John Winspear and Billy Hughes (forwards). This team scored over a hundred goals in the 1960 season, but there were disappointments too.

In the final of the League Challenge Cup, played in front of a huge crowd at Carlin How against Guisborough side Blackett Hutton, Cleveland Mines went down 2-0 after having a goal disallowed in the first few minutes. Still, you can't win 'em all!

Colin Berwick



The badge worn on the new football strip

Help Catch A Thief.....

Two plaques were recently stolen from the wall on either side of the entrance to the Bull's Head. If you have any information please ring either the police or the Bull's Head on 01287 650624. Thank you.



The Lamps

Davy looked a sad and forlorn figure as he sat alone on a seat in Sparrow Park. It was the week before Christmas and for the very first time Davy hadn't a bird for their Christmas dinner table. He knew Tilly would be gutted and so wondered what could he do?

"What's up, Davy lad? Yer've a face on yer like 'alf a mile of bad road."

Davy nearly jumped out of his skin. He hadn't heard Marto creep up on him.

"Aye, an' so would you an' all if yer couldn't afford a fowl for yer Christmas dinner," cried Davy.

Marto was puzzled.

"Yer don't need to buy a bird, Davy. Yer've gorra duck on yer allotment as big as Jigger's 'ead and that's about t' size of a double-decker bus!"

"A' know! A' know, Marto, but I 'avn't it in mi' to kill Donald, mi' duck. It's our little Ed's an' e'd be 'eartbroken if a' wrung its neck!"

Marto shook his head and said, "Well then, wring yer pigeon's neck. A've noticed lately its gittin' fatter an' fatter." Davy looked at Marto as if he was deranged.

"Yer must be bloody mad if yer think a' would eat mi' royal pigeon, Elizabeth Windsor Lamp! Roastin' it in t' gas oven? Nivver in this wo'ld."

Marto shut up and the two of them walked down to the allotments in thoughtful mood.

"Davy, why are yer so 'ard up? A' can't understand it. Jigger even got yer ten quid bonus off Tony Blair an' 'is crew."

Davy knew he was going to have to spill the beans.

"Now listen, Marto, an' a'll tell yer, but a' want yer to promise that yer'll say nowt."

"OK, OK!", replied Marto, his curiosity killing him.

"Ah've got our Tilly a 'muriel' fer Christmas Day," Davy said proudly.

"Wot the 'ell's a 'muriel', Davy?"

"It's a picture painted on yer parlour wall an' our Tilly's all'as wanted one, ever since she saw 'Ilda Ogden's on Coronation Street. A' promised mi' sel' she'd 'ave one this year fer 'er Christmas box."

Marto was speechless but all ears as Davy went on, "Adam's lass, Jayne, is a dab 'and with a paint brush an' we've shook 'ands on a price. That's why ah'm so skint."

"Davy, yer've gorra problem 'ere," Marto said, and Davy had. He knew in his own mind that Donald would have to die. It was the only way out of his dilemma. However, who was going to be brave enough to kill the bird? Davy knew he couldn't bring himself to do it. He looked over to Marto.

"Go on then, Marto, ger into t' 'en-run an' ger it over with."

Marto was reluctant. "No, a' can't do it, Davy, a' can't kill t' bairn's pet duck. But a' know someone who will - Stefan!"

They were in for a surprise when Stefan bawled them both out. "Ah'd rather wring both yer necks than Donald Duck's! Anyway, it's t' bairn's duck, not yours, so clear off!"

Davy and Marto made their way to North Skelton Club and, over a pint, they decided they would have to let Tabby do it.

He'd do anything for a couple of bob or a second hand, even a third hand shirt!

After making enquiries as to his whereabouts, Duffy, in all innocence, didn't realise he was waving two red rags to two bulls when he told them, "Tabby's at Curly Tops 'avin' blonde streaks put in 'is 'air. 'E's with Fraggie an' Rob Walker - they're 'avin' perms!"

Davy and Marto nearly choked on their beer - this they had to see! It was a better story than last Christmas when Julie and Linda flicked hot ash off their fags onto Greeny and Twess's heads setting their hair alight! They've never had a hair on their heads since and that's why you never see them without a cap on.

Davy flung Curly Top's door open and there, in full regalia, sat the 'three stooges'; Tabby with blonde streaks, Fraggie and Rob each with a full head of perm curlers. Never in the history of North Skelton would this happen again!



Tessa (er.. Tabby) with his blonde streaks

Davy was in his element as he shouted, "'Ey Tabby! Oops, sorry, a' mean Tessa! Yer look as though yer 'ead's been dipped in curry sauce an' you other two look like yer both 'ave a 'ead full o' wurrums!"

Davy and Marto were in stitches while Tabby, Fraggie and Rob were, by now, purple with rage.

Tabby was straight up on his feet shouting, "Get them two out of 'ere before a' deck t' pair of 'em. It'll be all over North Skelton now."

Davy's shoulders shook with laughter. "Aye, Tessa, yer right, it will."

The pair of them ran off, tears streaming down their faces as they headed for The Bull. Two pints later, Davy had come to a decision. Donald, Ed's duck, was staying - and so was Elizabeth Windsor Lamp. They would just have to make do with a brace of pheasants.

Christmas Eve arrived. The painting had been done and was waiting to be unveiled. The tree was decorated, its lights and tinsel twinkling, making eerie shadows on the walls. Davy, Tilly, Ed and Marto stood, excitedly waiting for Jayne to open the parlour door.

"'Ang on a minute, this calls fer a drink. Tilly, you pour that 'ome med wine out an' ah'll open t' back door - somebody's

bangin'."

Davy opened the door and couldn't believe his eyes. It was 'er next door'. They'd never spoken for months, ever since his 'royal' pigeon had made a mess on her patio - she should have been proud!



Fraggle & Rob in their curlers!

In her poshest voice she said, "I have just heard that you haven't got a fowl for your Christmas dinner and, even though I do not agree with this pigeon carry on, I admire you for not killing the little boy's duck. I have, therefore, if you will haccept it, brought a small parcel for Ed and a pig's head for your Christmas dinner."

Davy didn't know what to think, but for all her airs and graces it was still a kind gesture so he said, "Thanks missus, it's very good on yer!"

Now Davy wasn't going to miss an opportunity like this. "Come in! Come in, missus! We're 'avin' a little celebration."

She, of course, was too noseey to say no. So all five of them assembled outside the parlour door. Davy knocked and shouted, "We're all ready, Jayne!"

Jayne opened the door and they all trooped in.

Davy looked at Tilly and, with chest stuck out and pride shining in his eyes, shouted, "Merry Christmas luv! There's yer 'muriel'!"

Marto was amazed, "Cor, blimey!"

'Er next door' was rooted to the spot.

Tilly shed tears of joy and little Ed shrieked and jumped about. There, for all to see, filling the whole wall and in full charging action, was the biggest African bull elephant you have ever seen!

Tilly was in raptures, "It's lovely, Davy, a' love elephants, they're mi' favourites!"

Davy was as proud as punch. It was the best he'd ever seen. It's trunk was as long as a clothes prop and its ears like a pair of flannelette sheets flapping in the wind.

"By gum, Jayne, yer've done us proud. It's t' best elephant ah've ever seen."

Davy turned round to see the reaction of Marto and 'er next door'. Marto's eyes were nearly popping out of his head. As for 'er, she was speechless, thinking to herself that they were 'crackers' - he'd had a charging elephant painted on his wall that looked as though it was going to trample you to death any minute. "They're mad, absolutely mad", she

thought.

Davy looked at her and could see what was going through her mind. She was jealous and he was glad by! She'd be along Holmbeck Road quicker than Jigger when his Giro dropped onto the passage canvas (and that's quick!).

She turned to go, still in a daze. "Merry Christmas to you all. It's different isn't it?" She was so gobsmacked you could hardly hear her.

Davy took her to the door saying, "Thanks fer what yer brought, an' if 'im next door wants a look at Tilly's 'muriel', 'e's welcome!"

Davy was smiling as he went back in. "Are yer goin' Marto. See yer later on in t' Club."

Davy stood behind Tilly and Ed taking in the huge mural.

Little Ed looked up at his Dad. "De' yer think Father Christmas'll like mi' Mam's elephant when 'e comes down t' chimley tonight, Dad?"

"Father Christmas'll love it, an' a' bet nobody else in t' whole wide world 'as an African bull elephant chargin' along their parlour wall, mi' bairn!"

Nobody knew yet of another surprise Davy had in store for everyone. He was dying to get to the Club that night to tell 'Tessa' and his mates. He was bursting with happiness and was sure Father Christmas had come a day early for him. Two or three weeks earlier, Elizabeth Windsor Lamp, his 'royal' pigeon, had laid an egg. On looking under her that morning, Davy was elated to find that the egg had hatched, and there, covered in soft, fluffy down, was the first new member of his own 'royal family'!

What a Christmas it had turned out to be!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!

n

The Millenium

A committee is being formed for activities in North Skelton, including Green Hill View, to raise funds for the year 2000.



Many things are being planned but we need you, young or old, so please come along and help to make the Millenium a year to remember.

Julie Green

Dot and Joe Dowson, of 22 Gladstone Street, Carlin How, celebrated their Golden Wedding on 18th September.

They asked all their guests to please give donations rather than presents. A total of £360 was collected and shared amongst local charities.

Dot and Joe then kindly donated £20 of this money to 'The Key' magazine.

Merry Xmas and thanks to you both!

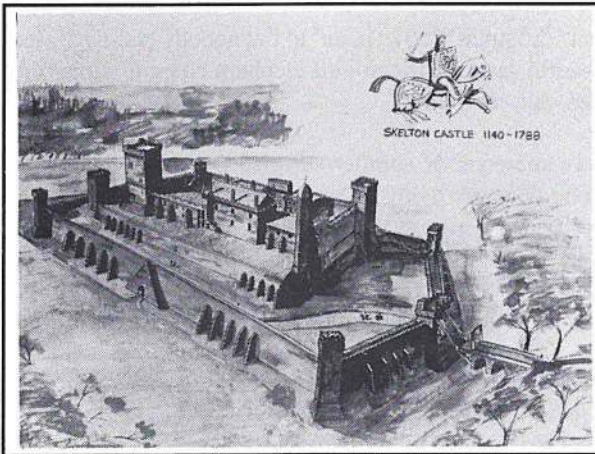
A History of Skelton Castle

by Stuart McMillan

East Cleveland is probably best known in recent history for its ironstone industry, the relics of the local mines being a constant reminder of those days. However, there is a great deal of fascinating history associated with the area going back over hundreds of years and this is the first of a series of articles in which Stuart McMillan, after much research, will be bringing to us the history of our local castles.

Skelton is a place of very great antiquity and history. Many of the royal families of Europe can trace their origins to this small village. From the De Bruce line there have been produced; two Kings of Scotland and one King of Ireland, Earls, Viscounts, Barons, Judges, Privy Councillors, Ambassadors, Envoys, and Knights; one Queen of Scotland, a Princess of Wales, Countesses, Baronesses, and so the list goes on right to the present Royal Family.

Skelton, Scheltun or Skelltun (the name 'skell' means brook or rivulet and 'tun' means town or village) is of Saxon origin and was owned by the Earl of Hugh who also owned land in Guisborough, along with the King, Robert, Count of Mortain and Robert Malet. Skelton was



to become the birthplace of an illustrious line of nobles, warrior princes and kings following a famous event in British history.

In 1066 the Normans invaded our shores. The Normans ('Northmen') were an offshoot of the Vikings and they soon put their stamp on the country. Legend has it that the last outpost of the Saxons was put down in the Tees marshes, now Middlesbrough, by the first Robert de Bruce. Every man, woman and child was slain by the sword as he and his army laid waste the whole area. As a reward, Robert de Bruce was given 15 manors in the North Riding and 43 in the East and West Ridings. He decided to make Skelton his chief barony.

The castle at Skelton was not built until 1140, during the reign of King Stephen. Some historians argue that the first Norman castle was built at Guisborough, but others dispute this claim. There is evidence mentioned in the history books of some foundations which were discovered just in front of what is now Guisborough Police Station. This could have been a 'motte and bailey' type of castle until the permanent structure was built at Skelton.

The castle, the biggest and most impressive of its time, was based on the De Bruce Castle in Normandy which can still be seen to this day. It was

built by wandering stone masons whose marks are still found on other castles in the area. The only known pictorial evidence of Skelton Castle is on a woodcut and it was from this that the illustration was made. The castle is described as 'large and grey with a large moat, great walls and towers, a single keep and a chapel.' It was the envy of the country and was known as the 'crazy castle' because of its maze of rooms and secret tunnels.

The 2nd Robert de Bruce fought at the Battle of the Standard in 1138 with his sons Adam and Robert, Lord of Annandale. It was his line which led to the Royals. He resided mainly in the court of Henry I. Much of the history has been well researched and there are several good books on the subject of Skelton and the De Bruce's. However, not much has been written about the castle itself.

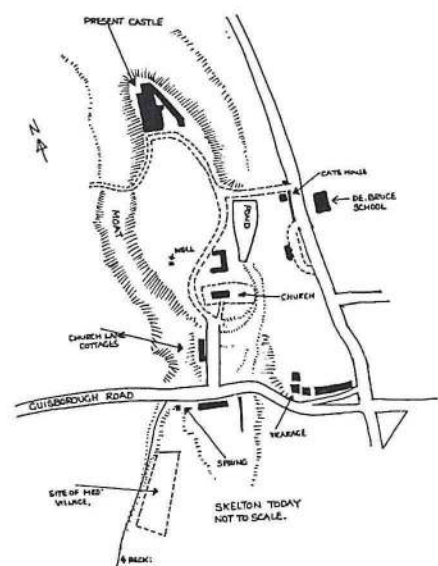
As you drive out of Skelton in the direction of Guisborough and enter the 'dip' near the last houses you are actually where part of the original moat and south gate entrance were situated (see plan). It is worth walking down to the old church near the castle grounds and observing the remains of the old moat behind the cottages. The moat was drained and partly filled in some years ago but there is still sufficient evidence to show the vast width and depth it must have been. It is possible that the castle was built on two levels and that the top level was used to partly fill in the moat.

The remains of an ancient village have been found near the stream which filled the moat below Back Lane and access to the south entrance of the castle must have been by bridge or boat. After 500 years of the existence of the moat the ground and surrounding area became very boggy and the structure of the castle began to suffer, the towers beginning to lean dangerously. In 1788, therefore, the old Norman castle was pulled down by John Hall Stephenson and the present castle was built.

If the Norman castle had survived, what an attraction it would have been! In its history it had been besieged by King John, who was seeking revenge on the barons who forced him to sign the Magna Carta in 1215. Peter de Bruce, the 6th Baron of Skelton, was one of the names on the Magna Carta signed at Runnymede, and King John, appalled by the liberties extorted from him, swiftly began a war against his new enemies.

It is not known whether the King Robert de Bruce ever visited Skelton from his family home in Scotland. It is known, however, that members of the De Bruce families fought on both sides during the troubles. Many knights were related, if not by blood then by marriage.

If you ever wondered where the other De Bruce's lived in Scotland, Annandale is near Dumfries. There have never been any excavations on the site so a wealth of remains must still be there!



In the next issue we will look at the history of Kilton Castle.

The 'Maynard'

A Welcome With Open 'Arms'



Five years ago, on December 14th 1993, Ernie and June Chapman opened the door of their own pub - the Maynard Arms. It was a day they had both dreamed of, but the road to it had taken them 11 years.

Ernie and June made their first step on that road in 1982 when they took over the Arlington Hotel in Loftus. They remained there for 7½ years making many friends during their stay.

The next move was to the Miners Arms at Skelton Green, the village where Ernie had spent his childhood. Many of his clientele were lads and lasses he had gone to school with. They were both very happy there but the seed of their dream was growing fast - Ernie and June longed to own their own pub.

After 3½ years they started to look around. There followed two bitter disappointments, one being 'gazumped' at the last minute. It came as no surprise to Dennis, Ernie's brother, that the couple were feeling very low when he uttered the now immortal words, "What about the Maynard?" The last place Ernie and June expected to end up was at Carlin How, but Ernie reckoned without fate, something he never believed in, but certainly does now.



Ernie & June Chapman



The derelict pub five years ago

Five years ago, the Maynard Arms was a boarded up, derelict building. Vandalism had been rife but when Ernie and June looked around the place with a torch - the electricity had been switched off long before - they saw it had lots of potential. It didn't take them long to decide "yes - this was the one!"

What Ernie hadn't realised was that he was coming back to his roots. His dad, Herbert, was born in Carlin How and his grandfather, Ernest, had owned the greengrocer's shop just below the Maynard. Ernest was a well known, popular character who delivered his produce by horse and cart. It is believed, even to this day, that the incline to the side of the Maynard was named after him - 'Chappie's Bank'.

Without their eleven years of experience, Ernie and June would never have taken on the mammoth task of rebuilding the pub. They had it gutted from top to bottom. The workload

on them was immense but finally the opening day arrived and it was a proud couple that opened the doors that day.

The Maynard soon became a popular drinking house and from the very beginning Ernie set high standards, curbing bad language and setting up strict safety measures. The couple very quickly moulded themselves into the village life raising hundreds of pounds for local charities. Ernie even formed a cricket team and once had a pink 'curly perm' to raise money for the then named 'Adult Training Centre' whom he has supported for 14 years.

June and Ernie have two lovely daughters who they can call upon any time to help out when the pub gets busy. They have now been married for 35 years and their friendly and helpful disposition generates itself into the atmosphere of the pub, every customer receiving a warm welcome. Ernie's greatest passion, next to June of course, is his fanatical support of the Boro'. Many thanks to you both for your most generous donation of £50 to 'The Key' and may we wish you both many more happy years in the Maynard Arms!



The Maynard's smart lounge as it is now

'Pop Quiz'

by Eddie Hartley



- 1 What was Glen Campbell's first No 1 ?
- 2 What No 1 was The Beatles longest playing single & in which year ?
- 3 What duet sang 'Ebony And Ivory' and in which year ?
- 4 Name the singer who sang 'Seasons In The Sun'.
- 5 Who sang about 'Oliver's Army' ?
- 6 Which group 'Don't like Mondays' ?
- 7 Name Johnny Kidd's backing group.
- 8 Who had a hit in January 1961 with 'Poetry In Motion' ?
- 9 Who sang 'In The Year 2525' ?
- 10 Name the 1970 hit single by Three Dog Nights.
- 11 Who sang 'Knock Three Times' ?
- 12 Who sang with Johnny Mathis on the hit song 'Too Much, Too Little, Too Late' ?
- 13 Chris Farlowe had a big hit with 'Out Of Time'. Who were his backing group ?
- 14 Who sang 'Come On Eileen' ?
- 15 In what year did Bing Crosby record 'White Christmas' ?
- 16 Who sang 'Golden Brown' ?
- 17 What was the name of Smokey Robinson's backing group?
- 18 Who sang 'Runaway' ?
- 19 Which American group sang 'Do It Again' ?
- 20 Who were the 4 members of Queen ?

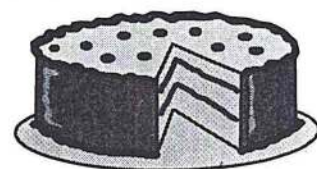
Answers on Page 17

Fire Safety Tips for Xmas

1. Have 'fairy lights' checked by a competent person.
2. Don't hang decorations over fires or too close to lights.
3. Keep trees moist.
4. Don't light naked flames near to artificial trees.
5. On discovering a fire, get out and call the fire brigade.
6. Don't use candles on window sills.
7. If you don't have a smoke alarm buy one for Christmas.
8. Don't overload plugs and sockets.

Eric Lees (Station Officer - Skelton)

Christmas Recipe - A Delishuss Fruitcake



Ingredients

1 cup water	2 cups dried fruit
1 cup brown sugar	1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt	8 ozs nuts
4 large eggs	1 teaspoon baking soda
Juice of 1 lemon	1 cup butter
1 bottle Brandy	

Method

Sample the brandy to check the quality.

Take a large bowl. Check the brandy again to be sure it's the right strength - pour a glass and sample. Repeat.

Turn on the mixer. Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar and beat again.

Make sure the brandy is still OK - try another glass.

Turn off the mixer. Break two eggs and add to the bowl. Chuck in the dried fruit and then mix on the turner. If the dried fruit gets stuck in the beaters pry loose with a drawscraper.

Sample brandy for consistency.

Next, sift 2 cups of salt or something - who cares?

Check the brandy.

Now sift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one tablespoon of sugar or whatever you can find.

Grease the oven and turn the cake tin to 350 degrees.

Don't forget to beat off the turner. Throw the bowl out of the window, check the brandy and then go to bed!

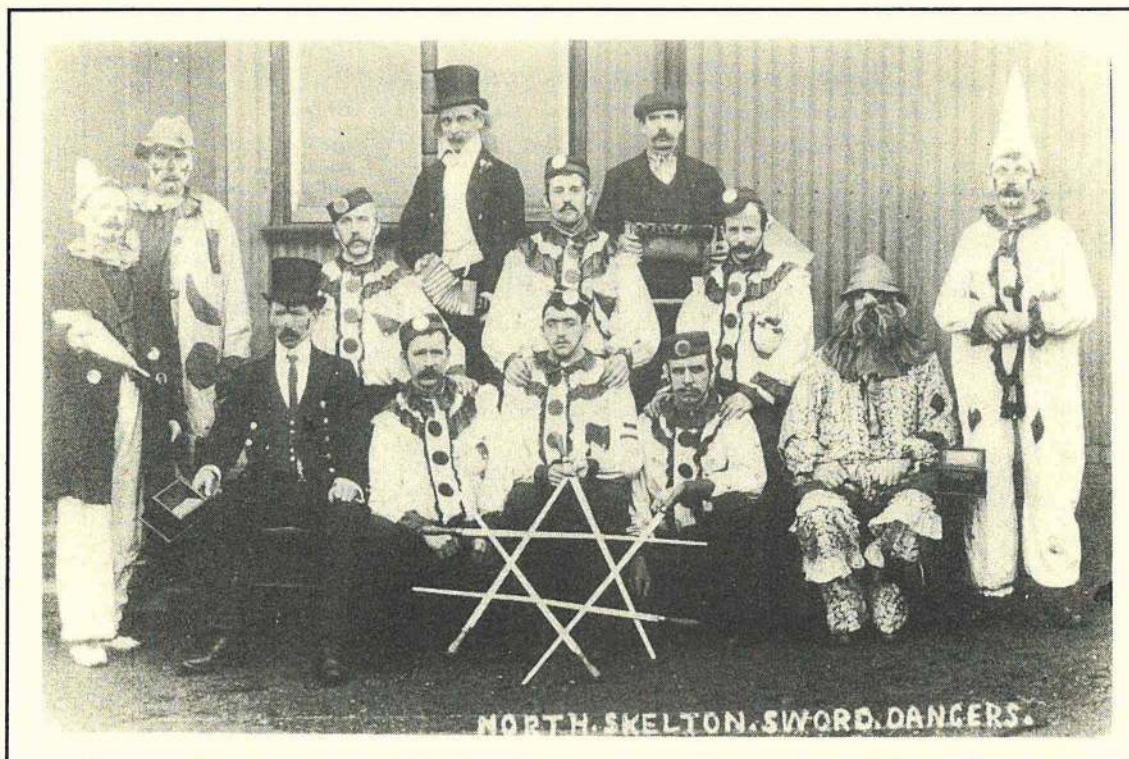
Rita (hic) Beckham

PHOTO GALLERY

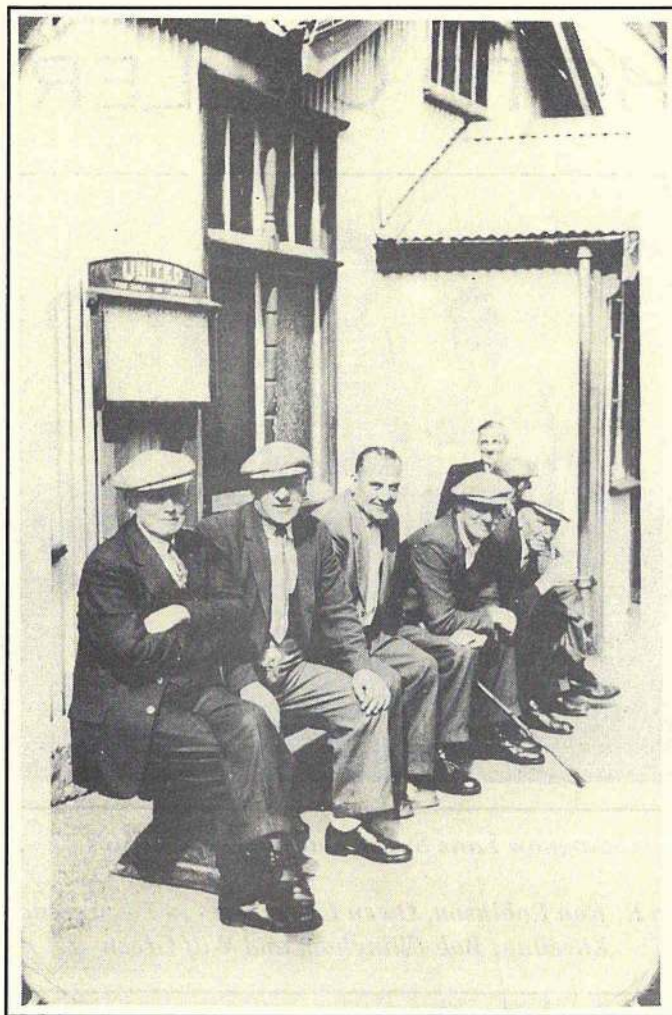


Stanghow Lane Sword Dancers - mid 1950's

*Standing L. to R: Ron Robinson, Owen Laffey, - ? - , - ? - , Terence Richards
Kneeling: Bob Ellingham and Wilf Green*



*North Skelton Sword Dancers, we think in the 1920's, outside the 'Tute'.
Do you recognise your Dad or Grandad among them?*



*Village 'characters' seated outside the 'Tute'
L. to R: Ben Howard, brothers Ernie & Sel Turner,
Rob Bolton, Freddie Hugill and Herbert Tremain*



North Skelton Day Centre's 1st Christmas Party, 1984, in the 'Tute'

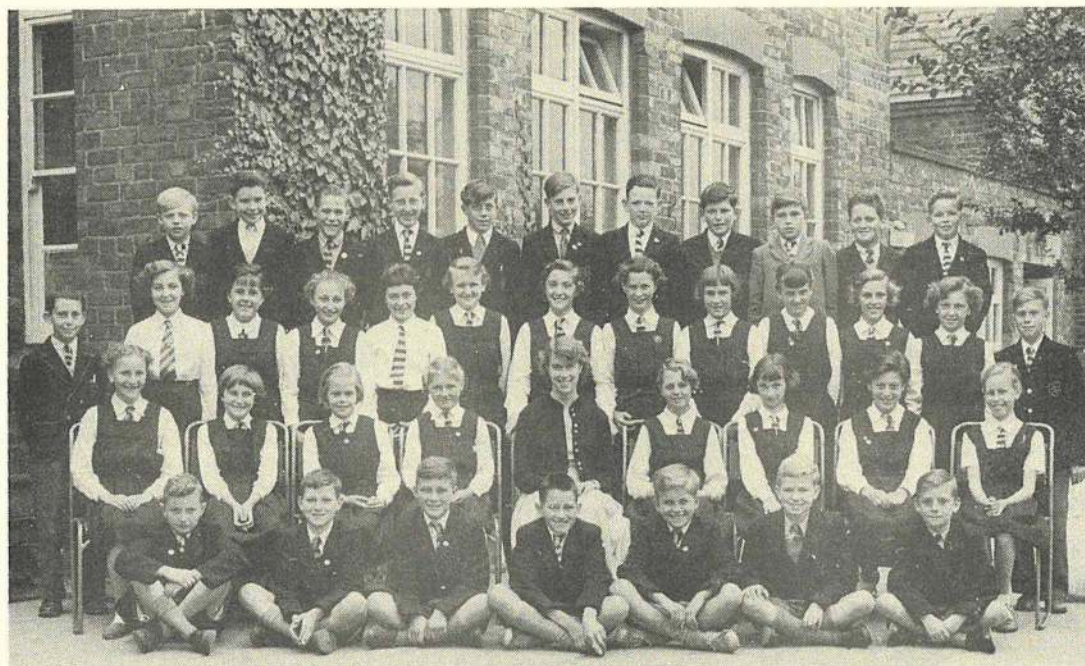
*Richard Holt MP is carving the turkey surrounded by staff and senior citizens
including Joyce Watts, Jimmy Campbell (Santa), Dot Ackerley, Kay Garth,
Anne Cummings, M Middleton, Mrs Taylor and Miss Harrison*



Jenny Garbutt's 'Blackpool Trip' - c 1950

Included in the photo are: Mrs Hugill, Christine Mains, Mr & Mrs Reuben Cooper, Mr & Mrs George Moses, Mr & Mrs Robson, Mrs Wells, Emma Garland and her mother, Nellie Wilkinson, Jenny Garbutt, Mrs Pennock.

Children include: Sheila & Ruth Garland and Peter Garbutt



Stanghow Lane School - 1957

Back Row L. - R: S Taylor, G Howsam, S Green, C Brown, -?-, M Walker, T Stephenson, J Butcher, R Wilson, F Hambley, J Brady

2nd Row: -?-, P Hopkins, E Booker, P Garvey, P Robinson, S McIlroy, M Bennison, G McCormack, J Calvert, W Bennison, P Crooks, S Whittle, E Baker

3rd Row: M Evans, D Hutchinson, W Bulmer, K Taberner, Miss Gray, M Pigg, A Dale, B Whittaker, B Kirk

Front Row: J Warren, -?-, K Crossman, D Easton, D Beadle, -?-, -?-



*This fireman fought local fires during World War II.
Skelton Fire Brigade would love to know his name.
Do you recognise him?*



Skelton Firefighters - 1995

*Back Row L. to R: C Harrington, P Smitheman, G Haywood, S Webster,
M Matthews, L Turner, D Welford & M Lowe
Sitting: J Broadfoot, T Smitheman, R Howlett, Eric Lees (Station Officer), P Holmes,
M Lawson & S Dewing*

Letterbox & Messages



Collection of John Wiggins' photos.

Apologies to original owners of photos whose names have slipped me with the passage of years, but very many thanks. A book of old photographs of Skelton Green is to be published next year. I am seeking to loan any old photos of Skelton High Green - all will be cordially looked after.

John Wiggins, Manless Green Farm, Skelton Green,
TS12 2DH. Tel 01287 650879

Dear Ed

Does anybody from Mr Bosomworth's class in the 1940's remember his poetry lessons? (He used to have rolls of paper which he used to pull down from the wall-board).

I'm looking for the author of 'Nod' which begins 'Softly along the road of evening, in a twilight trimmed with rose...'

It's a firm favourite in our family. Whenever my daughter was ill she'd want me to recite it. I'd like to get her a copy if only I could find out who wrote it.

Sheila Bocking, 20 Ford End, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 0EG

Apologies to Marion Ramage (nee Hodgson) whose photo below would have accompanied her letter about her memories of Ground Hill in our August edition but, unfortunately, we couldn't fit it in.



L. to R: Albert, Bessie, Derek, Marion & Claude

Christmas Greetings



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the following people.

North Skelton 'Village in Bloom' committee who gave their time all summer to keeping the village hanging baskets and floral displays watered.

These lads and lasses in the Band who turn



out in all weathers to play carols in our streets at Christmas & New Year.

To everyone who donates a prize for our Xmas Draw.

To Jean & Marjorie for North Skelton's excursions.

To Mervyn Marley who voluntarily tends the gardens of ST Peter's Church.

To the lads who formed a 'choir' one memorable Saturday night in North Skelton Workingmen's Club; Stan Whyman, Jigger Jackson, Bob Whiteley, Tony Ainsley and Thomas O'Shea.

Thanks also to Colin Pledger who went round with a tray and collected £6.50 which was donated to 'The Key'.

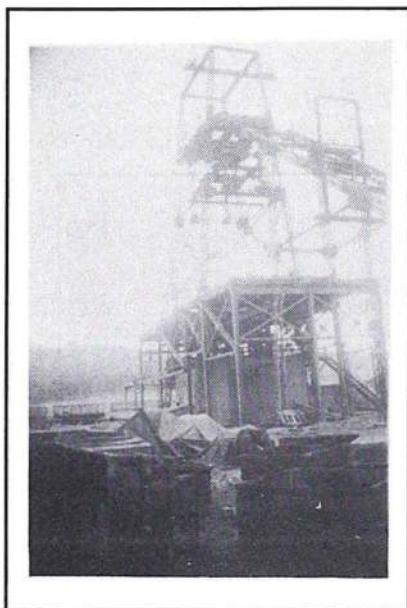
Finally, Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year to all our readers both at home and away.



'A Tale of Two Headgears'

by Ron Hugill

While reading issue No. 21 of 'The Key' I saw the photograph of the old North Skelton Mine 'headgear' and it brought back to me lots of memories that may interest some readers. At the time there were two 'headgears' of that design (called 'box girder structure') in East Cleveland. Each was made up of thousands of small plates and



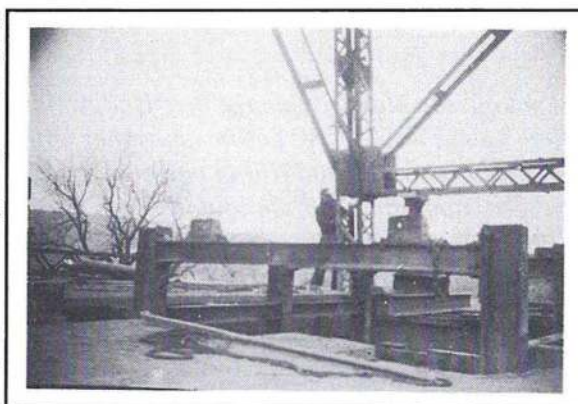
*South Skelton Mine 'headgear'
ready for lowering*

angles riveted together to form the uprights that held the 'winding wheels' and, what we called, the 'backstairs' that ran to the back of the 'winding house'. The other 'headgear' was at the old South Skelton Mine ('Van's Pit' as they used to call it) which was situated on the right-hand side of the road between Boosbeck and Margrove Park - there are still some old buildings standing. It is the 'headgear' of this mine that my story is about.

One fine day in the early 1950's, Les Bousfield (now living in Loftus) and myself (now of Brotton), but both of us young North Skelton lads then, were working in the welding shop at North Skelton Mine when in walked Mr Roberts, the Mine Manager at the time. Nothing very interesting had happened that week - why I say that is because in those days we were considered as 'Jack of all trades' and you never knew where you would be working from day to day. Some days we were just left to do our own job which was plating and welding, but on others we could be 'fitters' working down the mine cleaning out pumps or 'blacksmiths' maintaining the ropeways. We were also sometimes 'labourers' working up the yard, loading or unloading timbers, emptying shale carts or on the 'pit-top' pushing tubs about. We were even spare lorry and ambulance drivers - I wonder what the unions would say today? Still, in those days, they were the sort of things you were asked to do. However, neither of us were prepared for what Mr Roberts was going to ask us to do that particular day!

The Start - "Good morning, lads", Mr Roberts said, "I have a little job for you two. I want you to go up to South Skelton Mine, dismantle all of the 'pit-top' and fell the 'headgear'. When it's all down I want you to cut it all up for scrap and load it into rail trucks. I've managed to get you some special 'release-chocks' that they use in the coal mines if they're of any use to you. I've also got you some new oxy-acetelene cutting gear. There are ten men still working up there who'll give you any help you require and if you see Wilf Wheatley, the lorry driver, he'll take you both and any gear you want up there each day. I'll see you both get an extra half shift a week while you're there!" He then turned and walked calmly out of the shop. We were both flabbergasted to say the least but after coming back down to earth we thought, "Well, six months up there, an extra half shift a week and summer coming on - it won't be bad!"

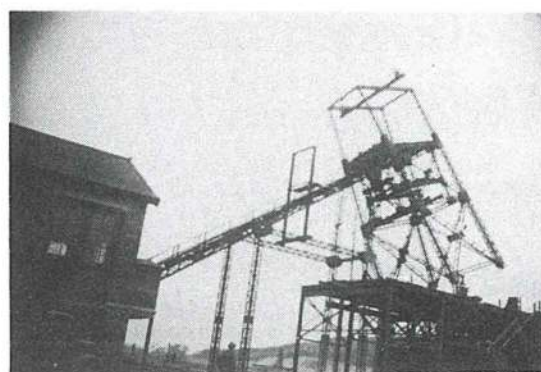
South Skelton Mine - The first few days were passed trying to figure out how to do the job and getting to know our new mates - another shock. The first to greet us was a man called Jock Snaith. He had been the blacksmith at South Skelton. I say 'had been' because when he took us to meet the rest of the 'lads' we found out they were all aged between sixty and seventy years old - just the type for climbing about the 'headgear'! - another thing Mr Roberts 'forgot' to mention. I must say this, though, they were all a great set of fellows who would do anything they could to help us.



*Les cutting the uprights -
release-chocks in position*

And so to work - You will see step by step, I hope, from the snaps I took on my little old camera, how we eventually managed to do the job. The first thing was to get as much weight as we could off the 'headgear'. We cut up the rope-wheels, bearings, shafts and everything that we could. These were lowered to the ground by

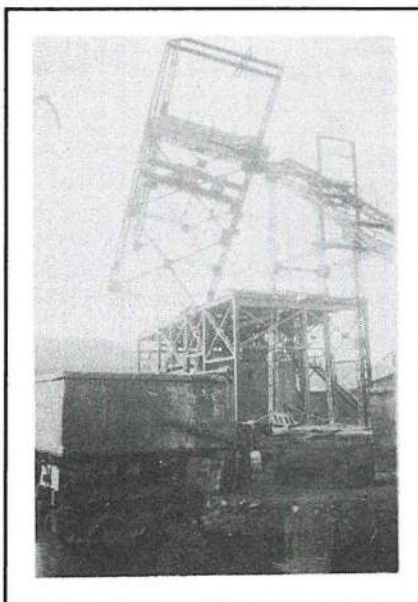
'block and tackle'. Next we affixed two steel ropes from the top corners of two of the main box girder uprights to two hand-operated winches. The winches were both well away from the structure and were, when the time came, to be manned by five members of our 'over-60's club'! Then came the most dangerous job. We placed the release-chocks under the horizontal box girders on the side we expected it to fall - you can see these on the photo with Les cutting the uprights. Next we cut about six feet out of the 'backstairs', freeing it from the winding house. We had to put ropes from the release-chocks, one for Les and one for myself.



Wilf Wheatley looks on at the 'headgear' well and truly fastened to the 'backstairs'

The 'Crunch Day' - When the big day finally arrived we did not believe so many people would be there. There were Mine Managers, Under-managers, 'big names' from the Steelworks, even an Evening Gazette reporter. Les and I were both nervous because, to be honest, I don't think we believed it would work. We all got into position and Les blew the whistle. We then both opened the release-chocks and for a second, apart from a few pigeons flying off the top, nothing happened! However, slowly it started to move. The lads on the winches had done the trick but as it started to come towards them, and although they were well out of range, one of the crews turned and ran! The other crew carried on winding and did enough for the 'headgear' to move one side but it affixed itself to the 'backstairs' that were still standing.

What do we do now? - So there it was - hanging from the 'backstairs'. There was a front page picture that night in the Gazette - 'A Fantasy in Steel' was the headline and I suppose looking at it it was. However, our problem was what to do next? Suggestions came thick and fast from people who had never been near the job. One, I won't mention any names, wanted us to climb up the 'backstairs' and cut it free. You can imagine our reply to that!



*'Fantasy in Steel'
the photo on that night's
Evening Gazette front page*

After some thought, the answer was simple - it would be just like chopping down a tree! We cut the 'backstairs' from the winding-house and then cut the two uprights on the side that the 'headgear' was leaning. Then, when cutting the next but last upright on the opposite side, the whole thing started to go over. It moved slowly at first, seemingly giving us time to retreat, before it finally all came down to the ground. There were cheers all round!

Epilogue - It took us about six weeks with the help of our faithful friends to cut it all up and load it into the wagons for scrap. Mr Roberts by the way, true to his word, paid us our half shifts.

Postscript - North Skelton Mine closed in 1964. Les and myself had by then moved on and were working in the 'boiler-shop' at Skinningrove Steelworks. The felling of the North Skelton 'headgear' was put out to contractors - I bet that cost them a lot more than a few half shifts!

Ron Hugill, 20 Marshall Drive, Brotton.



North Skelton In Bloom - Prizewinners

Best Front - 3 Bolckow Street (Mrs Marlene Rix)

Best back - 19 Vaughan Street (Mrs Iris Cowen)

Best Commercial - St Peter's Church

Best Children's Tub - Leanne Bytheway

Best Garden - 1 Heather Grove (Mrs Pauline Hutchinson)



North Skelton Workingmens Club Members Harvest Show

The doors opened at 8am for members to lay out their garden produce which was of a very high standard. However, as usual, it was the same men and ladies who entered, a total of only twelve.

Although it was a disappointing turnout, the enthusiasm of the entrants was second to none.

The show is held every year and any member can enter free.



The entries are displayed before judging

Judging begins at 10.50am and the doors are opened to the public at 12.30. Prizes are £3, £2, & £1 and with each winners ticket is attached a voucher for money off seeds, etc. A gallon of beer is given to the best overall entry which was won this year by Bob Whiteley for his tomatoes. Colin Ledger collected most points, the judge being Mr Gordon Wren.

Once again, these same members prepared all the produce ready for auction on Sunday night. Only 35-40 members turned up but the atmosphere was brilliant and the bidding fantastic. The auctioneers were Phil Taberner, Colin Pledger and Bob Whiteley. Donations included a beautiful basket of flowers from Mario Tokarski which raised the princely sum of £21. Including the raffle, a profit of £200 was made.

Jean Jackson

(There are several classes open to ladies and it is hoped there will be even more next year. I feel personally ashamed that I didn't make the effort to enter - I certainly will next year and I hope more of you members do too - Ed)

Please give your support to local events such as the Harvest Show above. Remember, no other village in this area gets such free activities as its own newspaper, excursions, OAP Xmas party, etc. than does North Skelton.

Merry Christmas and thanks to all volunteers

Doc Spot . . . by Dr Roger Neville-Smith



The grey, cold depressing months of winter are here again. Flu has worn us all down. If only the sun would shine again.

Mrs Pressed has just been to see me. She's depressed as well. The last tablets did not suit her and she does not want to try any more!

I think I might have just the thing - my favourite winter tonic. Perhaps we should all take a prescription.

NAME		MD Pressed	
Age if under 12 years		Flat 13	
yes		Gray Town	
Address			
Pharmacy Stamp			
Pharmacist's pack & quantity endorsement	No. days treatment NB Ensure dose is stated	NP	Pricing Office use only
<p>Rx</p> <p>Flax seed 50kg - apply to floor</p> <p>Deck chair 1</p> <p>Tape of holiday pops 1</p> <p>Cocoa nut oil - apply all over in very hot room - 1 litre</p> <p>Sun hat 1</p> <p>Sun glasses 1</p> <p>Large picture of palm fringed beach - apply to breast (chimney)</p> <p>Togatta Sundae - large glass every half hour - 2 litre</p>			
Signature of Doctor		Date	
DKH		1st March	
For pharmacist No. of Prescriptions on form		DEES HA 34479 Dr KINDHEART THE SURGERY CLEVEDALE 1LUV 5UN 24/56	
IMPORTANT		Read notes overleaf before going to the pharmacist	
		Form FP10 (Comp)	

'Action North Skelton'

Earlier this year, Kath Price retired as Treasurer for ANS. Jean Tokarski has now taken over the role. Good luck to Jean and many thanks to Kath for her help and immaculate accounts over the past years.

North Eastern Co-Op, Skelton

Merry Xmas and many thanks to Mrs Jackson for allowing the Co-Op at Skelton to be used as a 'distribution point' for 'The Key' magazine.

Look Closer - See Me!

A well known North Skeltoner and retired psychiatric nurse, Joan Majin (nee Wilkinson), sent us this article a while ago. We thought we should publish it at this special time of year and hope it helps you remember those who are not quite (or so we sometimes think) so fortunate as most of us.

'The patient who wrote the following verse was unable to communicate with doctors, nurses or other patients, but was seen to scribble notes from time to time. After her death, her locker was emptied and this extraordinarily moving poem was found:

*'What do you see nurse, what do you see?
Are you thinking when you are looking at me,
Of a crabbit old woman not very wise,
Uncertain of habit with faraway eyes,
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice "I do wish you'd try!"
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
Or forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who un-resisting or not lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding the long day to fill.
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still
And do at your bidding, and eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters who love one another.
A young girl of sixteen, with wings on her feet
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.
A bride soon at twenty, my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.
At twenty five, now I have young of my own
Who need me to build a secure, happy home.
A woman of thirty, my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last.
At forty, my young sons have grown and all gone
But my man stays beside me to see I don't mourn.
At fifty, once more babes play round my knees,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread.
For my children are busy rearing young of their own
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.
I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel,
'Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.
The body it crumbles, grace and vigour depart,
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.
But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells
And now and again my battered heart swells.
I remember the joys, I remember the pain,
I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years, all gone too fast
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, nurse, open and see
Not a crabbit old woman.*

Look closer - see me!

Yule Never Believe It!

.... some unusual Xmas facts

Turkeys were introduced to England in 1526 when Yorkshireman, William Strickland, bought 6 of them in Mexico and sold them in Bristol for tuppence each.



It was Edward VII who made eating turkey at Xmas fashionable. Now, more than 12 million turkeys are sold each Xmas.

Although the feast of Nativity has been celebrated since at least the year 354 AD, the way we celebrate Xmas now dates from early in Queen Victoria's reign and is now followed worldwide.



Up to the year 1890, Santa Claus was depicted as a tall, thin character who wore green or brown as often as red.

Santa's present appearance was created for a series of Xmas cards by Swedish artist, Jenny Nystrom in that year.

The original Christmas Pudding was 'plum porridge' which gradually evolved into a thicker plum pudding in Elizabethan times. Nowadays, many families still make their own pudding and follow the custom of letting every member stir the mixture anti-clockwise on 'Stir Up Sunday', the last Sunday before Advent. One particular firm, Matthew Walker of Derby, now make 16 million Xmas puddings each year!

It was Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, who popularised the 'Christmas Tree' in Great Britain after putting one up at Windsor Castle in 1840. Electric 'fairy lights' remained too expensive for most families until after World War II.



The Windsor Castle trees were always topped with a large 'angel' which through the years, especially with the influence of pantomime, eventually became a female fairy complete with wand.

Answers To Music Quiz:

1. Rhinestone Cowboy 2. Hey Jude - 1968 3. Paul McCartney & Stevie Wonder 4. Terry Jacks 5. Elvis Costello 6. Boomtown Rats 7. The Pirates 8. Johnny Tillotson 9. Zager & Evans 10. Mama Told me Not to Come 11. Dawn 12. Deniece Williams 13. The Thunderbirds 14. Dexy's Midnight Runners 15. 1942 16. The Stranglers 17. The Miracles 18. Del Shannon 19. The Beach Boys 20. Freddie Mercury, Roger Taylor, Brian May & John Deacon

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26th Dec - 'Black Rose' R&B Band
27th Dec - Xmas Quiz
28th Dec - 'Man About A Dog'
29th Dec - Pool & Darts Games Night
30th Dec - Xmas Draw
New Years Eve - Disco / Karaoke**

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Christmas Day - Karaoke
New Years Eve - Excellent Duo
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