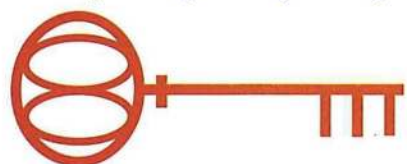


ISSUE NO. 28

DECEMBER 2000

# THE KEY



A NEWSPAPER FOR NORTH SKELTON & LAYLAND



*North Skelton Slack - January 1986*



## Editorial

**MERRY XMAS TO ALL OUR READERS  
BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD!**

*The letters, cards and e-mails Don and I have received from you all have been overwhelming. We have tried to answer every one of them – if we have missed you out please accept our apologies.*

*Devany's, in Skelton High Street, remains our only distribution centre for The Key. Don and I wish all the staff a very merry Xmas and peaceful New Year.*

*Thank you all for your continuing donations – may I remind you that all cheques must be made payable to 'The Key'.*

*Seasons greetings also to our Treàsurer, Stuart Fawcett, who gives his time freely to keep our accounts in order.*

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### **St Peter's Church, North Skelton**

Evening Services are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month.

I would like to thank everybody for helping and supporting St Peter's Church, especially to Mervin Marley who keeps the Garden beautiful. Thanks also to Mavis Stevenson, Pat Brook, Anne Jefferson, Bill Ebbs, Stella Poulter and Barbara Burrell for making the Coffee Mornings on the first Friday of each month such a success.

I would like to wish everybody in North Skelton a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas and New Year.  
God Bless.

Alison Husband

## **Has Anyone got this Photograph?**

Dear Norma,

My brother, Jack Marley, has lived down south for the last 50 years. He would dearly love to trace a photo of himself in one of North Skelton's many carnivals – the year would be around 1944. Jack was dressed up as a 'scarecrow' and won many 1<sup>st</sup> prizes. He remembers quite a few people took photographs of him but, of course, wouldn't know who he was.

The biggest clue is the caption that my mother wrote on a piece of cardboard and pinned on him, 'GUARD THE PRECIOUS GRAIN OUR LIFELINE'.

If anyone has this photo, please get in touch – my brother would be so grateful.

Joan Turnbull, 48 Layland Road, North Skelton

## **CLEVELAND LEAGUE BILLIARD SHIELD**

Dave Gosling was a member of the team that won the Cleveland League Billiard Shield and along with many others would dearly like to know where it is now. Dave remembers it held pride of place in the left hand corner on a shelf in North Skelton 'Tute'. Some other members of the winning team were: Wally Templeman, Toby Wilson, Bill Vasey, George Mogridge, Ralph Jackson.

Do you know where it is? Have you a photo? Please let me know.

*I have been in touch with Mr J Herbert, Secretary of Redcar Workinmen's Club who informs me that, as far as he knows, the Shield is still being played for in local competitions - can anyone confirm this or give us details of recent winners? (Ed)*

## **A Thank You to the Northern Rock Foundation**



I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joan Wolley, of the Northern Rock Foundation, for her kindness in inviting me to the 'Picture and Piano' at Newcastle Quay on 3rd November.

The occasion was a 'drinks party' for key figures who had benefited from the foundation to meet each other.

**Norma**



# Sword Dancing - A Village Tradition

by Ian Keeler

How many of the readers of 'The Key' visited the folk festival at Saltburn in August of this year? They would have been entertained by Morris dancers, folk singers and 'black-faced' clog dancers. The only sight missing was the sight of sword dancing which was performed in the past by a team from North Skelton.

Sword dancing is part of our pagan heritage of which Morris dancers, mummers and the Maypole are just a few examples. Readers of a certain age will remember seeing these dances and some must have even practised and performed the sword dance at school.

The sword dance was a 'solar dance' connected with the death and renewal of the sun. The swords, about 40 inches long and very heavy, were not weapons but symbols of the sun. The team consisted of six to eight men plus an accordionist to play the beat and various followers including the 'fool'.

The dances are rituals of the seasons and during the course of the dance, the swords were wreathed into the 'lock' or 'rose' which made the emblem of the sun. This was placed around the neck

of the 'fool' who was ritually 'slain' to symbolise the end of the year.



*North Skelton Sword Dancers*

*On the left is 'Towny' Tremain (in suit) beside Mr Porte and front left is Bob Evans (Does anyone know the location?)*



*North Skelton Sword Dancers form a 'Gaurd of Honour' at Rolf Gardiner's wedding*

Sadly, sword dancing went into decline in the area but has recently been revived at Lockwood Beck Primary School, Boosbeck.

Bob Evans, of William Street, North Skelton, was a member of the sword dancer's team and one day invited Rolf into his home for tea. Bob's daughter Jean (now Jean Tokarski), as a child of 2-3 years, sat on his knee for most of the visit. Her Dad later told her that Rolf had made such an impression on her that on the day he got married she was broken-hearted! (Ed)

During his research into folk dance, a Mr Rolf Gardiner visited North Skelton. In his journal he describes his visit, including some detail of the dancers practising in the 'Band Room'. His visit led to a revival in sword dancing and, with the assistance of the Pennyman family of Ormesby Hall, eventually to the formation of a second team in North Skelton, the 'Primrose' team at Lingdale and further teams at both Boosbeck and Loftus.

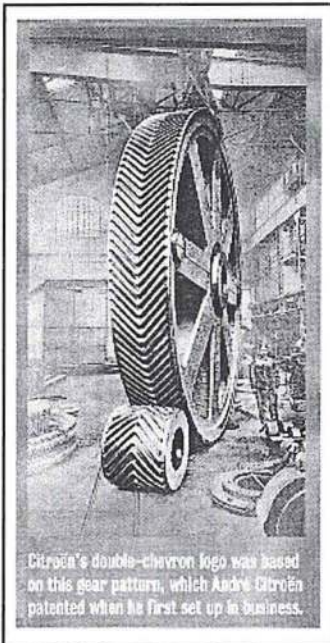
Thanks to Rolf Gardiner's involvement, the North Skelton team travelled all over the area and taught visiting miners from the Ruhr and Silesia and went on exchange visits with the miners in Germany. The team performed at the Albert Hall in London and, in 1932, acted as 'guards of honour' at Rolf's wedding at Southwark Cathedral. Rolf Gardiner's association with North Skelton Sword Dancers spanned the years from 1925 until 1939.



# Eddie's Car Page

by Eddie Hartley

Now that we're used to companies such as Nissan or Honda setting up huge factories in Britain, it comes as something of a shock to discover that Citroen built an enormous 60 acre site at Slough Park back in 1925. The Citroen factory was largely responsible for the regeneration of Slough after World War I and used to produce 200 cars a day.



*Citroen's double-chevron logo was based on this gear pattern*

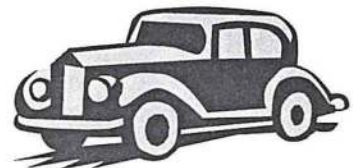
The Traction Avante was way ahead of its time - Citroen engineers introduced front-wheel drive to the mass produced car and made it work.



Some readers may remember the old TV detective 'Maigret' – his car was a Traction Avante.

While travelling through Poland, the then young Andre Citroen saw a wooden pattern for gears with chevron-shaped teeth in a village workshop. He bought the patent and based his company logo on the design. It is still used today.

Citroen was one of the first mass producers to get into the London taxi market, even before Austin or Morris, and by 1931 over half of London's 550 strong fleet were Citroens.



## Car Quiz ???

1. Name the country which is the home of the Saab.
2. Name 2 of the Austin 'Counties' models.
3. Ford RS 2000 – what does RS mean?
4. What does BMW stand for?
5. What colour was the 1,000,000<sup>th</sup> Morris Minor?
6. What identifies a Lamborghini in a china shop?
7. What English motor cycle (1902-70) was known for its 'square four' engine?
8. What's the noise checking device called inside a silencer?
9. Which car has the '3-pointed star' emblem?
10. Which Reliant is associated with Batman?
11. What's the coloured flashing light called on a motor vehicle?
12. What wartime invention is used in speed traps?
13. Where does the 'lead' join on to a car battery?
14. What do we call a 'station wagon'?
15. What Volvo is named after a river?
16. What make of car were 'Pathfinders' and 'Kestrels'?
17. It's a pity if the motorist is, but the clutch pedal needs to be what from time to time?
18. What do the AA and RAC do at the roadside?
19. Which oil company sounds like the start of a distress signal?
20. With what do we measure our spark plug gaps?

( Answers on Page 19 )



# Adam's Journey To Freedom

*(Continuing the story of Adam Derring's wartime experience . . . . .)*

Adam and the other 40 Polish men stood in the Internment Camp looking around and talking to each other, wondering what was going to happen next. The one thought that kept them going was knowing that they weren't in the hands of the enemy, Hitler's German Army.

Eventually, an officer came and took the 41 men and placed them all together in an army hut. Each had a straw mattress and they had to queue up in a line every day for food. All in all though, the conditions weren't too bad.

For three days they waited there for the Polish Embassy to make contact with them – when they did, Adam and his colleagues found themselves on the move once again, this time to a disused factory that was cold and dank and their 'bed' was a stone floor covered with straw. One consolation was the fact that here, they met up with even more of their fellow countrymen. They could at last talk to one another, swap stories and voice fears about their families.

After 24 hours, an Army Major from the Polish Embassy arrived at the factory and wrote down all their particulars. He told them that they would all be transported by lorry to the Polish Embassy just outside Paris where they would be billeted.

The embassy was rather sparse because it was just in the process of being set up with the help of the English. However, it wasn't too bad and so for the next four weeks they helped construct the buildings alongside the embassy. Adam, at this time, would lie awake at night worrying about his family, wondering of the whereabouts of his mother, father and two sisters? He had no way of finding out.

Four weeks later they were all put onto a French train and taken to a huge prisoner of war camp in Paris. The Poles who had worked at the embassy were kept together in a separate confine supplied by the embassy until the day they were taken and put into the larger compound - their number had now grown to about 2,000 but at least they were safe.

One day, when a large convoy of lorries arrived, each man was supplied with his own tent, a luxury indeed after what they had been through. The men were crowded into the wagons and transported to Cherbourg. For the next 48 hours they lived 'under canvas' until an order came through telling them to make their way down to the harbour where they were to board what was called a 'Liberty Ship'.

These ships were used not only to carry the men to England but also vital equipment. Adam remembers his ship transported tracks and other railway equipment. There was no food at all for them aboard the ship and certainly no beds or bunks – they simply laid down on the decks and tried to get some sleep.

When dawn broke, Adam awoke to the sight of land – England! It was a hungry, tired young man that walked down the gang-plank that morning. A feeling of safety, yes, but Adam was in another strange and foreign country that he knew nothing about. Once again they were herded onto a train and this time taken to the racecourse on Epsom Downs. There they were given a good meal but the next few hours were to be a nightmare.

Each man had to strip naked and stay that way until his clothes were 'de-loused'. Adam wonders how many people watching the horse racing at Epsom these days know that at one time it was a de-lousing centre – not many I bet!

From Epsom it was once more onto a train and the start of a long journey north to St Johnstone in Scotland. It was there that, for the very first time, all their particulars were legally recorded. They then travelled on to Balcometh where they underwent a medical examination – Adam was found to be 'thin, though quite fit'. He was now ready to join a regiment and chose the Light Artillery and was transferred to Duns where a new regiment was being formed. The men immediately undertook normal army training and soon the regiment was up to full strength.

The Army HQ was at Selkirk and that was where Adam was billeted. His job was cleaning and repairing equipment ready to be taken back to the front line of the British Army.

He now had time to reflect on his long journey, the many camps he'd been in, the travelling in between on foot, by train, lorry and ship. Not once in all this time had he been in contact with any of his family. Were they dead or captured? He just prayed they were still alive. Adam's prayers weren't answered until many months later.



*Adam in his early twenties*

*(To be continued . . . . .)*

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*Stanghow Lane School Girl's Netball Team - 1957*

*Back Row L. to R: Ann Robinson, Mrs Worsley (teacher), Doreen Westbrook, Marilyn Teasdale  
Front Row: Barbara Gosling, Josie Brown, -?- , Rita Hill, Stephanie Bonnard*



*Stanghow Lane School Football Team - 1958/59*

*Back Row L. to R: Joe Reed (teacher), Jeff Parks, Alan Cuthbert, Peter Hodgson, Harry Hogarth, Fred Jackson*

*Front Row: Frank Ellingham, Bernard Hill, Brian Cummins, Stewart Brown,  
Colin Scott, Alan Craig, Dennis Thompson*





*Stanghow Lane School c. 1957 - Does anyone know the festival or occasion?*

*Back Row L. to R: S Bonnard, A Robinson, -?- , -?- , -?- , J Brown, A Hart, J Brown, M Davey, R Sanderson, -?-*

*Middle Row: J Wynn, D Johnson, B Gosling, D Westbrook, C Pashley, D Thompson, D Antill,*

*R Drury, H Holmes, -?- , J Crooks*

*Front Row (kneeling) : B Dale, -?- , J Bainbridge, B Snaith, M Teasdale, C Thomas, S Harrison, R Garland, K Berwick*



*House Leaders and Captains of Stanghow Lane School - 1951*

*Back Row L. to R: Allen Lynas, Michael Want, Barry Bloomfield, Norman Johnson,  
David Lowe, Dennis Preston, Mr Bonas ( Headmaster)*

*Front Row: Dorothy Gledhill, Pat Gill, Moira Porte, Ann Berwick,  
Margaret Walker, Barbara Walker*

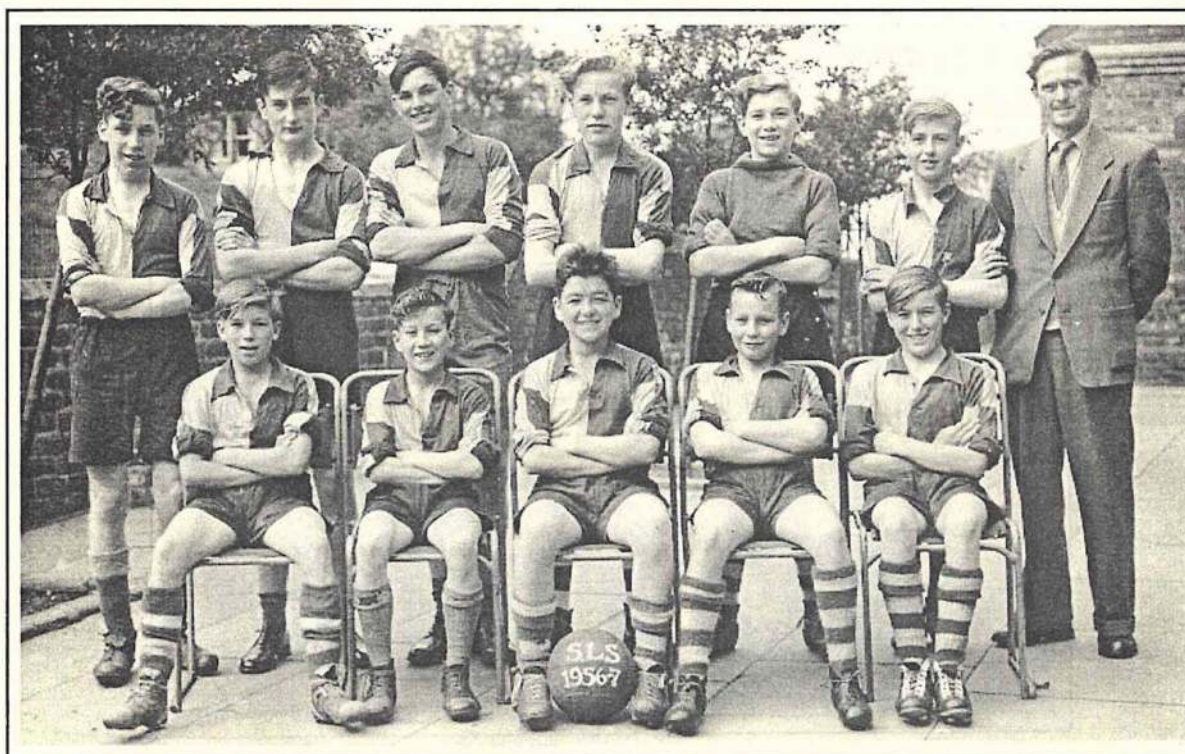




*New Skelton Junior School Football Team - 1962*

*Back Row L. to R: Norman Breeze, Francis Thirling, Peter Ashton, Peter Ward, Tony Richardson,  
John Gell, 'Pip' Wardale*

*Front Row: Glen Kilgour, John Douglass, Stephen Bland, Steve Crawford, Lee Ingleby*



*Stanghow Lane Senior Football Team - 1956/57*

*Back Row L. to R: M Holt, R Bramley, M Marley, J Hessey, N Morley, G Laker, J Reid (teacher)*

*Front Row: B Snaith, I Parkes, G Hudson, B Kime, A Robinson*





*Skelton Green Infants School Play - 1959*

*Back Row L. to R: Francis Thirling, -?-, Stephen Bland, Pamela Dunn, Tina Fawcett, Christine Williams,  
Margaret Gibbon, Steve Crawford, Malcolm Taylor  
Front Row: -?-, Geoffrey Shaw, Christine Dowey, -?-, Jean Vincent, Tony Richardson*



*Stanghow Lane School Class - 1956*

*Back Row L. to R: Mike Crossman, John Hessey, Neil Morley, Michael Holt, Derek Dauncey, David Brown,  
Keith Carter, Peter Hill, Maurice Drury,  
Middle Row: Ian Parkes, Alan Cummins, Les Smith, Francis Batterbee, Eunice Smurthwaite, Valerie Snaith,  
Irene Codling, Dorothy Hodgson, Pauline Ridsdale, Janice Simpson, Brian Duncan, Alan Mogridge, Geoff Hudson  
Front Row: Jean Agar, Ann Wilson, Janet Cook, Josephine Catnach, Margaret Wright,  
Mr Joe Reid, Joan Robson, Sheila Thurlow, Barbara Foulsham, Sheila Harrison, Pat Smith*





*A rare photograph of New Skelton taken from the shale-heap at North Skelton with in the foreground, part of the old cricket field ( the 'crick') and allotment huts where some houses of Greenhill View Estate are now situated*



*Another fine, nostalgic photo of a 'traffic quiet' Vaughan Street, North Skelton*

*Can anyone work out from the car models which year this photograph may have been taken and what's the advertisement on the wall?  
Also, who remembers the name of the general dealers shop (now 'Curly Tops') ?*



## ***'Knick-Knacks'***

Margaret Clements, a regular listener to Radio Cleveland, heard Stuart McFarlane reading out a letter he had received from the matron of a nursing home in Darlington. A gentleman in her care could play the 'knick-knacks' and she wanted to know if anyone could possibly make him a set. Stuart immediately thought of someone and announced over the radio that his friend and butcher, David Brown, was just the lad that might take up the challenge.

Whilst buying her meat, Margaret mentioned the request to David. At first he dismissed it but later thought, "Why not, I'll have a go!"

Firstly he needed two good 'beef bones' which were completely stripped of all meat. They were then sand-papered to the smoothness of velvet and finally polished. David admired his handiwork. Although he couldn't try them out as it takes skill, practice and patience to learn to play the 'bones', he was still quite proud of them.

His next problem was that he didn't know which nursing home to send them to. He rang Radio Cleveland who advised him to send them to their office and they would forward them on. A couple of weeks later, David received a lovely letter from the matron. She couldn't thank him enough and told David that the gentleman was currently entertaining the other residents and thoroughly enjoying himself! He was delighted with his new set of 'knick-knacks'. It just goes to show how one small effort can make so many people happy.

*n*

## **'Far Fields'**

I recently received an enquiry from a Mr Tom Wilkinson, of Valrico, Florida, USA. He is trying to find out as much information as he can of his Wilkinson ancestors from this area.

He has found evidence that one family lived at a house or farm called 'Far Fields', near North Skelton. I have located the house on an OS map of the area from 1850 - my estimation places it roughly where North Skelton's football field used to be located below the railway bridges just north of East Pastures Farm.

I wonder if anyone has information about the house or remembers seeing evidence of any ruins? Mr Wilkinson's great-great-grandfather, Thomas Wilkinson, lived with his wife, Mary Pybus and her family, in their farmhouse at Liverton which is now the Waterwheel Inn.

For those interested I found the old map on the internet at: [www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk)

**DB**

## **A Message From**



**CLEVELAND  
POLICE**

Hello,

Just a short message to introduce myself.



**PC Stuart Bell**

I joined Cleveland Police in 1979, first serving at South Bank Police Station before moving to North Ormesby. During my time at North Ormesby, I served as a Local Beat Officer for Netherfields.

In 1984 I was successful in being posted to the Mounted Branch based at Ormesby Hall where I spent the next 13 years of my career. However, all good things come to an end, as they say, and it was time to move on. 'Where to go now?', was the question and Guisborough was the answer. I am now approaching my 4<sup>th</sup> year here, and may I say that I am thoroughly enjoying it.

My hobbies include travelling, walking and trying to play the guitar and sing. I am also currently trying to come to grips with my computer.

Guisborough Police has recently formed a Community Policing Team (CPT) consisting of six PC's and one sergeant. Each PC has responsibility for a particular area. I share the Skelton, North Skelton, Lingdale and Boosbeck area with PC Steve Drabik. The team is committed to improving the quality of life for local, law-abiding residents.

The establishment of the CPT marks a major change in the way the area is policed. The intention is to form partnerships with the community and other agencies in order to achieve our goals. We can only do it with your help. **HELP US TO HELP YOU!**

**Stuart Bell**

Warning: Dark nights are coming - don't leave houses in darkness when unoccupied. Use time switches and fit alarms - they DO deter burglars.



# Hero 'Abe' In Underground Rescue

I would like to tell the story of what happened on the night of 17<sup>th</sup> January, 1944 regarding my Dad, George Smith, who then lived with my mother, Rose, at 4 Richard Street, North Skelton.

My Dad was a deputy in North Skelton Mine and during one of his 'shifts' down the pit he was buried by a roof-fall. He ended up face down, his leg trapped under a prop beneath the great pile of stone and shale.

I will never forget that night when my late brother, George, ran all the way home from Ings Lane, Brotton. The men going home from 'back shift' had called to see if he knew of Dad's accident – he didn't, so he came to see if we knew anything and we didn't either, even though they had called men out of North Skelton Workingmen's Club and the Bull's Head to see if they could help.



*'Abe' Bradley (centre) receiving his award from John T Hall  
George Smith (Grace's Dad, whose life 'Abe' saved)  
is on the left of the photo*

This leads to my story of one brave hero called George Bradley from Lingdale, known to everyone as 'Abe', 25 years old and married with a baby girl.

A number of his mates, all family men with children, had laboured unsuccessfully to free my Dad and the situation looked hopeless. Then 'Abe' suggested that the only way was to get to the back of the fall and work from that side – and that he was the lad to do it. Every man there knew the risks involved – he had to squeeze himself through a small hole, 23 inches by 8 inches, left by the roof-fall! Any further fall would have buried 'Abe' as well as my Dad, but that night the gods smiled on the brave. There was no further fall and, with great difficulty, 'Abe' managed to free Dad's leg and

stayed with him a further 40 minutes until he could be rescued – he'd been buried for 4 hours, his leg was fractured in two places, and it was encased in plaster for the following 13 weeks.

'Abe' Bradley was awarded the British Empire Medal, The Carnegie Trust certificate, the Daily Herald's Order of Industrial Heroism and a bronze medallion, as well as a cash award.

'Abe' was horribly embarrassed at 'all this fuss about nowt'. The authorities, of course, did not regard it as 'nowt'. John T Hall, the Northern District President of the Miner's Union, in presenting 'Abe' with his awards said, "You're a right 'un 'Abe', I'm proud to know you, and if these medals were as big as frying pans, they'd be none too big to express my feelings."

My dad always praised 'Abe' because he knew, had it not been for him, he would have died. I can remember my Mam going mad because Dad was late and we were having to build the fire up at a time when coal was rationed.

I think 'Abe' would be the only ironstone miner to receive the accolade and am only sorry he has never had any mention in Tom Leonard's Mining Museum at Skinningrove. I will always say "thanks" to 'Abe' who I am sorry is no longer with us but I am certain my Dad would not have lived until 1964 if 'Abe' had not been down North Skelton Mine that night.

By the way, 'Abe' was uncle to Mr George Benson who is now manager of the Bulls Head. George's Mam, Mary, must be very proud of her hero brother.

*Grace Wynn, 42 De Brus Way, Guisborough*



# The History of the Cleveland Mines - Longacres

by Stuart McMillan

*Having brought us a fascinating insight into the Castles which once dominated our local area, Stuart McMillan begins a new series which we're sure will prove just as popular. East Cleveland is steeped in another more recent history, a history that lasted for over 150 years and more, and affected the lives of the vast majority of residents in the little villages and towns around North Skelton, even until today . . . an industry that attracted people from all over the country and even from as far away as Spain, via the tin mines. The final chapter of this period ended on 17th January, 1964, with the closure of North Skelton Mine.*

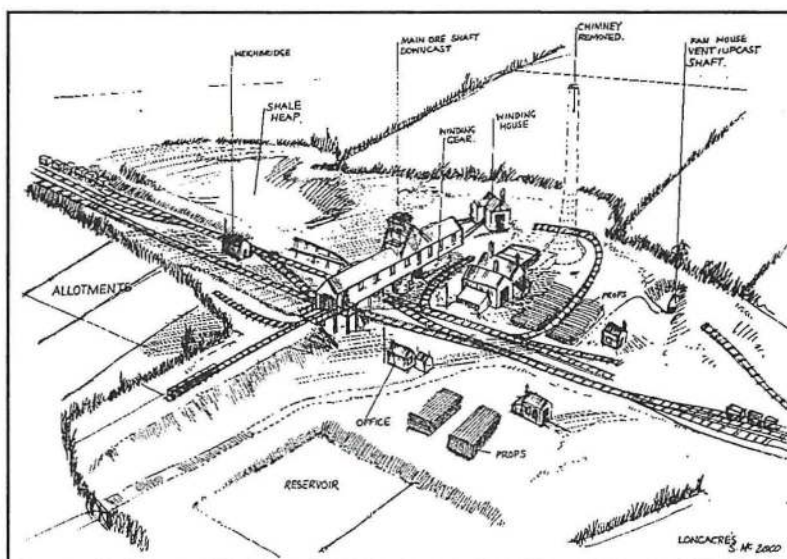
*During its heyday, ironstone mining was the main source of employment in East Cleveland - mines littered the area, some of which will be covered in later issues. Some say that East Cleveland is standing on ironstone 'legs' - the only areas that were not mined under were churchyards and Town Halls! Though only a small percentage of ore was mined, the work was hard, pay was low, and shifts were long, dark, cold and wet . . .*

The first mine we will look at is Longacres (OS - NZ 666196) situated close by what is now Skelton Industrial Estate at Hollybush. This was the 'sister' mine to North Skelton, and if you go to the site of Longacres today you will find a little evidence remaining, the buildings having been 'levelled' in the 1970's after a hundred years of service.

The site of one of the shafts is still visible with a high, round brick wall marking its spot. This was the main shaft which lay beneath a long, large, mainly timber constructed building. One end of the building was supported by a brick and concrete engine block designed for the winding gear - part of this structure is still there to be viewed. At the other end of the main building was an embankment and a concrete support which can also still be seen, looking like the edge of a platform. This suspended the shed above part of the railway, allowing trucks to run underneath to collect the ore which had just been raised from the shaft.

Another visible remaining structure is the ventilation shaft entrance which has been 'capped'. The building is of concrete but is now overgrown and is hidden in a hollow - there are two rooms, the rear one being the capped shaft - it is pitch black in there so shouldn't be entered.

The two shafts of Longacres were sunk in the 1870's to a maximum depth of 313 feet - the method used is quite fascinating. A hole was dug to the required diameter and then lined with bricks. One team of workers would then dig under the brickwork, which then slid down under its own weight, while a second team added more bricks at the top. It was a dangerous job and accident rates were high - at least two people were expected to die per shaft though, fortunately, this wasn't always the case.



The land for the site of the mine was leased from the Wharton family by Bolckow, Vaughan & Co. and production for the first year was around 103,000 tons - by 1880 the output had increased to 250,000 tons. The seam of ironstone around this area was 9 feet thick, though the stone was of poor quality, even in the best parts of the seam. It was, therefore, separated on site before transport and, in fact, Longacre even had its own smelt as shown in old photographs where a tall chimney was evident although it is believed this was removed before the First World War.

Longacres was dogged by fires which caused considerable damage during the sinking of the shafts. The mine was ventilated by a large guidal fan, later replaced by a Sirocco fan which was situated in the shaft room which still stands. The mine was taken over by Dorman Long & Co from 1929 until the 1950's when the main buildings were left to decay. From then on the workings were undertaken by North Skelton Mine - full trucks of ironstone from the Longacre site could be sent along the one mile-long underground, inclined railway, unaided, to the base of the North Skelton shaft (at a depth of 740ft) from where they were raised to the surface. Longacres' shafts were from then on used only for ventilation and as access for men and materials such as pit props and ponies.

*(If you have any memories of working in the mines in this area, or have any photographs, we would love to hear from you)*



# Congratulations Page!

Eddie Britton was a bus driver in the 1960's, Doreen a conductress – both were employed by the United Bus Company. Doreen remembers quite clearly that she didn't 'fancy' Eddie at first – she thought he was 'stuck up'!

As time passed, these feelings changed and she became quite 'struck' on him. Eddie felt just the same way about her and eventually they started 'courting'. Finally, Eddie popped the question, and on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1960, on a frosty but lovely, sunny Monday morning, Eddie and Doreen were wed at Guisborough Register Office.

The reception was lunch with three friends – no honeymoon for the newlyweds, times were hard and money was tight. At 5 o'clock that afternoon their wedding day festivities ended – both went to work back shift 'on the buses'.

This year, their Ruby Wedding celebration was held in Grinkle Park Hotel, attended by their loving family of 1 son, 5 daughters and 14 grandchildren.

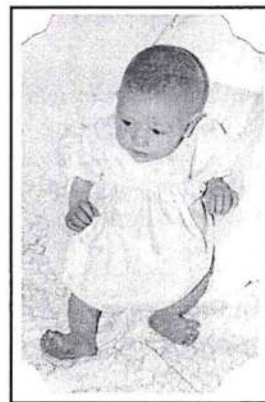


*Doreen and Eddie on the day of their Ruby Wedding  
with family (left to right in order of birth)  
Karl, Dawn, Joan, Anne, Linda & Heather*

It was a lovely surprise for them both to see their only son, Karl, who, being a Regimental Sergeant Major in the Army, serving abroad, didn't think he'd be able to make it to the celebration.

Eddie and Doreen are very proud of all of their family, and both agree that they are as happy now, 40 years later, as on the day they were married.

Congratulations to you both!



*Michael Garth  
40 years old on 31.12.2000  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY MIKE !  
Love from Sis  
( Who's a pretty boy - then! )*



*Michael Garth  
Happy Birthday Dad !  
Love from Jordan & Nanna  
(Please, Dad, can I have a mountain bike for Xmas!)*



*Mike Marsay & sister Julie Green*

Julie, I missed your birthday, to you a great sin  
And so your forgiveness I now must win  
I won't miss it again, I'm so sorry sis'  
Please free me from t' doghouse before it's Christmas!

*Lots of love, from Mike*



## A Tribute From Us!

'The Key's' Millennium Awards for services to the community goes to two special people.



Ann Adams

Ann, whilst working in Curly Tops hair salon has sold hundreds of tickets, raising thousands of pounds for local charities. Listed below are just a few organisations she has helped over a period of 20 years.

St Peter's Church, St Helen's Church, St Margaret's Church, A.T.C. Social Skills, St Aidans, Seafarer's Charity, A.N.S., The Key and numerous other Cancer Funds



Mervyn Marley

This summer, villagers passing by North Skelton St Peter's Church could not fail to appreciate the blaze of colour and beautiful display of flowers. Mervyn, freely giving his time, has worked tirelessly to keep the Church gardens in such a wonderful condition, giving so much pleasure to us all.

## Genealogy - Hugh Robert Gunn

Mr Reg Gunn, who lives in Victoria, Canada, has asked for help in tracing any information regarding his grandfather, Hugh Robert Gunn, who was married to Catherine (nee Bell) and lived at 25 Richard Street, North Skelton around 1905. Reg's father, John Charles, was born in the same house. He believes his grandmother, Catherine Bell, worked at Skelton Castle and that his great-grandfather, Charles Bell, may have been Huntsman there at one time. Reg has evidence that his grandfather was a commercial traveller, a mechanical engineer and possibly a milliner.

## A Christmas Message From Mo!



Redcar MP - Mo Mowlam



RT.HON. DR. MARJORIE MOWLAM, M.P. FOR REDCAR  
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE

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Norma Templeman  
7 Bolckow Street  
North Skelton  
TS12 2AN

September 2000

Dear Norma

The magazine is a great idea - keep on going!

My message for your Christmas edition is as follows:-

Marjorie Mowlam wishes the residents of North Skelton and Layland a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Best wishes

*Mo*

## Answers to Car Quiz:

1. Sweden
2. Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Hampshire, Hereford
3. Rally Sport
4. Bavarian Motor Works
5. Lilac
6. Bull
7. Ariel
8. Baffle
9. Mercedes Benz
10. Robin
11. Indicator
12. Radar
13. Terminal
14. Estate Car
15. Amazon
16. Riley
17. Depressed
18. Assist
19. Esso
20. Feeler gauge



# The Lamps

Marto banged on Davy's door. "Davy!", he shouted, "Ah've got that sewer pipe we wanted!"

Davy jumped up and opened the door. Marto was stood there with a five foot long piece of sewer pipe.

"Eeh, Marto, it's just what we want! Let's gerrit ovver t' club and wrap some Christmas paper round it. Where did yer gerrit from?"

Marto lifted the pipe onto his shoulder, "Ann Hutchy took me down to that 'manor house' their David's building and gimme it." Davy didn't like it. Ann Hutchy was trouble, everything she touched turned out a disaster.

"Ah'm tellin' yer now," Davy siad, "it won't work. She went to Blackpool and look what 'appened, she brought the country to a standstill! There was a petrol strike and she'd 'ave summat to do wi' it."

"Look Davy, we're desperate and there's nowt else we can use."

"OK Marto, but 'ah still don't like it."

North Skelton Club was a hive of activity. Duffy and Benson had got together and arranged a Christmas Party that would also act as a 1st Birthday Party for Davy's twins. The children invited were from 1-6 years old.

The 'concert room' was looking lovely, streamers were hanging all around the walls and balloons hung from the ceiling. A 6 ft Christmas tree stood at the corner of the stage which was being turned into a 'Santa's Grotto'.

Debby, Jayne and Gillian were hard at work stretching tinsel and



tin foil in every direction. Jayne had painted a fireplace with flames flickering in the grate. Santa's chair was placed beside it, a red velvet curtain draped over. At the back of the room tables were overflowing with jellies and goodies of every colour and flavour.

Duffy and Benson walked in with a large cardboard box. It was full of presents, one for each child. All that remained was for the 'disco' to be set up. Baz, the resident DJ, had been warned 'not too loud' and only records fit for the little bairns.

"Yer've no need to worry on that score Duffy, cos ah've looked through me 'repot-wore' an' found some kids Christmas songs!"

Debby stepped back to admire their handiwork, her eyes sweeping across the stage. They came to rest on Baz's disco. "Just look what e's put on t' front of 'is disco, 'e must think 'e's Jimmy Saville!"

There, stretched across the front of the disco, was a black cloth. Stitched on in coloured ribbon were the words, 'BAZZ-AZ-CLAZZ'!

Jayne was the first to speak, "Get mi that ribbon an' pass mi the sellertape!"

A few minutes later the words had been changed to 'BAZZ-AZ-BEEN'!

"Eeh Jayne, cover it up, 'e'll go mad!" Jill said.

The disco was forgotten about as the doors burst open. In came

Davy and Marto huffing and puffing, the sewer pipe carried on their shoulders.

Benson stared open-mouthed, "Wot's that for?"

"It's Father Christmas's chimley," Davy replied. "Marto an' me thought if we rigged it up above yon grotto, Santa could slide down it into t' grotto an' onto 'is chair!"

Benson shook his head, "Ah've never 'eard such a daft idea in all mi life! Who's gonna rig it up?"

"Tabby!" said Davy.

Tabby duly arrived, toolbox at the ready. An hour later all was ready. The scaffolding was up and the pipe was in place.

Marto then asked the 64 dollar question, "Who's gonna tell Mad Murph?"

All eyes turned to Tabby as he walked towards the door leaving behind, as he normally does, a trail of mucky footmarks. "You must be jokin', our lass likes mi eyes this colour, not black!" he shouted.

At that very moment, Mad Murph walked in. Of course his eyes went straight to the grotto. "Wot the 'ell's that!"

Poor little Davy was cowering behind Marto as he replied, "It's your chimley, Santa!"

Murph's face went red with rage, and his eyes bulged as he shouted, "Ah didn't wanna be Fatha Christmas in't first place. It was forced on me so ah'm damn sure ah'm not droppin' down that!"

Davy and Marto pleaded with Murph to do it. "It's fer t' little bairns Murph, it'll be t'ighlight o't day."

Murph was livid, but because it was also Davy's twins' birthday party he reluctantly agreed.

Meanwhile, 'Er next door' had worked hard for weeks making Tilly's three childrens' fancy dress. Little Ed was Joseph and the twins Angels. All three of them looked lovely as they made their way along to the Club, meeting up with all the other Mums and their children.

Stefan walked forward to greet them all, guiding them through to the Bar. Linda and Julie were the waitresses, looking very festive in their 'Mother Christmas' outfits. They were just putting the finishing touches to the tables which were bulging with the jellies, cakes and Christmas goodies.

Stefan walked in and shouted, "Kids are all 'ere. Are yer ready?" Julie looked up, "Ey, Stef, who d'yer think you are, givin' orders?"

"Ah'm t' bouncer!"

Julie and Linda laughed. "Bouncer! At a bairn's party! Oldest one's only six! Doesn't do much fer yer 'street cred' does it Stef!"

Stef stomped away, he hadn't wanted the job in the first place. He was only doing it as a favour to the Club to keep out gate-crashers and older kids.

Debby, Jill and Jayne looked rather out of place. the three of them had gone to the fancy dress hire shop and all that was left were three 'bunny girl' costumes. They were black and fit where they touched. Their white fluffy 'bunny tails' bobbed up and down as they walked. They were certainly quite a comical sight!

Stef couldn't resist, "Yer showing more white flesh than Adam and Eve ivver did!"

Benson and Duffy opened the door. "Right everybody, in position an' purra smile on yer faces," shouted Duffy, "an' as fer you Murphy, shurrup moanin' an' stand under yer chimley!"

Murphy was almost ready to start World War III. He thought to himself, "If it wasn't fer Davy's bairns, 'ah'd chin the lot of 'em!"

A space was made right down to the bottom of the concert room. Duffy and Benson lined up the children. Each child over four was given a lighted candle. Baz pressed his buttons and the lights were dimmed.

The music of 'Away In A Manger' played as the procession of dressed-up children slowly made its way from the bar into the concert room. Their little voices rang out as they sang, "I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky..."



The curtains on the stage were slowly pulled back . . . the children gasped, their eyes widening as they saw the Christmas tree lights twinkling, the tinsel glittering and Santa's grotto glistening. Their "Oh's" and "Ah's" could be heard through in the bar.

Tilly and 'Er next door' walked onto the stage, one carrying a birthday cake, the other a Christmas cake. The lit candles on them caused shadows to dance on the walls. The children continued to look on in awe. It was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. Finally, a voice clear and sweet began to sing, "Little donkey, little donkey . . ." It was 'Er next door', her voice rising, lifting the atmosphere as she sang, "Ring out those bells tonight, Bethlehem!" Every adult in the room seemed to be standing with their mouths open, holding their breath until she finally finished. There were tears in her eyes as she looked down at the children. A small voice piped up, "Ey missus, yer got that wrong in t' middle cos ah've done it at school!"

Everyone burst out laughing, although, sadly, it had broken that wonderful, reverent atmosphere that all present had witnessed but couldn't believe.

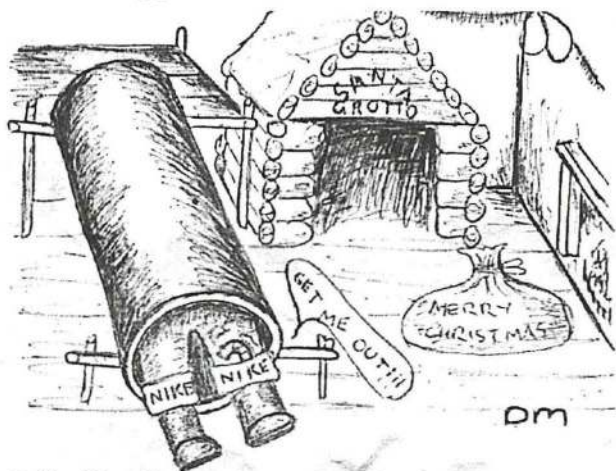
The children sat down at the tables as Julie and Linda bustled about, pouring orange juice, filling up plates and pulling Christmas crackers. The kids loved every minute.

Baz was doing a great job playing all the songs that kids love, although he hadn't yet noticed that the adults couldn't stop giggling at his new 'logo' - 'BAZ-AZ-BEEN!'

Behind the scenes, Davy and Marto were busy trying to calm Murph down. "Look Murph, Tilly an' 'Er next door' will get the children to the front of the stage, then 3-2-1 an' down yer drop!" "Urry up then, ah'm sweatin' like a ragin' bullock, an ah've gorra temper like one an'all!"

It was true, Murph was getting hotter and hotter in his Santa suit. The quicker this fiasco could be over, the better. The kids sat down expectantly. Debby, Jill and Jayne stood at the bottom of the sewer pipe as the countdown began, 3-2-1 . . .

Murph climbed the steps, took hold of the pipe and lowered his legs inside. "Right, SHOVE!" They shoved alright! He slid, and then got stuck! He couldn't move an inch, his body was firmly encased in the pipe! He shouted and fumed!



Debby, Jill and Jayne got hold of his feet and tried to push him back up. Meanwhile, Davy and Marto were trying to shove him down! The kids were loving every minute of it - they shouted and cheered! Santa was firmly stuck down his chimney!

Mad Murph bellowed from the pipe, "Get me out of 'ere now, 'ah can't move an' ah'm gerrin' cramp! As fer you two, Santa or no Santa, ah'm chinnin' yer both when 'ah ger out!"

Davy tried his best to calm him down. "Murph, don't panic, Stef's comin'."

Davy looked at Stef. "Please Stef, ger 'im out, 'e's gonna kill me an' Marto!"

Stef shouted, "Bring me a bucket o' soap suds!"

Marto ran.

Murph continued shouting, "Urry up, for God's sake, get me out of 'ere! Oh, dammit, mi false teeth 'ave dropped out an' caught in mi beard!"

Marto arrived back with the soap suds. Stef poured them in. Splash! The sewer pipe was suddenly filled with water and terrible language!

Murph roared, "You stupid . . . ! That watters freezin' cold an ah'm shiverin'. Mi teeth 'ave dislodged an' ah can feel 'em near mi wellies!"

Debby moved forward. Sure enough, Murph's 'bottom set' were lodged in his wellie top. "Ah'm not pickin' 'is noshers up, ah'm a nurse, nor' a dentist!"

Everyone was beginning to panic. Poor old Murph was getting hotter and madder by the minute. In the bar the 'three wise men' got up, Jigger saying, "Gentlemen, they seem to be avin' a very merry Christmas next door! Let's proceed into t' concert room, front seats are called for."

Ord Norm and Joyce followed, one step forward and two back! They pushed open the door. "Is it 'appy 'our?" slurred Joyce.

Ord Norm, gin bottle in hand, said, "If it were up to me, (hic) ah'd send fer t' Blue Watch!"

Everyone stopped and gaped. Davy ran to the phone and dialled 999. Five minutes later the Fire Brigade steamed in brandishing a 10 lb hammer, each one laughing, "Where's this Santa that's stuck up 'is chimney?"

The children loved it, as did the 'three wise men'. Even Joyce and 'Ord Norm', by now slumped in a corner, managed to open one eye and snigger.

Julie said to Linda, "Let's knock off eatin' our L.O. (left overs) diet. Ah'm not missin' this."

The 'bunny girls' stood, making eyes at the 'Blue Watch'. The only one who wasn't enjoying it was Father Christmas, who by now was screaming, "Wot's 'appenin'? Get me out fer God's sake, ah've got cramp now!"

"Ang on mate, don't worry, we're nearly there!"

Suddenly, SMASH, the hammer came down and the sewer pipe was in pieces. Murphy shot out, his 'bottom set' bouncing across the stage!

Baz switched on full blast, "When Santa got stuck up his chimney, he began to shout . . ."

Everyone joined in, even the fire brigade. It was marvellous! The kids sat spell bound as the firemen took over from Santa and gave them out their presents, one by one.

Where was Father Christmas? He was last seen running up New Skelton bank like sugar off a shovel, Davy and Marto not far in front of him!

Jacko, Smithy and Belrow were just rolling home after an afternoon session. They all stopped in their tracks as the trio raced past. Belrow shouted, "Reindeers done a runner then Santa?" They all laughed as they shouted, "Merry Christmas!"

Meanwhile, back at the Bull, Jean and Sally sat in the bar on their own. "Jean," Sally said, "what are we gonna do when its our millennium?"

"Well Sally," Jean replied, "we'll just sit 'ere an' open our telegrams from t' Queen."

"Ah don't want one Jean, she's nivver gimme nowt afore, an' if she 'as to wait til ah'm a 'undred to send me a card, she can keep it!"

Jean smiled as she said, "Yer right Sally, we'll just sit 'ere, lift our glasses, and wish each other, an' all No'th Skelton, a Happy and Peaceful New Year!"

*(Although sometimes triggered by a true event, 'The Lamps' stories are completely fictitious. So are the Lamp's family and 'Er next door'. Other characters are villagers portrayed larger than life with their full permission.)*



# Jingling Johnny!

## Interview with Peter Evans . . .

Saturday, 9am - the old 'United' bus pulled up at the bus stop outside Mrs Bower's shop (now the Post Office). The boot was opened and all the musical instruments were safely inserted. The Bandsmen trooped onto the bus full of confidence and anticipation. Their destination was Kirby Moorside. The contest was for the trophy, 'Jingling Johnny' and North Skelton Band wanted it badly! The mood on the bus was happy and jovial and every seat was taken - loyal supporters were also making the trip.

The bandsmen were: W 'Touser' Housam (Conductor), Frank Housam, 'Foxy' Grange, George Hugill, Harry Carver, Jim Wilson, Cecil Hurn, 'Pip' Harrison, Peter Evans (all cornet players), Arthur Stone (soprano cornet), Joe Hodgson (tenor horn), Fred Hugill & George Ring (solo tenors), Jack Drew & Jack Cummings (baritone), 'Buck' Templeman & Freddy Harrison (euphonium), Tom 'Tut' Templeman & Tommy Hugill (bass), Bob Evans & Benny Dale (double-bass), Fred Housam & 'Trix' Winspear (solo trombone), Harry Pratt (bass) and drummer George Hugill (senior).

It was 1938-39. Peter Evans remembers the event clearly, even though he was only a young lad of sixteen. "We had some great supporters who followed us everywhere, all good, loyal village characters."

Here are just a few of the regular followers that Peter remembers: Bob Vasey, Jim Reeder, 'Grandad' Evans, Ted Housam, 'Mac' Baker, Ben Howard, and Alec Batterbee.

The bus drove down into Hutton-le-Hole. The bandsmen needed one final practice and found a barn was available to them in the village. After their session, they boarded back onto the bus as the warm sun shone high in the sky. Next stop - Kirby Moorside!

When they arrived, secretary Charlie Jackson headed straight for the tent to register their entry and get their draw number. 'Gosh' Gordon, caretaker of North Skelton's bandroom, was also the band's 'librarian' and before every contest, 'Towser' would give him the music. It was then in his care until the bandsmen needed it - 'Gosh' never failed to deliver.

On order, all the bands marched and played up to the contest field. Even then North Skelton stood out! A spectator was heard to remark, "What time's that good band gonna be on again," referring to North Skelton's.

The programme was as follows: each band had to play first a 'march' (North Skelton played BB&CF & Contest Field); next came a hymn (Deep Harmony); thirdly a waltz (Cornflowers and Poppies); finally they played a random selection.

They all gave it their best, playing from their hearts and souls. It was a nail-biting wait for the results. Then a great cheer went up - North Skelton had won the 'Jingling Johnny' trophy! Not only that, but individual medals had been won as well by:

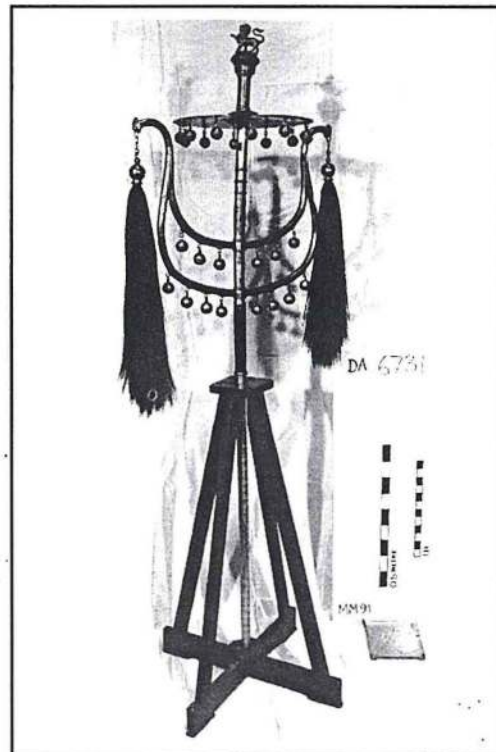
Frank Housam, Arthur Stone, Fred Hugill, Fred Housam, 'Buck' Templeman and Freddy Harrison.

Imagine the joy on the faces of this band of men! Peter remarked, "We all sat up straight like soldiers and played like heroes!"

Afterwards, they all made their way into Kirby Moorside where the pubs and clubs were bursting at the seams. The beer flowed freely and the lads got drunker by the minute! All except the bus driver and poor Peter who was only 16 years old and knew if he showed his face in any of those places his Grandad Evans would kick his backside back out! Instead, he and the driver wandered around the town until the jubilant winners had had enough and saw fit to return to board the bus for home.

'Jingling Johnny' had pride of place - it stood in the aisle at the back of the bus. Peter remembers the journey home as if it were yesterday, "D'yer know mate, it was brilliant! Charlie Jackson played all the old songs on his mouth organ. The singing nearly lifted the roof off the bus. It was great although, mind you, half of them were well drunk! 'Tut' Templeman kept turning round to have another look at the trophy, each time he would laugh and then cry. What a day it was, but by God, we deserved it!" "Now," he continued, "I can't remember whether it was 'VE Day' or 'VJ Day' when the band marched around the streets of North Skelton to show the villagers 'Jingling Johnny'."

What an achievement it had been - everyone came out of their houses to cheer the jubilant victors. The trophy was last won after the war by the Easington National Fire Service Band, now Easington Colliery Band.



The 'Jingling Johnny' trophy is made of brass and copper with a wooden stand. It is stamped 'POTTER MAKERS, LONDON', and engraved 'DOUTHWAITE DALE CHALLENGE TROPHY - ANNUAL COMPETITION - PRESENTED BY ADMIRAL SIR CYRIL AND LADY FULLER, 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 1935'. It was donated to York Castle Museum in 1961 by Kirby Moorside Brass Band, and there it resides to this day.



# Here and There

by Robert Rykiw

(Robert Rykiw, formerly of Hollybush, continues his story of life in Berlin where he now resides . . .)

Berlin has a large Turkish population, the fifth largest number of Turkish citizens living in one city, worldwide. Their way of life is somewhat removed from that associated with family life in East Cleveland. Not many of the Turkish wives have jobs. Their work is the home and family and they stay indoors more. The husbands, along with single men over, say, twenty-one congregate in numerous men-only clubs. These clubs are often associated with Turkish football teams.

However, good weather brings them out to enjoy park barbecues, with families and relatives and friends often grouped together. These 'get togethers', like numerous Turkish open-air fruit and vegetable markets, bring more colour and life to Berlin's city life. Large groups of Turkish men also play a form of bowls together in the parks, whilst from somewhere in the party atmosphere background, the wailing sazz and violin sounds of Turkish orchestral music emanate (sometimes too loudly) from ghetto blasters.

Walking along the streets in Berlin eating doner kebab, the visitor might be stirred by loud music and beeping horns. This is followed by a parade of cars decorated with flowers and ribbons, full of laughing, smiling people celebrating a Turkish wedding. It's quite common and providing one is not feeling miserable it can be exhilarating.

The main problem I have with Turkish folk is the way that most of them pass on the left on the pavement, as opposed to the right, which is customary here. I also don't like the way some of the young ones drive around the square where I live pretending to be Formula One drivers! Far worse are some of the local dog owners whose idea of walking the dog is to take it to the same spot around the square every day and not clean up the resulting deposit.

A lot of the Turks seem to have a chip on their shoulder. It's probably something to do with unemployment and assimilation problems, a result of older Turks (a large proportion of them 'stay at home' women) being unwilling, unable or not encouraged to learn German and mix more. The cause of assimilation has been hindered by many Turks not being allowed to vote and take up German nationality (against European regulations) until the Social Democrats came to power last year.

In recent elections in the former East Germany, where unemployment is high, right-wing parties who complain that asylum seekers and economic migrants from post-communist Eastern and Central Europe along with the large Turkish community are taking resources meant for German people, gained about one in six of the votes cast.

Resentment against Turkish people (another 'chip' factor) is not hard to spot, although it is not widespread. No doubt some of this resentment is due to the fact that Turkish people are not averse to having children, even when unemployed. Unemployment and the resulting need for something to focus on and give meaning, is a childbirth factor not simply confined to Turks, however, and is present in the general unemployed population.

Despite the German government repeatedly stating that more children are needed to provide the future workers necessary to support Germany's ageing population (through state insurance payments) the birthrate does not increase. It seems that many Germans are averse to starting a family for various reasons. It can't simply be a problem of not meeting the right partners.

Owing to my father's descendency from Ghengis Khan's Golden Horde, I've got almond-shaped eyes. I share this feature with a number of Turkish people and I'm sometimes mistaken for a Turk. Like them I know what it is like to get 'that look' now and again from the odd German. Behind that look lies a prejudice I prefer to disregard. However, I could not ignore a verbal attack in Berlin's main station when a toddling, shorts and tee-shirt clad Tristan (my son) started taking off a urine-soaked nappy. While I was paying for a newspaper, the nappy dropped to the floor. As I was bending down to pick it up, a German woman stormed over to me and angrily shouted, "There ARE toilets in this station, you know!" I was flabbergasted! I don't know whether that was racism or a product of the supposed German trait of orderliness! Oh well, such are life's trials and tribulations. I think it is fair to say that such an utterance would be unlikely, on say, Redcar railway station. I imagine someone there being more helpful, perhaps pointing their finger and saying something like, "Look luv, there's a waste bin in that corner."

There's an active night life in Berlin, mostly in the central area. Lots of pubs, music cafes, discos, and clubs for gays enjoy a lack of restrictive licensing laws and stay open till the early hours, perhaps till seven or eight in the morning.

The large gay population has earned Berlin the title of 'gay capital of Europe'. There is a lot of media attention and coverage of the gay lifestyle. There's money making in it somewhere especially as many young gays seem to me to be following a fashion. Perhaps it is something to do with the so called 'male identity crisis' caused by the women 'wearing the trousers'.

It is not surprising that tourist literature informs the visitor that Berlin is known as 'the city that never sleeps'. This can also be seen as referring to a Berlin, which, like a phoenix rising from the ashes and debris of the past, has become the capital once again. In the process the political axis has shifted eastwards to the position it occupied before the fall of the Third Reich.



Robert Rikyw



# *The Decline and Fall of Almost Everyone!*

*by Neil Harrison*

At fifteen, Derek Pigg was already developing as a useful medium-pace seam bowler, especially on the green wickets which seemed to predominate in the Skelton area. These could be found at 'Spouts' (on the Guisborough Road), Tom Kingston's Field (off the 'black railings') and the slopes of the Recreation Field (Hollybush). It was 1955.

We knew, of course, that there was 'proper' cricket: North Skelton (behind Boocock's), mighty Loftus (with an enclosed ground!), Skelton Castle (sheep may safely graze) and even the minute ground at Priestcrofts (near Boosbeck) boasted two teams.

The Castle selection policy of that day had to give preference to *'employees of the Estate'* and, from memory, the team featured at differing times:

Wilf Foster, Freddie Parvass, Roland Whitaker, Joe McGrail, Barry Broomfield, Stan Brown, a burly hitter whose name I cannot recall, Frank Thompson, Alf Glover (a wicket-keeper with his own style), Ken Stainthorpe, George Bunning, Gordon Hood (fearsome fast) and Eric Hatfield (a local great).



*North Skelton Cricket Club - winners of the Zetland Cup 1950*

*Back Row L. to R: -?- , -?- , A Leeks, H Marley, R Slater,  
C Wilks, T Pashley, -?- , A Turnbull*

*Front Row: L Douglass, C May, D Gosling, D Wright, J May*

Although the fielding was somewhat creaky – Bloomfield was assessed as the lythest – there was to be no room for two 15-year-olds bursting to play the beautiful game – so off to Priestcrofts we went. Walked, of course. Different clubs, changed attitudes – guidance and advice from Bernard and Malcolm Gratton, gangly Keith Elliott, 'Ash' Hawkins, Ken Forbes (yet another individualistic keeper), Trevor Jackson and others during, would you believe, twice-weekly 'nets' and the occasional game for the 'stiffs'.

Here I first encountered *'The Averages'* – that mystical formulae upon which so many, too many, cricket decisions have been based. Les Gorman (fellow student at Guisborough Grammar School) already featured highly in 'Ash' Hawkins neatly scripted maths, but Les was always destined for greater things and, along with North Skelton's Len Douglass, duly achieved these at Guisborough. I think both proved something of a point there.

Working Saturdays, and an affair of the heart at Staithes, meant that I did not play Cleveland League cricket



(amalgamating many titles) until 1960, by which time North Skelton and Priestcrofts had gone the way of Brotton, Spa Wood, and Charltons, etc., although Loftus continued and the Russell Cup was still an elegant evening venture. The decline continued through the early 1960's as TV, motoring and other attractions sapped the membership of many clubs and gallant tea ladies remained the solid backbone on most Saturdays. On Teesside, the many works-based teams such as ICI, Cargo Fleet, Head Wrightson, Cochranes, Furness Athletic, etc., were to disappear over the next 20 years. With Great Ayton, Stokesley, Marske and others wisely upgrading to NYSD cricket, the Cleveland area was in free-fall membership.

At Skelton Castle, a combination of favours from work-colleagues, a youth policy (Rodney Hill) and sheer faith kept us going, but only just. Off the field, Graham Hodgson revolutionised fund-raising, his mum Doris helping form a vibrant Ladies Committee, but the major improvements were at the ground, following two moves totalling about 100 yards, to accommodate road-straightening. The input of Johnny Musset and Rodney Hill realised tremendous stability on the square, which was to set the trend until 1997, while the erection of a new pavilion in the dying throes of Skelton & Brotton UDC (Jim Graves, *et al*) was a community affair of real note. Meanwhile, the iconoclastic myopia of the Dales cricketers had seen Liverton Mines, Lingdale, Staithes, Hinderwell and Moorsholm thrown-out on 'a catchment area change of rule' – but more probably because these teams were more successful than the 'farm yackers'. The Cleveland League absorbed those teams, not without early difficulties, and the Dales cricket clubs continued to interbreed their own cricketing success . . . talk about 'All Creatures Grunt and Smell' !

Suddenly there was a resurgence of interest; TV lost its grip, the car became more a utility than a god, and young people rediscovered the attractions of pitting one's own ability against others. Batting at cricket remains the definitive sporting test of courage and character. Sadly, at about this time, less cricket was being played in schools. Fabulous young talent like Johnny May had to ask the Head of Sport at De Brus if they could possibly arrange a cricket match – the H of S was, apparently, some minor celebrity in an Indoor Sporting Discipline . . . well, so was I, but it didn't stop me giving 40 years to Cricket in Cleveland.

(More in Part 2, including the real story of why Rodney Hill ended up in the boating-lake in Rhyl, and did Johnny Musset really catch a sparrow at Scarborough?)

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(Registered House-Builder)



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3 Kilton Lane, Brotton, Saltburn,  
Cleveland Tel: 01287 676282

## SPIRALS

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**48 Tube Tanning Booth**

(£1 for 4 Mins - £2 for 8 mins)

Mon 9am - 1pm  
Tues 9.30am - 11.30am & 3.30pm - 6.00pm  
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Thurs 9am - 7pm  
Fri 9am - 5pm  
Sat 9am - 3pm

7 High St., Brotton Tel: 01287 677184

**Thank You  
and Merry Xmas**

to all the staff at  
Devany's Newsagents  
High Street, Skelton  
for your continued help  
in the distribution of

**THE KEY**  
from Norma & Don





## **CURLY TOPS**

Unisex Salon

Season's Greetings

Pauline

Ann & Kay

**Competitive Prices &  
Special Offers  
Throughout the year**

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(BUTCHER)

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Pies to please!

**Hand-raised Stand Pies**

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All Small Building Work

6 Layland Rd, North Skelton

Home Phone - 01287 650815

Mobile - 07974 463555

## **Elmora Nurseries**

North Skelton



**Xmas Trees  
Holly Wreaths  
& Bouquets**

Flowers, Plants, Fruit & Veg

OPEN 7 DAYS

TEL: 01287 652105

## **Bull's Head**

North Skelton



2nd Dec - 'Paul Tilley'

9th Dec - 'Persuaders 60's'

22nd Dec - Disco

23rd Dec - 'Trade'

27th Dec - 'Marty & the Moondogs'

30th Dec - 'Simpsons'

31st Dec - Disco

Merry Christmas Everyone!

Tel: 01287 650624

## **INGLEBYS**

Estate Agents



103 High St, Skelton

Tel: 01287 653365

4a Station St., Saltburn

Tel: (01287) 623648

## **G Boocock & Sons** *Holmbeck Garage*

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Saturday 7am - 7.30pm

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**Forecourt Shop, Auto Parts  
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**Competitive Prices**

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## **Snappy Snacks**

Holmbeck Road



Sandwich Bar

Off Licence

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**Low Cost, High Quality  
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**We now act as Agent for**

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## **North Skelton Workingmen's Club**



16th Dec - Children's Xmas Disco

- all children accompanied  
by an adult

31st Dec - Danny Bonna - vocalist  
plus Disco

(tickets £3 each in Club)

New Year's Day - 'Family Day'

Tel 01287 652921

**S.B.G.**  
**Insurance &  
Property Sales**  
**Motor &  
Home Specialists**



**Xmas Greetings  
01287 650994**