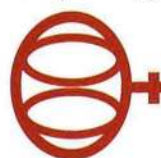


ISSUE NO. 31

DECEMBER 2001

THE KEY



TTT

A NEWSPAPER FOR NORTH SKELTON & LAYLAND



H. HARRISON. 01.

10th Anniversary Edition

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Editorial

WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT 'THE KEY' IS 10 YEARS OLD! DECEMBER 1991 to 2001

Over the last decade 'The Key' has gone from strength to strength. And it's to you, our readers, who we'd like to say thank you.

Don and I have tried to include articles for all ages - however, we have learnt over the years that we can't please everyone!

Your donations continue to be gratefully received, but funding is becoming very difficult. 'The Key' will still be distributed free of charge to all residents of North Skelton, Layland & Greenhill View, but due to the rising costs in producing the magazine, as from next Easter, copies of 'The Key' will increase in price to 50p for non-residents. If you are on our mailing list please remember to add on 5p for the envelope, 41p for postage - a total of 96p per copy. Please contact me for the cost of sending a copy overseas.

Don and I both know that the majority of you pay more than the asking price anyway, and we thank you for that.

Your articles over the years get better and better. Please keep them coming. Don would like to express his thanks to those of you who have sent articles on disk or by e-mail - it saves him a lot of typing time. Relevant photographs would be appreciated with your articles - these too can be e-mailed.

We never cease to be amazed by your lovely letters and e-mails. Everyone seems to be on the internet these days - better and cheaper for me, more work for Don!

Hopefully, next year, I will have my own e-mail account. I am taking computer lessons and learning the new technology slowly but surely. This is all a far cry from our first copies which were typed, cut out, and stuck on in columns bordered by strips of thin black tape - I soon got 'sacked' from that job as I could never get the lines straight!

Many times I have mentioned the people responsible for my first production copy of 'The Key', but because this is a special edition I would like to thank them once again; Mike Stephen, Sandra Himsworth and Veronica Chambers.

Finally, to all our regular contributors, thank you for doing a brilliant job for 'The Key', especially 'Pip' Harrison for illustrating our cover. I also appreciate all the volunteers, past and present, who help me to deliver the magazine round the houses. A Merry Christmas and Peaceful New Year to you all.

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Some photos from 'The Key' can be viewed on the internet - the website address is:

www.burluraux1.freemove.co.uk/keyindex.htm

Street Memories

I took a stroll down memory lane
And went to see our street again.
Where once stood houses in days of yore
With lighted windows and open door,
And street lamps glowed on a foggy night
As children played games beneath their light.
Where a bloke was lucky to have a job,
And suits were pawned for a couple of bob.
The women in shawls who every night
Would sit and chat 'neath the street lamps' light,
And boast of their kids, their Tommies and Janes,
Who'd be running around and playing their games
Of kicky-tin, spies and blind man's bluff,
On pavements uneven and stones that were rough.
The games of football played in the dark,
That would have done credit to Ayresome Park,

Whilst the older boys and a junior miss
Chased each other to catch a kiss.
Though times were bad and work was scarce,
Without good neighbours it could have been worse.
There was always a loan of a couple of bob,
When the man of the family hadn't a job,
Or a helping hand when someone was ill
And you couldn't pay the 'tick' shop bill.
Though times were hard, with friends so true,
The skies that were grey soon turned blue.
But like the gang on the corner
Who sang "Heart Of My Heart",
There came a time when we had to part.
And though we are scattered in towns far and near,
We occasionally meet and over a beer
We talk of our childhood, the bitter, the sweet,
And re-live the memories
Of our old street . . .

Anon

What Became of North Skelton's Chapel ?

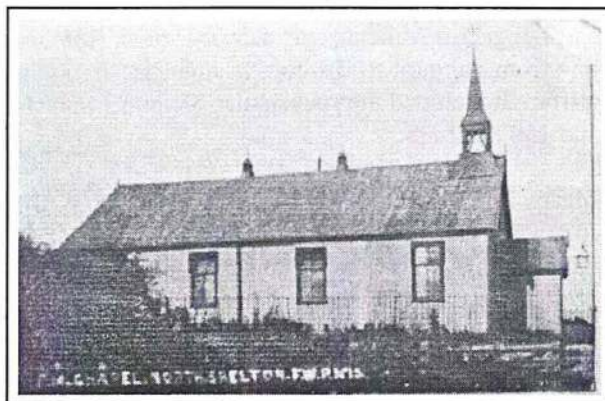
The old timber and corrugated iron chapel that was erected originally to satisfy the spiritual needs of the miners of North Skelton has long since gone and now the showroom of Boocock's Country Store stands upon the site. The chapel now stands at Clitherbecks Farm and is used as a building to house livestock. I don't know much about the history of the building before it was removed except to say that it was a chapel and that it had fallen into disuse.

A friend of my father's, Mr. Lawrence Hauxwell of Skelton, was a joiner working for the builder, Norman Sykes, who had won the contract to redevelop the site. First of all the site had to be cleared, and, after a quick glance at the old chapel, the decision was made to subcontract this work, as quite often in those days, as well as in modern times, it can cost a large amount of money to clear a site safely. Lawrence was asked if he knew of anybody who could do the job and he said he would find out.

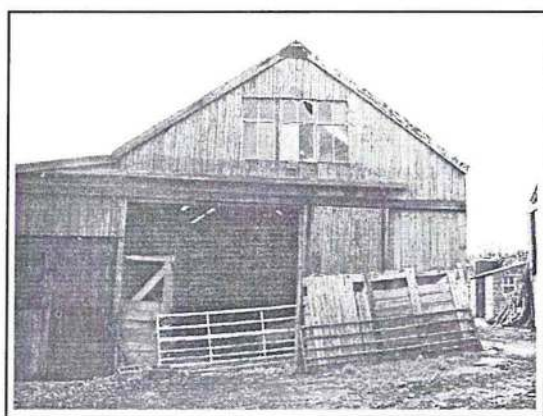
My father, Mr. David Harland, was at that time a farmer at Clitherbecks Farm, (or Doubting Castle depending which map you read), farming dairy cattle, sheep, pigs and hens, as did most farmers on the moors long before the Common

Agricultural Policy polarised farmers into doing one thing or the other. Lawrence rang up my father to enquire if he knew of any farmers who could dismantle a building and remove it. My father, not being shy of hard work and seeing the potential in the building said that he knew the very chap.

Permission was quickly obtained from the Wykeham Estate, (who still own the farm), and in a letter dated the 3rd of August, 1966, permission was granted on the condition that the 'tenant's fixture was erected tidily and in keeping with the other buildings on the holding'. So it was that shortly after my father paid the sum of £50 and began the task of taking down the building and removing it to the farm. I remember as a child riding on the tractor with my father as we went to North Skelton with a flatbed trailer and another tractor and trailer to bring home all the timber, window frames, doors, and other paraphernalia that had been the Chapel. It was a long job and it was dark by the time we returned to Danby. In the meantime, I am told that the builders felt that they had made a mistake in their initial appraisal of the building as there was much fine timber in there and they felt that my father had got himself a bargain.



*North Skelton Methodist Chapel
(then standing on the site of the Country Store)*



*The 'chapel' is now an outbuilding at
Clitherbecks Farm, Danby*

Then began the job of reconstructing it on the farm. The midden pit was cleared and fine foundations laid. The major supports of the building were erected with the help of Mr. 'Dickie' Tyerman of Houlisyke and Mr. Eric Stainthorpe of Hutton Mulgrave lending a hand. I don't remember how long it took but I do know that we have a fine building still standing. Shortly after, my sisters, who were all teenagers by that time, had a party and I remember the interior of the building was covered in psychedelic posters, it being the 1960's of course. After that it reverted to being a shed, where on the ground floor cattle were housed in the winter months. At this time my father had sold his dairy herd of cattle and had bought into beef cattle. Our neighbour, John Henton, welded some stands into the concrete floor for each beast, and hay was fed from the hayloft that had been built as a first floor above.

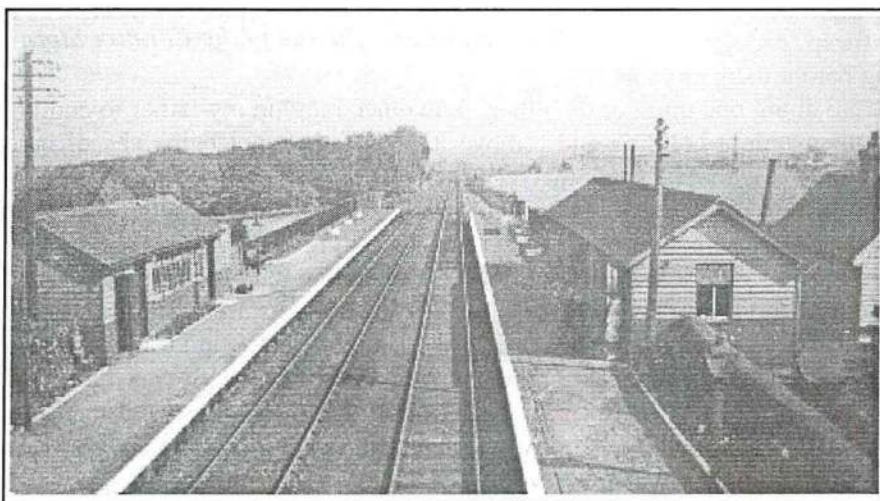
The years went by and my father gave up the beef herd and now the farm has solely sheep. Some modification has been made to the hayracks and feeders accordingly but apart from these small changes it is as my father built it in the 60's. I am now the farmer at Clitherbecks, but in these days of CAP and quotas it is nothing else than a 'hobby farm' and is mainly subsidised by a day job through which I met Norma, the editor of 'The Key' and this article is the result. I hope that it has 'shed' some light onto the whereabouts and use of your old Chapel.

Neil Harland

NORTH SKELTON RAILWAY STATION

The first railway line in North Skelton was a temporary branch of the Cleveland Railway near its crossing of Stanghow Lane and past Wet Furrows Farm. The Cleveland Railway, which extended to Brotton in 1865, had a depot near Stanghow Lane which serviced North Skelton Mine while it was under construction. The mine opened in 1872 and Longacres Mine a year later, by which time the North Eastern Railway Company had built an extension branch line from Saltburn to Brotton through North Skelton. This line opened on the 1st June 1872, but not for passenger traffic. It included the spectacular Skelton Viaduct, designed by T.E. Harrison with eleven arches, 783 feet in length and 150 feet high.

Meanwhile North Skelton had grown. In 1870 fifty cottages were built near the mine at a cost of £80 each, and the following year the Skelton and Brotton Urban District Council built a further 156 cottages to house the miners and their families who came from as far afield as Durham and Cornwall to find work in the expanding iron industry. In 1881 the foundation stone of the Primitive Methodist Chapel, which was to be built of wood and corrugated iron, was laid by George Robinson, the mine manager, and in 1900 Bolckow, Vaughan and Company, the mine owners, came to an agreement with the North Eastern Railway Company to leave sixty per cent of the ironstone beneath the site of the proposed North Skelton Station near Hollybush Farm.

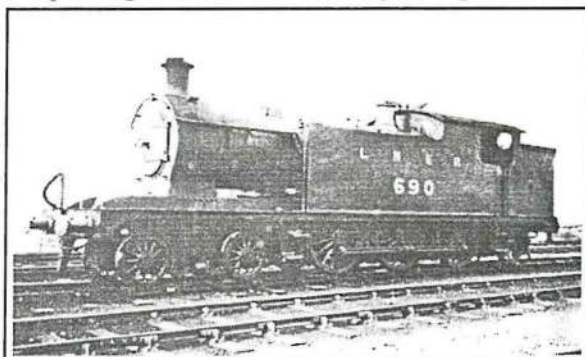


*North Skelton Railway Station
- looking along the 'down line' towards the village (top right)*

The station opened on the 1st July 1902 and cost £1447 to build. At this point it is interesting to note that the York National Railway Museum's Directory of Railway Stations shows North Skelton Station as opening on 1st April 1875. I can only surmise that this was a depot for goods traffic - coal, timber and machinery - for either North Skelton or Longacres. Certainly, signal boxes were situated at the approaches to both mines. The Passenger Station buildings, which were built mainly of wood, comprised a station house, waiting room and booking office on the 'up' platform - the line to Saltburn. On the 'down' line were a waiting room, and a signal box at the Brotton end of the platform. This controlled the siding which led from the main down line behind the station to the goods shed. On the Saltburn side of the station was a footbridge for passenger use when crossing the track. Some distance down the line, near to the two bridges which cross the road through North Skelton, was another signal box opposite Richard Street. This controlled the junction where the Brotton line and the Prestcroft Spur converged, the latter leading to the branch into the sidings at the mine. By 1911 the population in the Skelton district exceeded three thousand and the number of passengers booked at North Skelton which served the area was over twenty four thousand. By 1921 the population and the number of passengers booked had hardly changed. In the

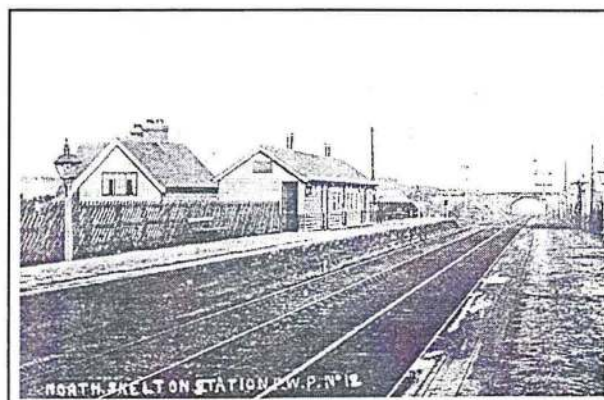
winter of 1912/13 there were about twelve passenger trains a day in each direction. The first train to Saltburn was at 7-43 am and the last train back from Saltburn was at 7-35 pm except Saturdays when there was a late train at 10-10 pm.

The main routes were to and from Scarborough via Whitby or to Middlesbrough via Guisborough, changing at Brotton. The 'up' line required a change at Saltburn in most cases but occasionally there was a through train travelling further afield. Ron Booth remembers a school visit to London in the early 1930's when a through train from North Skelton carrying children from a number of local schools left at two o'clock in the morning. He had to walk from Groundhill and remembers with some



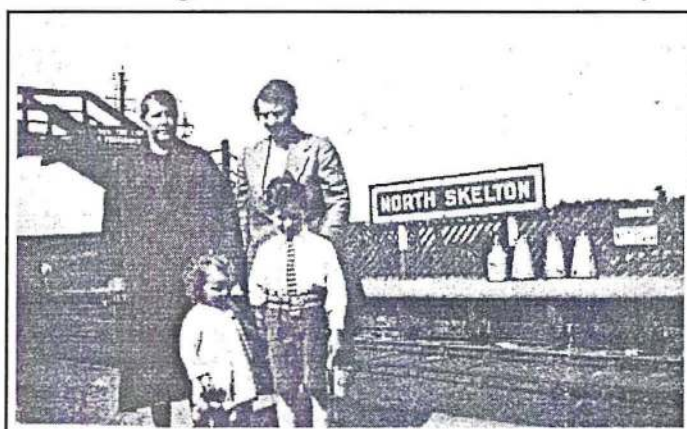
Photographed in 1929, this engine, 690, worked the Saltburn - Brotton line

gratitude the roaring coal fire in the Waiting Room. These were times when the railways had little competition. Buses were almost non-existent and people were used to walking long distances. Deliveries of essentials such as coal and milk were usually by horse and cart, often collected from the railway stations. In the 1920's and 1930's the station platforms would be full of milk churns, fish boxes, pigeon baskets, luggage and people. Such was the popularity of rail travel that on many lines, where reversing and shunting were necessary, as at Brotton and Guisborough, steam Autocars and Railcars were introduced, alongside the traditional locomotive and carriages, to speed up operations. The Autocar units made matters easier because only the driver changed ends - not the engine. The Autocars and Railcars were given names such as 'Neptune', 'Old Blue' and 'John Bull' after well-known stagecoaches of the past.



Looking towards Hollybush bridge (still standing) as is the Station House (left)

By the 1940's things had changed. Rail travel was still popular but other forms of transport such as buses and cars were becoming more available. In 1949 there were only four trains a day from North Skelton; the 9-46 a.m and 6-29 p.m to Brotton and the 10-40 a.m and 6-56 p.m to Saltburn.

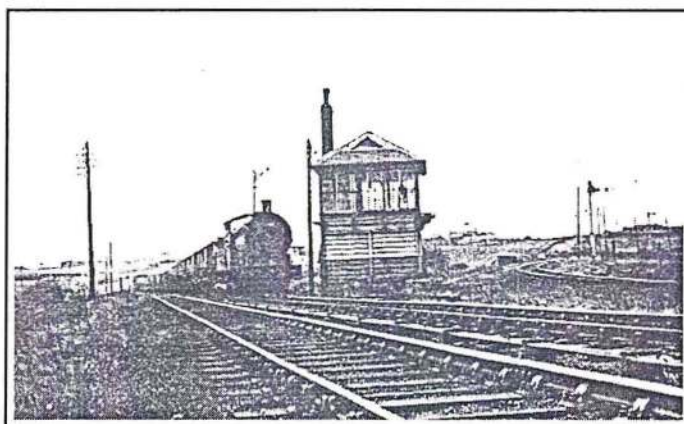


This photo was taken in 1928 - they had travelled on a one day ticket from South Bank

*Left: Mrs Chapman from Northampton & Mrs Perkins
Children are Hazel Perkins (aged 4)
and Norman Perkins (aged 8)*

To a child in the 1930's a trip by train to Saltburn was an adventure. The chocolate machine in the station provided refreshment in the shape of a bar of Nestlé's in its red and silver paper. The ride over the viaduct was followed by a donkey ride, ice cream and picnic on the beach. The only drawback for a tired youngster was the long walk home from the station.

Three years after the station closed, Longacres Mine shut down though stone was still taken through North Skelton. Ten years later, on 17th January, 1964 North Skelton Mine closed. It had produced 25 million tons of ironstone in its lifetime. The last trainload of over 200 tons left the mine on 20th January and soon after, North Skelton Junction Signal Box stopped operations. The Station House still remains as a reminder of the past. The railway viaduct still spans Skelton Beck, though the line is now single track and carries mineral traffic from Boulby Mine and steel from Skinningrove. Remarkably, that is almost exactly what it was designed to do one hundred and thirty years ago.



North Skelton Box with Priestcroft Spur on the right

Colin Berwick

North Skelton British Restaurant

On my travels researching the wartime history of this area I have spent many hours in Records Offices throughout the area. From County Hall, Durham, to the Records Office of what was Dorman Long, later to become British Steel, now Corus, to the County Records Office in Northallerton and to the County Archives Middlesborough.

It was on one of these trips to the County Archives Office that I was looking through the list in the Skelton & Brotton UDC records for the war years. There I found reference to the WW2 British Restaurant, North Skelton. What was this? I must admit it was new to me, a restaurant in North Skelton during the war? Were there not restrictions, rationing, coupons, dig for victory etc?

'Norma', I immediately thought, I wonder if there is anything in it for *The Key*. I put in a request on my card and in a short time I was presented with three large books. Two were green hard-backed ledgers, one with *North Skelton British Restaurant* embossed on the cover in a very faded gold, and the other, an identical book embossed with *Carlin How British Restaurant*. On opening the books I was presented with the daily store records. Potatoes, turnips, parsnips, cabbage and peas - the lists were endless. There were jams and bottled rhubarb, ground rice, even Bisto! Almost every crop was available plus tea and coffee and of course meat - 6 to 12 lbs daily, bacon 6 - 10 lbs monthly and margarine 1-5 lbs (up to 10 lbs some months). For the winter months there was coal and coke, as well as paraffin, to keep the place warm and to cook on. But where in the village, I wondered, was the 'British Restaurant' situated? It must have been at the pit, or so I thought. A quick phone call to Norma and I was put straight; it was, in fact, in the village Institute (known to locals as the 'Tute') and the tables were on the dance floor - it was all very nicely set out.

"I have something that may interest you," exclaimed Norma, "on the subject of the British Restaurant". A few days later a hand written note was passed on to me. It read:

"I began work at the North Skelton British Restaurant, I think either in May or June 1943. I had to bike from Guisborough because there were no buses until 8.30am from there. Edie Harding and Norma Sturman arrived about the same time. They saw to the potatoes and veg being prepared, and there was an old machine to peel the 'tatties'. They went into a zinc bath of water and another stood with fresh water. Edie and Norma 'eyed' each one and washed them. Our favourite 'tattie' song was 'Nelly Dean'. I bet some rare noises escaped outside, but we had lots of laughs!

My job was to cook the large joints, first in a huge pan and then roasting in the coal-fired oven, which was very temperamental and 'smoked'. I use to send for a council workman and usually a Clerk from Skelton Council arrived. He was a Londoner by the name of Harry Devoil and he could not quite reckon me up. He just use to stand and listen then send someone to clean the little tin chimney, and away we went for a little bit longer. Alice Watson from Carlin How, who was supervisor, usually called in once a week. Making pasties once a week was a favourite day for folk. I made 100 -150 a day, and there was never any meat and veg left. This was followed by steamed pud, jam 'roly-poly' or 'spotted dick' and custard - cost 1s. 6d. We were very well patronised by both residents and office staff from the pit. One little girl came regularly for 2 dinners "to take home please". Gypsy, a large greyhound, was often seen peeping in the side door for any leftovers. When we said, "Can you smile?", it showed a line of white teeth before it got its reward! Dadd's of Guisborough were our veg suppliers, Jarman and Flint of Stockton brought dry ingredients, plus 7 lb tins of jam. It all seems a long way off now, but it brings back many happy memories. I think I'm the only survivor. It was a lovely place, always someone popping in to lend a hand or bring a bit of village news."

Edith Wilkinson

Flicking through the pages of the ledgers it's hard to imagine the days when children had not seen a banana or an orange, or chocolate. This restaurant may have been the only 'square meal' they got. There were no street lights and no central heating and work was hard.

The restaurant at North Skelton's first entry in the ledger was on 4th July, 1943 and the last was 15th June, 1945, serving the community during the later part of the war. Carlin How's restaurant served from 16th May, 1942 until 30th June, 1945. Also in the ledger was a unemployment card for a Thomas Chambers, of 50 Garney Street, Boosbeck, with stamps and the card looking as fresh as the day it was issued. There was another surprise in the last large book that I requested, a book twice the size of the two ledgers - the '*GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME*' - the local authority's register of accommodation. This purple book listed the addresses of the people not only in North Skelton but every village from Carlin How, Moorsholm, Lingdale, Boosbeck to Charltons. It told how many rooms a house had, how many people lived there and how many rooms were spare.

Some examples were:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|----------|---------------|
| 1 Hombeck Road | 6 rooms | 2 people | 4 spare rooms |
| 10 Glen Coe | 5 " | 4 " | 1 " " |
| 1 Railway Ter | 5 " | 4 " | 1 " " |
| Elnora House | 5 " | 6 " | 0 " " |
| 7A Bolckow St (Police House) | 0 " | 0 " | 0 " " |



A History of the Cleveland Mines - Lumpsey Pit, Brotton

Lumpsey Pit is now hardly recognisable, as most of it was demolished in the late 1960's, and the shale tips were levelled to a certain extent. Some foundations remain to show where the buildings once belled smoke and noise throughout its working life. Since the building of the new by-pass, the pit has become more visible as the road passes close to the old buildings and under the old main line.

Lumpsey was the second ironstone mine at Brotton - the first was positioned near the railway station and only worked for a short time until the opening of Lumpsey, its shale tips now making a playground on Coach Road, the only indication of where this pit once stood.

Lumpsey Pit was built next to the main East Coast railway line from Middlesbrough to Whitby, a line which now terminates at Boulby Potash Mine, now the only working mine in Cleveland and the deepest in Europe.

Lumpsey was built on the west side of a hill and stood alone half a mile south of the village of Brotton, with a branch line running through to Kilton Mine. An old railway signal still stands in its original position, its signal paddle pointing down. The two shafts were sunk in the late 1880's to a depth of 75 feet and branched out to a tunnel which boasted a height of 8' 6", the first ore being extracted in 1881 - some 500-plus tons.

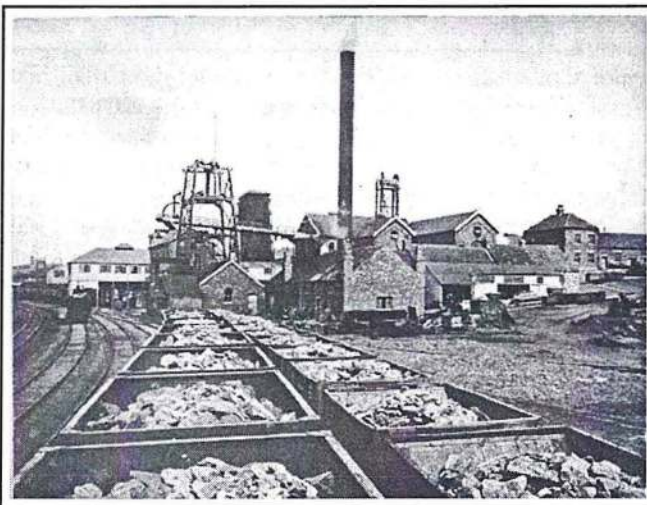
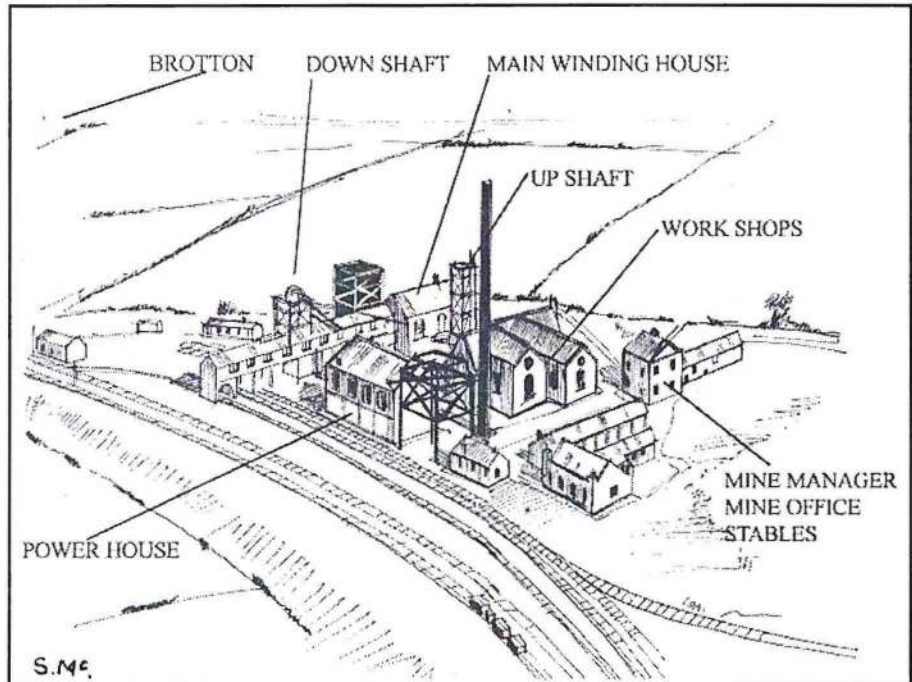
In its first period of ownership, from 1881-1923, the franchise was operated by Bell Brothers, passing in 1923 to Dorman Long and Co. During World War 1, a six-inch gun was kept at Lumpsey. Set on a railway carriage and standing at a height of 25 feet, it was wheeled out by horse to a special three-finger spur line near Hunt Cliff as a defence against Zeppelin attack. The spur line was demolished in the late 1950's.

Lumpsey was a large pit compared to others in the area, being built of stone and brick with the same general layout of the Cleveland iron ore pits. At one time some 70-plus horses worked on the site, but with the advent of more modern machinery the horse became redundant, with the ore trucks being conveyed on a continuous rope.

The mine was connected to Carlin How, with its ore being extracted through Lumpsey, at the turn of the century and from that time on, the two pits worked together as one, extracting the ore and working round pillars left to support the roof. The closing of Lumpsey in 1954 brought the end of iron ore mining in Brotton, though the pit was connected to North Skelton, acting as an air vent to that mine.

To access the site today, start at Brotton and follow the footpath down below the Hospital and pass between the allotments and over the new bypass by the footbridge. Follow the track adjacent to the railway line and then you cannot miss the pit ruins. The two shafts are about the first thing you come to - a large concrete platform with two plaques on them and two vents through which can be heard the sound of running water.

Just in front of the old shafts is a tower of concrete with a tunnel for trucks to pass through. It was a support for the ore tipping shed and now stands alone next to the main line. Looking around there are various foundations - some can be distinguished as buildings, others cannot. At the end of the site is what remains of the shale tip, smoothed out by demolition and, over time, by bikers. The old branch line to Kiltonthorpe makes a nice walk but is apt to be muddy at times.



Lumpsey Pit c. 1920

Stuart McMillan



COMPUTER HELP PAGE

ANTI VIRUS PROCEDURES



Computer virus' are a menace and range from the harmless joke to the downright destructive. Some Virus's just sit around in your computer now and again putting silly messages on your screen or beeping every time you hit a key on the keyboard. Some other virus's can destroy all your files, make your operating system unworkable, or send out infected e-mails to everyone in your address book without your knowledge. Once your computer is infected then it may be a simple case of running some anti virus software to get rid of it, or in other cases you may need to follow instructions to manually remove the virus. The good news is that there are a number of websites that can offer help and advice about virus's and their removal, (www.avp.ch, www.nai.com, www.symantec.com/avcenter/vinfodb.html)

The transmission methods for virus' are usually one of three methods:

- a) When files are transferred from an infected machine to a healthy machine via a floppy disk.
- b) When files are sent as an attachment to an e-mail.
- c) Some virus's are sent as e-mails, in rare cases you do not even have to open the e-mail up, you only have to download it and see it in your inbox for it to be activated.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT INFECTION

- 1) Obtain some good anti virus software. Various companies sell software that will constantly monitor your system and incoming e-mails for virus's. Make sure that if you pay up front for anti virus software that you can get free updates. On average 15 new virus' are let loose on the internet every day so you need to ensure that you can get regular updates. **ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE IS ONLY AS GOOD AS IT'S LAST UPDATE !!** There is no value in buying anti virus software that is more than 6 months old that does not allow you to update ! An alternative to buying up front is to download free anti virus software from the internet & pay every time you update. Occasionally free anti virus software is given away on the CDs on the front of computer magazines. There are even some anti virus packages that claim that no upgrades are required . As usual in life, in the author's opinion, you get what you pay for.
- 2) Beware of unsolicited e-mails. If you receive an e-mail with an attached file from someone you do not know, **DO NOT OPEN THE ATTACHMENT** until you have decided whether you trust the source, even better still **DELETE THE WHOLE E-MAIL !** Also if you receive an e-mail from a friend that looks in any way suspicious, then call that friend up and ask if they have sent you an e-mail. I know this rather defeats the object but it's better than getting a virus.
- 3) Only swap files on floppy disks with machines that have regularly updated anti virus software and the disks are scanned on your machine.
- 4) Beware e-mails with 'strange' subjects or text. E.g. "Subject: Some pictures for you", any e-mails with strange messages like this should be binned straight away.

Neil Harland

In our August Edition of 'The Key' we published a 'Free Pass' card, found in an old photo album, from Geo W Wren, former proprietor of the 'Traveller's Rest, East Loftus. Inside were these 'Ten Commandments':

1. When thirsty thou shall come to my house and drink, but not to excess; that thou may live long in the land: and enjoy thyself forever.
2. Thou shalt not take anything from me that is unjust, for I need all I have and more.
3. Thou shalt not expect too large glasses, nor filled too full, for we must pay our rent.
4. Thou shalt not sing or dance only when thy spirit move thee to do thy best.
5. Thou shalt honour me and mine, that thou mayest live long and see me again.
6. Thou shalt not destroy or break anything on the premises,

else thou shall pay for double the value; thou shall not care to pay me in bad money nor even say 'Chalk' or 'Slate.'

7. Thou shalt call at my place daily. If unable to come I shall feel it an insult, unless thou send a substitute or an apology.
8. Thou shalt not abuse thy fellow bummers, nor cast base insinuations upon their character by hinting that they can't drink too much.
9. Neither shalt thou take the name of my goods in vain by calling my beer 'slops' for I always keep TADCASTER TOWER BREWERY CO's Fine Ales and Stout, and am always at home to my friends.
10. Thou shalt not so far forget thine honourable position and high-standing in the community as to ask the Landlord to treat.

W

Eddie's Cars

Air-Cooled Cars....

Once they were the height of fashion, but now 'air-cooled cars' are a thing of the past. What was once almost the rule when it came to small continental cars 30 years ago (Citroen, VW and Fiat's by the million) is now the exception.

Think 'classic' however, and a whole world of per-



verse vehicles emerges, some long forgotten and others still familiar. Porsche, Citroens, Tatra, Fiats, NSU, Panhard, Corvair.

Take the Fiat 500—motoring for the masses Italian style. Here is 4-wheel transport in its most basic form. Powered by a little Fiat twin engine not much bigger than a hairdryer, which you start by pulling a handle between the front seats.

The first 60's Corvair was General Motor's answer to the cheap VW Beetle, and had a reputation for evil handling. Someone once quoted, "Unsafe at any speed."



Now the NSU Prinz is a different 'kettle of fish'. The NSU 1200 TTS was claimed by NSU to be the fastest

1-litre car in the world in 1967. The catch was the price - £1,036 put it in competition with the Lotus Cortina.

Any kind of Panhard is an exotic machine in this country. It came as a shock to some people that such a large car with 5 seats could be powered by a 2-cylinder 850cc engine. Low weight, good aerodynamics and in Tigre form, with twin carbs, you could manage up to 90 mph.

All good, extremely reliable classics and, of course, no worries about hoses, anti-freeze, water pumps or radiators - great, eh...!

As for today, I think the only air-cooled machine is the new Mexican Beetle. If anyone out there knows different, let me know...

10 Years On ...

Well, it's been 10 years since Norma gave us our first 'Key' magazine - doesn't time fly...! What were you doing 10 years ago?

There was plenty going on and what a co-incidence, as today President Bush is at loggerheads with Bin Laden, so then was his father with Saddam Hussein, warning the Iraqis to pull out of Kuwait. A few days later and Operation 'Desert Storm' was under way. Let's jog our memories with other events from 1991.....

In sport, Nigel Hawke wins the Grand National on 'Seagram'. Nigel Mansell goes into the record books in July after winning the British Grand Prix, his 17th victory, one more than Sterling Moss, making him Britain's most successful driver.

Author Graham Green dies, aged 86, and Robert Maxwell dies leaving a question mark over his business empires, the Mirror Group and the New York Daily News just to mention two.

After five years captivity in Beirut, Terry Waite is released and flies home. Super rock star Freddie Mercury, lead singer with Queen, dies aged 45.

On the motoring front, 1991 is a little modern for me—Vauxhall launched the MK3 Astra. Ford's best seller, the Escort, gets another face lift and still tops the sales charts. Today, the Escort has bowed out to make way for the Ford Focus.

What a busy decade, and The Key has given us some super reading and memories. Here's to the next 10 years—I wonder if we'll see cars still around in 2011 such as the Sierra, Cavalier, Astra?

I doubt it....

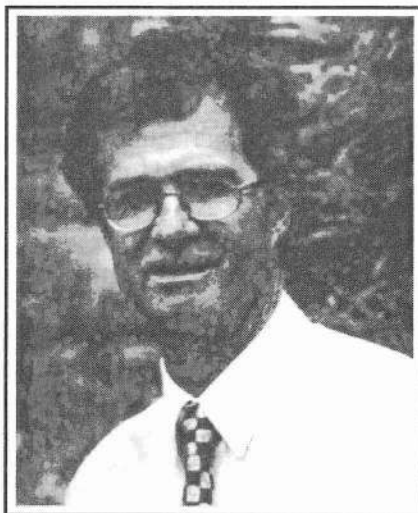
Eddie Hartley

Letterbox

I have lived in Skelton for fifteen years and have been puzzled as to why there are so few eating places in the village. Many people eat out nowadays yet where are the Italian, Indian or Thai restaurants, the bistros or wine bars? The High Street is dead on an evening - two or three classy restaurants would bring it to life. Is there no demand for these facilities? I would be interested to know what the views of other Key readers are on this issue?

Josie Bland

21 Years of Skelton Health Surgeries



Dr Roger Neville Smith

I have been working at Skelton for the past 21 years and can still remember Dr Stevenson who, at that time, was almost fully retired but still had one surgery each week for his "old faithfuls". He had held his surgery for many years at his residence, York House, South Terrace, Skelton where he remained the senior partner for a long reign. Many doctors (maybe as many as 15) had joined and left. Dr Rooney, one of his partners had a house and surgery at Ardmore House, Skelton Green during this time.

When Dr John Frood joined the practice in 1972 he replaced Dr Whitefield and worked with Drs Stephenson and Beckwith. Until premises were found in the High Street in Skelton, patients would often be found queuing down the path at York House, waiting for the surgery to be declared open.

Tragically Dr Beckwith died in an aeroplane crash in 1973. Since then a large number of doctors have joined and several left the practice. Dr Richard Parkin, now the senior partner, was the first to join after Dr Frood followed by Dr Ian Guy, Dr Hyla Holden and myself in 1979.

Surgeries ran at 57 High Street, Skelton as well as the Health Authority Clinic at Lingdale. Transient surgeries ran from the Plough in Moorsholm and a private house in Child Street, Brotton above the "high wall". As well as surgeries there were two "call houses", one in Boosbeck and the other in Richard Street, North Skelton. Although patients would not usually be seen there messages were deposited and collected. The number of private telephones and cars were very limited in the 1970's.

In 1973 Skelton Health Centre was built with much greater facilities and space for the nurses and health visitors to have offices and clinics. Gradually, the need for the "call houses" dwindled and the Brotton surgery attracted very few patients; by 1976 they were closed. The surgeries at Lingdale and Moorsholm continued although the pub has given way to the Village Hall. Any latecomers would previously have had their consultation alongside the first customers arriving at opening time. The records had to be transported from the High Street to the Health Centre and a farmer's cart was used for the purpose. Unfortunately the weather was wet and windy and several sets of records took to flying off into the muddy field (which later was developed below the Health Centre). I am told that all the flotsam was found and restored to its rightful place!

Shortly after establishing the surgery at the Health Centre revolutionary communication systems were introduced. A pager, weighing about 8 ounces, was carried by the doctor on call and every car had a two way radio connected to Autocall (later Cleveland Health Call). No longer would the doctor return from one call to find he had to return to almost the same place to see another patient. The radios were eventually replaced by the first cellular phone available; this state of the art technology was the size and weight of half a car battery. As the modern small phones became available the 'black bricks' were 'mothballed'.

Dispensing medicines has changed a lot over the years since Dr Stevenson's time. He had a full dispensary at York House but when the surgery moved to the High Street and then the Health Centre, dispensing was only required for those living more than one mile from the nearest pharmacy. Moorsholm continued to be supplied for a few years and Lingdale still has a limited stock for patients of the relevant villages.

Phase Two of the Health Centre included a pharmacy (Kingston's) run by Les Gorman, and more room was available for consulting with extra space for the health visitors, community psychiatric nurse and social worker. Over the years many doctors have joined and left. Dr Ian Guy left to work as a curate, being replaced by Dr Mike Betterton. Since then we have seen the arrival of Kate Harvie, Marjorie Baillie, Margaret Bottery, Guy Baker, Neil Brownlee, Peter Lavelle, Allison Armitage and most recently Jesus Gonzalez-Castro. Dr Baillie left to take up psychiatry, Dr Bottery moved away with her husband, Dr Holden retired only to work as a psychiatrist locally, Dr Baker went abroad to Papua New Guinea and Dr Frood left to work for the NHS trust responsible for the community hospitals, psychiatry and the community services including district nurses. Among the permanent positions there have also been many temporary locum doctors, trainees (now called GP registrars) and medical students. Patients have coped very well with all these changes but may well have benefited from a "who's who" guide to new faces at Skelton.

Out of hours medical care is now run from East Cleveland Hospital and is shared by the doctors from Skelton, Brotton and Loftus. Prior to this each practice took its own out of hours work. On occasions this was very difficult: in 1978 the winter was very severe and Dr Frood remembers making house calls by tractor which also had to be used to help the

nurses. In Dr Stevenson's time alliances operated between doctors in Saltburn, Guisborough and Skelton, sharing holiday cover and out of hours. Cleveland Cottage Hospital (previously the Miners' Hospital) had beds for GP patients and a minor accident department; cover for this was provided by a practice in Saltburn (Costello and Constable), and the current Skelton, Brotton and Loftus practices. Old Cleveland Cottage Hospital has now been replaced by the palatial East Cleveland Hospital with much expanded services including elderly care and psychiatry.

So much has changed in our area. Employment has changed totally since the closure of the mines and also in the mid 1970s when many large employers in Teesside shed thousands of jobs. During my time I have seen real improvements in health, particularly with respect to children's infectious illness and the longevity of our elderly population. Residential homes have been created at Kiltondale and the White House (previously Dr Cawley's house and surgery) in Brotton, Castlecourt in Boosbeck (previously the village school), Manor Court in Moorsholm (previously the village school), and Ardmere in Skelton Green (previously the house and surgery for Dr Rooney).



*York House, Skelton
(former home and surgery of Dr Stevenson)*

Record keeping has changed hugely in the past 20 years. The original folders introduced at the beginning of the NHS, the so called Lloyd George folder, has been phased out. At first this was replaced by a larger A4 folder and now this is being replaced by computer based records. Similar changes have taken place for ordering prescriptions; again patients have coped very well with all these changes although at times have found it puzzling to understand - why more change?

Changes continue at an ever increasing pace as health needs change and government departments decide where our priorities must lie. People will get poorly, injured and depressed and hopefully the service that we provide at Skelton will continue to help those in need. Allowing the doctors to do their work smoothly and effectively is a dedicated and committed team of staff who have been able to adapt continuously to all ways of practising. The nurses, health visitors, midwives, and many others are there to work with all of us as a team and this team, I think, continues to be robust and happy. I know that the majority of the patients that we see are keen to help us help them.

Much of the information that relates to the time before 1979 has been supplied by Dr Frood and I am very grateful to him for this. Finally, it is likely that some of the facts are inaccurate and I am grateful to the readers who may correct and add to this article.

Dr Roger Neville-Smith

A Tribute to 'The Key'

Celebrating the first ten years of The Key – and looking forward to its next ten years – is not just a simple straightforward birthday celebration, but a milestone that marks a remarkable triumph of local community spirit.

Back in the early 1970s, when I came back to East Cleveland from three years away at college, the experience of being away and seeing other places and other people meant that I saw things back at home with fresh eyes. I came back because I loved this area. Three years in London were certainly exciting years, but I had missed the sea and moors, the East Cleveland valleys and mining terraces, and most of all, the unique spirit and culture of our local communities. But looking around me, I saw these local communities going through difficult times. The mines had all closed – North Skelton was the last to stay open – and a mood of uncertainty hung over everything. At one point, my father and I were invited to a local conference on the future of the East Cleveland mining communities where many people wondered if there

was any future at all for villages which had lost their essential economic purpose.

Well, as things have turned out, there was. The old mining villages have certainly changed. Most of them have become 'dormitory settlements' for Teesside, and the old mining terraces have been embroidered with new estates. But like all communities – in all places and at all times – these changes work hand in glove with continuities, traditions and cultures.

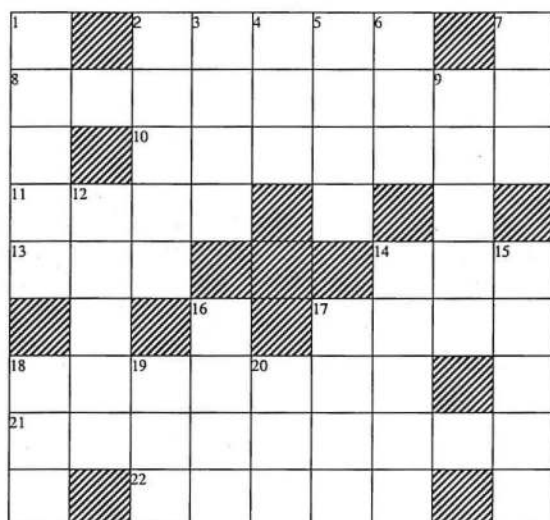
Every time I drive through North Skelton, I cannot help being struck by how well the village looks. Like all the other villages, it has undergone changes, but has also managed to preserve its essential character. This does not happen magically. It is the work of local people who care about their community and who work hard to enrich its environment, culture and spirit. People like Norma and friends who produce The Key. Local people who hold the world together.

Congratulations to everyone!

Tony Nicholson

Crossword

by Mark Thirkettle



Across:

2. Angry frown 8. Promote, urge 10. Furious
11. British river 13. Nevertheless 14. Seed
17. Part of the foot 18. Abashed 21. Nomadic
22. Highly praise

Down:

1. Landing stage 2. Perfume 3. Tapered shape
4. Belonging to us 5. Cover 6. Fall behind
7. Sea, river or double 9. Arabian sprite
12. Fermenting agent 14. Foot Control
15. Crockery item 16. Of the Isle of Man
17. Valiant man 18. Point 19. Go quickly
20. Assembled

(answers on page 21)

Some Useless Facts!

The short-term memory capacity for most people is between five and nine items or digits. This is one reason that phone numbers were kept to seven digits (not including area code).

The size of your foot is approximately the size of your forearm.

The average adult stands 0.4 inch (1 cm) taller in the morning than in the evening, because the cartilage in the spine compresses during the day.

The sound of a snore (up to 69 decibels) can be almost as loud as the noise of a pneumatic drill (70-90 decibels).

The strongest muscle in the body is the tongue.

The thumbnail grows the slowest; the middle nail grows the fastest.

There are 62,000 miles of arteries, capillaries, and veins in the adult human body.

A person's nose and ears continue to grow throughout his or her life.

A woman's heart beats faster than a man's.

It requires the use of 72 muscles to speak a single word.

Quiz . . . ???

General Knowledge:

1. In which county is Stonehenge?
2. In what year did the 'Freja Svea' run aground on Redcar beach?
3. What is the main spice in 'goulash'?
4. What is the next letter in this sequence - OTTFFSS?
5. At 11.15am, on 1st December 1990, Phillipe Cozette and William Fagg met for the first time and opened a bottle of champagne - why?
6. Which country has the largest population of Spanish speaking people?
7. How many men have stood on the moon?
8. If you sailed directly east from Middlesbrough, which country would you first come to?
9. In a game of Monopoly, how much money does each player start with?
10. What would a 'numismatist' collect?

Sport:

11. Which British sporting event is over a distance of 4 miles 374 yards?
12. What is the maximum number of clubs a golfer can carry in his bag?
13. In tennis, which player won 4 'majors' and a gold medal in the same year?
14. Football - who were the last winners of the old 1st Division?
15. Name the horse who crossed the line first in the 1993 Grand National which was cancelled?
16. How many gold medals did Great Britain win in the Sydney 2000 Olympics?
17. At what weight did Cassius Clay win Olympic gold?
18. If all the players in a cricket team were bowled out first ball, what number batsman would remain 'not out'?
19. Which sport has a playing surface of 9' x 5'?
20. In football, who is England's most capped player?

Music & Entertainment:

21. Who were the first group to perform on 'Live Aid'?
22. Who had a 'red nose day' No. 1 with 'The Stonk'?
23. Name the first presenter of 'Top of the Pops'?
24. Who has presented most TV Games shows?
25. Who has appeared in most 'Carry On' films?
26. What is the name of Del Boy's local?
27. Which singer appeared in Coronation Street's 40th anniversary episode?
28. What was Roger Moore's first Bond film?
29. In Live Aid, who appeared on stage in both the UK and USA?
30. Who had a top selling album called 'Stars'?

(Answers on page 21)

Alan Burluraux

PHOTO GALLERY



Langbaourgh Brass

(Based in North Skelton Village Hall)

*Back Row L to R: Karen Oldroyd, Andrew Champion, Kirsty Barras, Gary Douglas
3rd Row: Nigel Barnes, Neil Colman, John Avery, Eileen Derring, Allison Martin, Ben Derring,
Jane Bateman, Josie Coupland, Dave Tray
2nd Row: Hannah Ross, Bill Adams, Clare Kirby, Dave Pickard, Chris Coupland
Front Row: Tim Hall, Rob Collins, Tim Oldroyd, Paul Derring, Trevor Bateman*

(Missing from photo - Jacqui Wilson, Adrian Shelley, Craig Halsey, Phil Carter, Desmond Heaviside)

2001 Competition Honours:

*February: Durham League Contest - 1st place in Section B, promoted to Section A
March: Regional Contest - 2nd place in 3rd Section, qualified for National Finals in Preston in September,
promoted to 2nd Section 2002*

*May: Yorkshire & Humberside Contest, Scarborough - 1st in 3rd Section
September: National Finals, Preston - 4th in 3rd Section nationally (out of 16 bands)*

*October: Pontin's Contest, Prestatyn, Wales - 1st in 3rd Section
(19 bands in total from all parts of the country)*



Brotton Recreational Football Team - Cleveland League Division 2 Winners, 1954

*Back Row L to R: Fred Rowe, 'Acorn' Brown (in flat cap), Marshall Jackson, Geoff McLean,
Reg Dunning, John Dales, S Sykes, B Garbutt
Front Row: Alan Bringloe, Dennis Yates, Ron Scott, Brian Stonehouse, L Riddiough, Mick Conway*



North Skelton FC Presentation Night - early 1970's

*L to R: Gerry Brown, Terry Pullen, Dave Biden, John Jackson, Cliff May, Tommy Foster,
Jim Ramage, Monty Alexander, Tony Gordon, Fred Burluraux*



Skelton Castle Junior XI - 1982

*Back Row L to R: B Bloomfield (Coach), K Pigg, D Colman, L Douglass (Chairman) T Johnson,
P Briggs, L Allinson (Manager)*

*Front Row: R Stainthorpe, R Smith, A Breckon, M Balls, B Johnson (Captain,
J May, N Allinson, D Allinson*



Skelton FC - Teesside League 1966

*Back Row L to R: Cliff Drinkhall (Manager), Eric 'Tut' Thompson, Steve Teasdale, Billy May,
Bill Fraser, Neil Harrison, Alan Prothero, Barry Bloomfield (Trainer)*

Front Row: Terry Jones, Derek Harden, Frank Chapman, Glen Brooks, Dennis Thompson



Stanghow Lane School Football Team - 1949

*Back Row L to R: A Tilley, A Calvert, B Ness, D Preston, B Bloomfield, D Hick, Mr Reed (teacher), H Breeze
Front Row: J Templeman, G Templeman, D Lowe, A Goslin, M Ferrer, B Addinson*



Brotton County Modern School Netball Team - 1964-65

*Back Row L to R: Miss Tasker, Brenda Blenkey, Janice Hobbs, Maureen Cook, Helen Myers
Front Row: Caroline Watts, Susan Armstrong, Sue Perrow, Heather Clements, Janice Green*



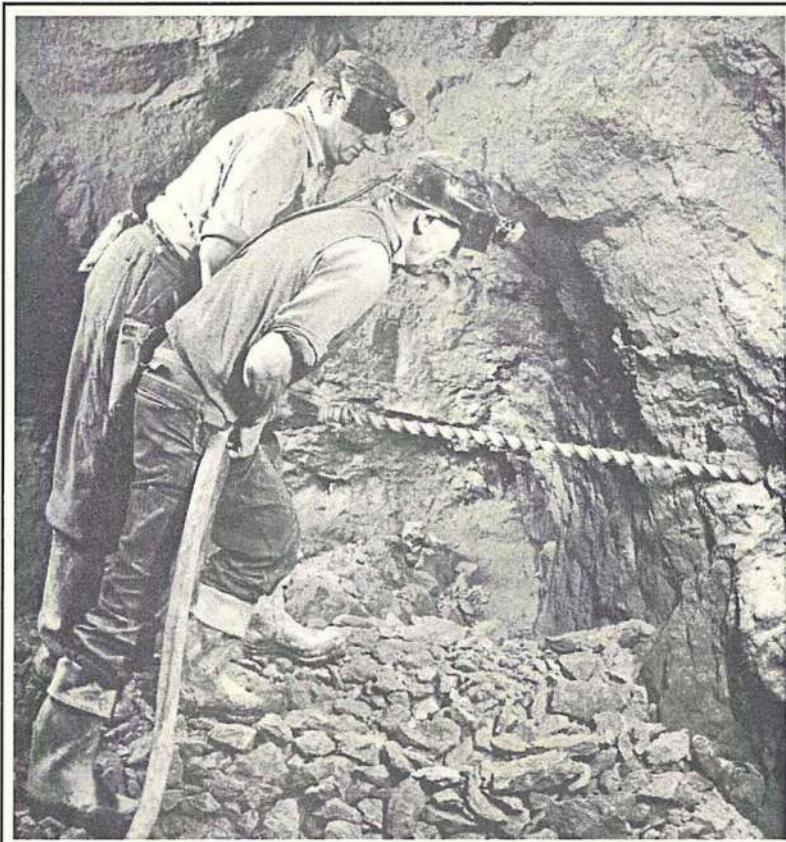
In The Bull's Head - c. 1960

*Back L to R: -?- , Fred Hugill, Tom Templeman, Frank Winspear (part hidden), Dennis Todd,
'Gosh' Gordon (part hidden), Bob Bolton, Tom Jackson, Mr Price, Malcolm Wilcox
Front: -?- , Ben Howard, Margaret Metcalfe, Marriot Jackson
Kneeling: Jack Johnson*



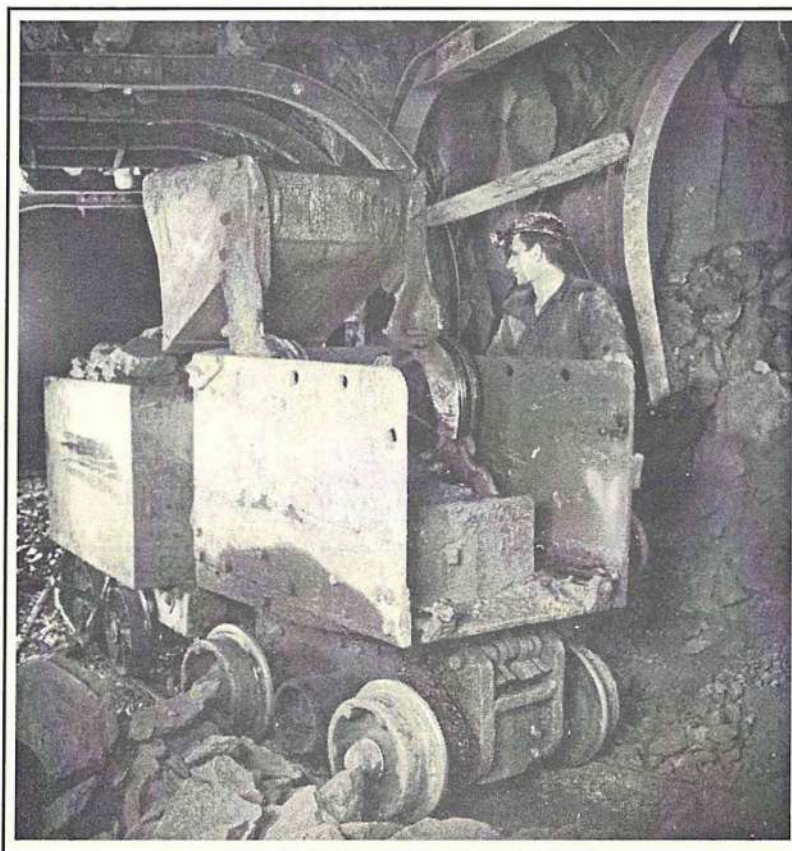
North Skelton Junior School

*Back Row L to R: Godfrey Clayton, Sydney Alderson, Leslie Smith, Edward Riley, Andrew Smith, Mervyn Marley,
Robert Bramley, -?- , Raymond Redman, Robert Whiteley, Peter Garbutt
3rd Row: Tom Hayes, -?- , Carol Pashley, Joan Robson, Jean Pratt, Christine Whitehead, Anne Ruddy, Jean Hill,
Ruth Garland, Anne Wilson, Brian Green
2nd Row: Ann Ridley , Moira Drinkhall, Felicity Carter, Doreen Antill, Annie Marshall, Irene Boyes,
Helen Johnson, Kathleen Berwick, Patricia Carter, Doreen Westbrook, Jennifer Pearson
Front Row: Geoff Laker, Bill Kime, Raymond Fowler*

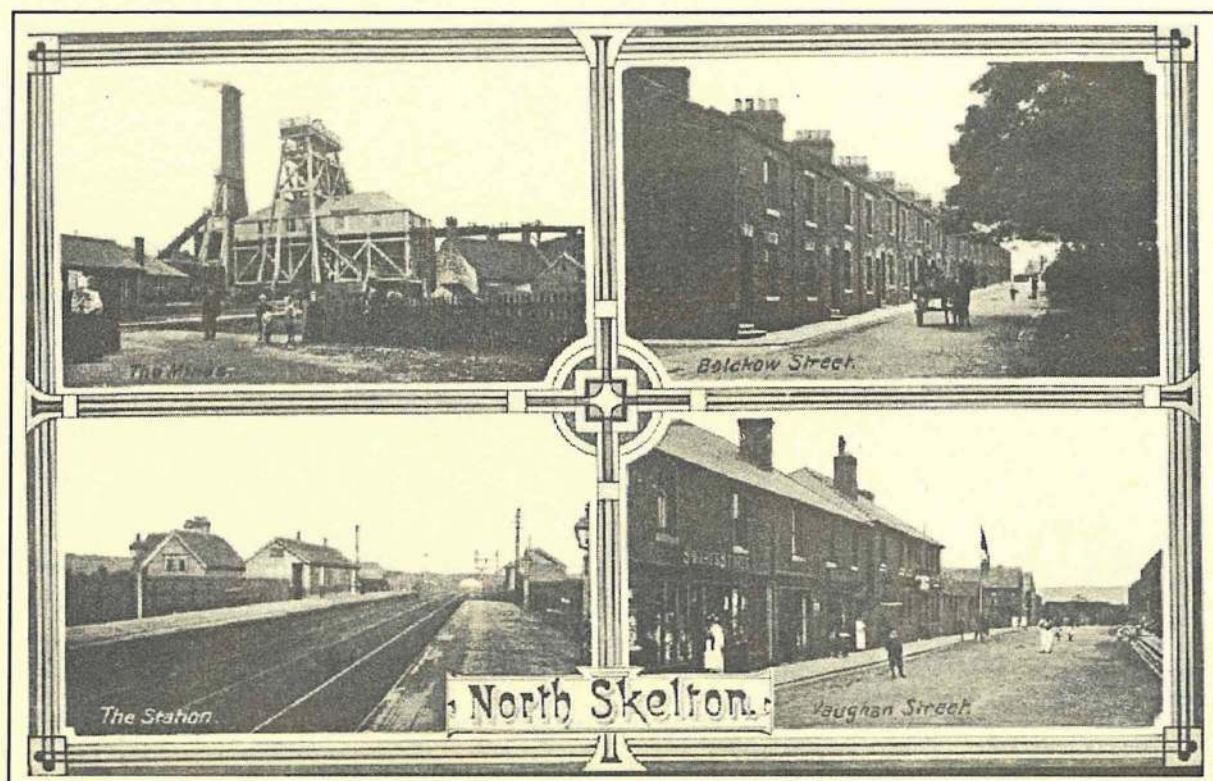


*The 'Last Shift', North Skelton Pit, 17th January, 1964
the day the mine closed and the end of an era*

Above are drillers 'Sacker' Cole and 'Niner' Weston . . .



. . . and loader 'Laffy' Yates

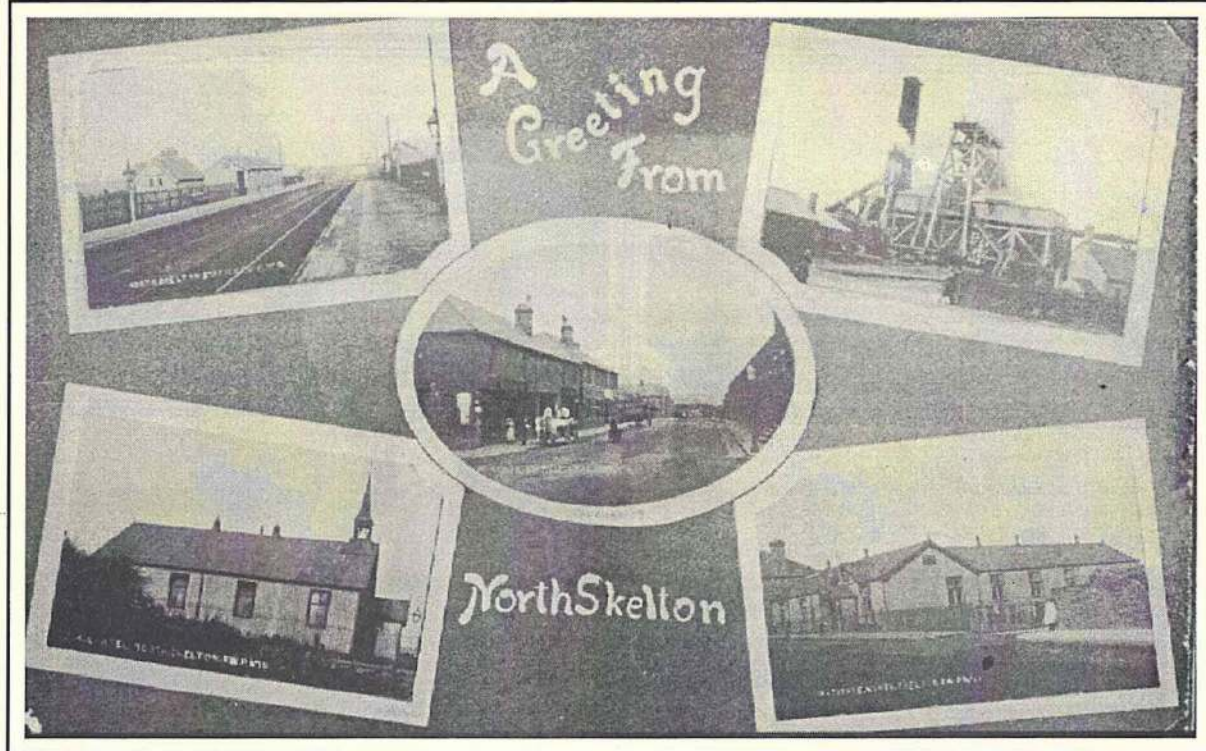


Postcards of North Skelton

*North Skelton Ironstone Mine (top left), Bolckow Street (top right),
North Skelton Railway Station (bottom left) and Vaughan Street (bottom right)*

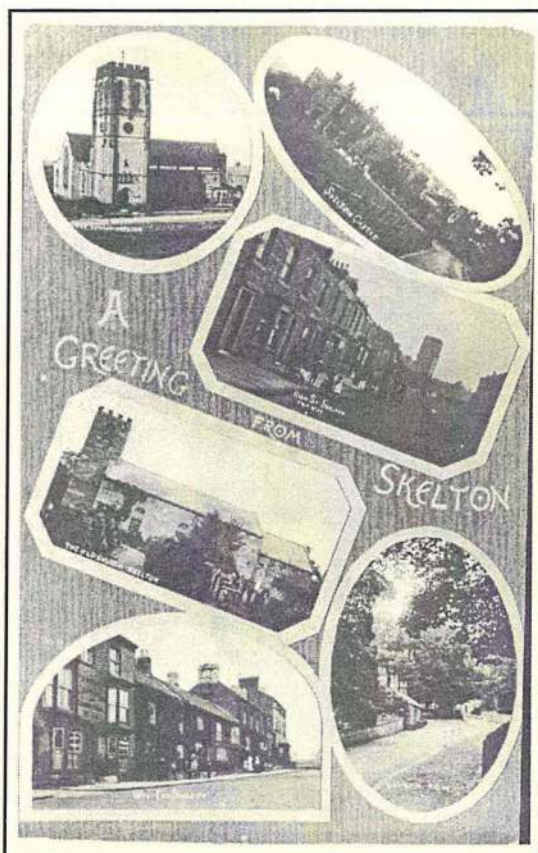


A larger view of Bolckow Street



Another postcard of North Skelton - stamp dated 18th August, 1908

The Station (top left), the Mine (top right), the old Chapel (bottom left) and the 'Tute (bottom right)



Two more local postcards from the early 1900's

Action North Skelton

Over the last 10 years, Action North Skelton (ANS) has worked very hard to improve 'run down' areas of the village. Many projects have been started and completed – listed below are just a few.

The Play Area – a massive project even for the experts to tackle, so what chance did a handful of residents stand? They took it on, and withstanding many complaints, completed the job. We now have a happy and safe environment for our children to play in.

Sparrow Park – now a well established seating area. Many



residents, especially during the summer months, derive great pleasure relaxing on the seats as they watch the world go by. George and Doris Pearson kindly donated one of the seats. North Skelton thanks you both.

War Memorial – our War Memorial area is the envy of many a village. The Memorial itself has stood there for many years, but the area was revamped with new paving, seating, a protective wall and smart, wrought iron gates another successful ANS project.



BMX Track – local children are now reaping the rewards of ANS's latest undertaking, the BMX track. After much deliberation, applications for planning permission and money, forms to fill in, appropriate people to meet, and meeting to arrange and attend, the day finally arrived at 12 noon on 27th October. The 'Jean Tokarski BMX Track' was officially opened. Jean praised the children of North Skelton, complementing their behaviour and patience, whilst waiting for the track to be completed.

OAP Xmas Party – this has become an annual event that most of North Skelton's senior citizens look forward to. All residents over the age of 65 are given a warm, festive welcome by the lady members of ANS and volunteers.

Excursions – there are currently 8 bus excursions a year. All ages are catered for and the trips depend on you. They are all funded by the 'Tote Double' ticket sales. Tote envelopes are on display in local businesses. Have a go and fill one in, anything from 10p to £1 could win you £25 plus. No claims means a 'rollover'. Only you benefit.

Other recent projects have been the seat next to North Skelton Workingmen's Club, and one at Layland near the bus stop. Last year, Mario planted 4,000 bulbs in various locations around the village.

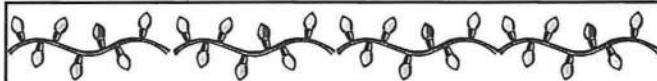
North Skelton is the only village for miles around that has all these facilities. You've never had it so good!

Well done to all the members of ANS!

Jean and Marjorie would like to thank all who participate in the 'Tote Double', especially all those people who collect envelopes for us each week, the Club for drawing the winning numbers, Bob Whiteley for his donation to the OAP Xmas Party, and everyone who donates prizes for the Xmas Draw.

Merry Xmas to you all!

This year's OAP Party will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday, 15th December at 4.30pm.



Christmas Lights

The North Skelton Belles Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people whose generous donations made our fundraising such a great success. It's all due to you that North Skelton will be 'lit up' for Christmas (and of course the committee's hard work! – Ed)



Answers to Crossword

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| J | | S | C | O | W | L | | B |
| E | N | C | O | U | R | A | G | E |
| T | | E | N | R | A | G | E | D |
| T | Y | N | E | | P | | N | |
| Y | E | T | | | | P | I | P |
| | A | | M | | H | E | E | L |
| A | S | H | A | M | E | D | | A |
| I | T | I | N | E | R | A | N | T |
| M | | E | X | T | O | L | | E |

Quiz Answers:

General Knowledge: 1. Wiltshire 2. February 1993
3. Paprika 4. E (Eight) 5. The breakthrough of the Channel Tunnel 6. Mexico 7. 12 men on the moon
8. Coast of Germany 9. £1,500 10. Coins

Sport: 11. The Boat Race 12. 14 clubs 13. Steffi Graf
14. Leeds United 15. Esha Ness 16. 11 Gold Medals
17. Light Heavyweight 18. No 8 19. Table Tennis
20. Peter Shilton

Music & Entertainment: 21. Status Quo 22. Hale & Pace
23. Jimmy Saville 24. Bob Monkhouse
25. Kenneth Williams 26. The Nag's Head
27. Noddy Holder 28. Live and Let Die 29. Phil Collins
30. Simply Red

Jim and Anne, Mam and Dad

Jim and Anne Ramage, our parents. Forty-five years they've been married. Forty-five years of love, respect and friendship. Forty-five years of living in the same house, in the same street, in the same village, North Skelton.

Jim, eldest child of five of Fred and Annie Ramage was brought up in Lingdale. He grew up in the quaintly named "Nannygoat Mansion" with his grandparents. Although his father had a love of music and was the conductor of Lingdale Silver Band, Jim was always a great sports lover. Football and cricket were, and still are, the only real sports to get a mention of any worth in our house.



Anne & Jim

Anne, middle child of five of George and Helena Berwick is North Skelton born and bred. George became the village grocer and general dealer in the shop next to Curly Tops (which now needs a good sorting out by the look of it!). A former Carnival Queen who was crowned in North Skelton "Tute", she already had her eye on a handsome stranger.

They met through one of Jim's other great loves, football. George, Anne's father was also the Sir Alex Ferguson of the day, managing the North Skelton Football team. Having an eye for drafting in talented footballers, George went far and wide, and finally found his own David Beckham playing on the fields of Lingdale. Jim Ramage. Quite a signing for North was Jim, having had played semi-professional football for both Leeds United and Stockton Football Club. They could have been the Posh and Becks of their day, him a talented, good looking footballer, her the glamour queen daughter of a grocery baron!!

Now you would never believe this but as the story goes it was Anne who did the chasing. With a ten year age gap, granddad George wasn't too keen at first. His young beloved daughter with an older handsome "Lindaler" with a penchant for sharp suits. As they say though, love conquers all and they married on 24 March 1956 in Skelton Chapel. He whisked her off to Ackworth in Yorkshire for the honeymoon, where they stayed with Anne's aunt and Uncle (he really knows how to show a woman a good time does Jim!).

They initially lived with Anne's grandmother, Rose Ellen Harrison in Richard Street, whilst Jim gutted the house where they still live. The house had been a shop, owned by an old lady so Jim had his work cut out to gut it from top to

bottom. They named the house "The Shell" because from the living room floor you could see up to the rafters of the roof. Jim took two years to rebuild the house inside and rumour has it around some parts that he hasn't done anything since!

Anyway, let's cut now to the present day. What are Posh and Becks doing now? Pretty much the same really. Jim, having just celebrated his 75th birthday a couple of weeks ago, still plays for Skelton Castle Cricket Club (where he was made Player of the Year a couple of years ago). It still means as much to him now as it always has to play well and give a good performance. Anne, due to celebrate her 65th birthday in a couple of weeks still has the beauty queen looks with the heart and soul to match. All of that and she still finds time to work too!

A massive source of pride and inspiration to all of us, their children, probably the most amazing thing about them is the fact that they are still doing the same now as they always have. They have just always been there. Always loving, solid, utterly reliable and loyal beyond belief. Throughout peoples lives and comings and goings, nothing has changed in the Ramage household. As a family we are all proud of the exceptional bond we have, but as their children, we are all just as proud of what our parents also give to other people which they probably don't even realise they do.

To finish, we would just like to leave you with this mam and dad. There is a saying that "you can't choose your family, but you can choose your friends". We feel privileged that you were chosen as our family and even more privileged that you have also chosen to be our friends. We all love you very much.



L to R: Anne, Angela, Philip, Alan, Elaine and Jim

Alan, Elaine, Angela and Philip Ramage

PEOPLE WILL TALK

We may go through the world, but it will be very slow
If we listen to all that is said as we go.

We'll be worried and fretted and kept in a stew,
For meddlesome tongues must have something to do,
For people will talk.

If quiet and modest 'twill then be presumed
That your humble position is only assumed,
You're a wolf in sheep's clothing, or else you're a fool;
But don't get excited, keep perfectly cool,
For people will talk.

If generous and noble, they'll vent out their spleen,
You'll hear someone hint you are selfish and mean:
If upright and honest, and fair as the day,
They'll call you a rogue in a sly sneaking way,
For people will talk.

If threadbare your coat and old-fashioned your dress,
Someone of course will take notice of this;
And hint rather close that you can't pay your way,
But don't get excited whatever they say,
For people will talk.

If you dress in the fashion, don't think to escape,
They'll criticise then in a far different shape;
You're ahead of your means, or you're bills are unpaid,
But mind your own business and keep straight ahead.
For people will talk.

They'll talk fine before you, but then at your back:
Of venom and spite there is never a lack:
How kind and polite in all that they say,
But bitter as gall when you're out of the way,
For people will talk.

Then if you show the least coldness of heart,
Or a slight inclination to take your own part:
They'll call you an upstart, conceited and vain,
But keep straight ahead, don't stop to explain,
For people will talk.

Good friend take advice, just do as you please,
And your mind (if you have one) will then be at ease:
Thro' life you will meet with all sorts of abuse,
But don't think to stop them, it is of no use,
For people will talk.

May the Light and peace of Christ be with us
all as we celebrate His birth this Christmas.

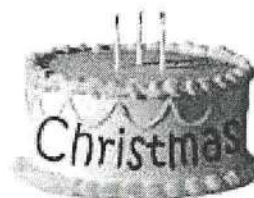
*Good wishes for a Happy and Holy Christmas
from Rector Graham and the people of
the churches of All Saints, Skelton
and St. Peter, North Skelton*



Christmas Recipes by Linda Westbrook

A Quick & Easy Christmas Cake

5oz butter
5oz brown sugar
8oz self-raising flour
6oz mixed fruit
2oz walnuts
1lb jar mincemeat
Juice & rind of one orange
3 eggs
Tsp mixed spice



Method

Line a 7 in cake tin with double greaseproof paper. Cream fat & sugar, beat in eggs. Fold in rest of ingredients. Bake on Gas Mk 3 or 325°C for 10 minutes. Then gas Mk 2 or 300°C until the top is firm to touch. Bake for 1½ hours.

Turkey Loaf (To eat hot or cold)

12oz cold cooked turkey pieces
8oz cooked pieces of ham
1 small chopped onion
Half tsp mixed herbs
1 large beaten egg
1 teacup fresh breadcrumbs
Stock if necessary (mixture dry)
Salt and pepper



Method

Mince turkey, ham and onion. Add seasoning, egg and fresh breadcrumbs. Pack into a loaf tin, greased well and cover with foil. Cook on Gas Mk 4 / 350°C for 1 hour. Turn out when set and coat in dried brown breadcrumbs.

Date Pudding with a soft caramel sauce

6oz dates chopped
Half pt boiling water
2oz butter
6oz sugar
8oz plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 large egg
Tsp bicarbonate soda
Tsp vanilla essence

Toffee sauce

2oz butter
3oz soft brown sugar
2 tblsp cream

Method

Set oven 350°C / Gas Mk 4. Pour boiling water over dates & bi-carb - leave to stand. Cream butter and sugar, stir in egg, flour and baking powder. Stir in dates with liquid and vanilla essence. Put mixture into greased 2 1/2 pint ovenproof dish and bake for approx 40 mins or until risen and firm to touch

Sauce

Boil together ingredients together for 2 mins and pour over warm pudding.

Serves 4 - 6 people

The Diary of James Allen Barrett

By Norman Sturman



James Allen Barrett was born at Morton Pinkney, Northamptonshire, in 1848. He was known as a 'tunnel tiger', that is, one who worked in tunnels, and helped with the boring of most of the tunnels in the country, including the one at Easington on what was then the Saltburn to Whitby branch line. He came up to Rosedale Abbey to work in the mines and then tramped to East Cleveland, sleeping at night in an old barn at the side of Kilton Lane, before starting work as an ordinary miner at Messrs Morrison and Co.'s Brotton Mines. He was soon promoted to deputy-overman, a position he kept until his retirement in 1906. He remained a bachelor throughout his life, living with Mr & Mrs Sturman and family in Brotton for 60 years until his death in 1935, at the age of 87. During the 60 years of his connection with Brotton, he had a break of two years for a visit to Australia, making the outward and homeward voyages in a sailing vessel. He hoped to emigrate to that country, but being unable to settle, returned to Brotton. Here are some extracts from the diary he kept on his travels which began in September 1886...

"We arrived at Plymouth about eleven o' clock. There was a man there to meet the train and conduct us to the depot. They had a van there to meet every train to take the luggage. We had about a mile to go to the depot. We got a drink on the road and that was the last in England, for once inside, the gate was locked and no more coming out. We did not know that would be the case, or we should not have gone in so soon.

The tug came alongside the depot and we stepped aboard. About two hundred single men, single women and married couples and children. There was some hurrah and shouting as we steamed out of the harbour and the concertinas played our old marching tunes, 'A Girl Left Behind' and 'Annie Dear Goodbye'. Our ship, 'The Selkirkshire', was lying in Plymouth Sound, that is about a mile out surrounded by a lot more Men of War, training ships and all sorts. Well then we came alongside the Selkirkshire, it was an iron barque, about 1,200 tons, regs. She was built in Glasgow in 1872. I expected to have found it a full rigged ship. We went aboard and took our places. Messes of some eight and ten in a mess. It blew very hard all that night.

The next morning they raised the anchor, on Thursday morning 9th September and the tug came and towed us out to Eddystone Lighthouse, that is 12 miles out and left us the wind blowing against us...I thought it was rather rough. Nearly all the passengers were sick, but it did not do much at me. I drank all my whiskey before we went on board and then you could not get a drink for love nor money. Nothing to buy on a Government ship but tobacco and that I did not want, but I got over it in 2 or 3 days. We were tossed about, I thought pretty roughly, the first 9 or 10 days till we got out of the channel. I saw a whirlwind coming along one day. It just passed behind us. You could see it for many a mile taking the water in front of it in a cloud.

When we got the trade winds, they were very light. They carried us into the hot weather. Then we had it calm. We were 300 miles of the line. Some days we had a bit of wind and some none with the sun blazing on us and the sea as smooth as a looking glass. We had sharks come alongside and saw any quantity of flying fish. Then we had some heavy rains come down in bucketful's. We made but very little headway for a fortnight.

We crossed the line on the 13th October. We had sports on board that day. The prizes all in tobacco. The wind carried us abreast the Cape of Good Hope and it was very nice sailing till we got to the Cape. Then we got plenty of wind and rather rough and very cold. I never thought we should have such cold weather. It took us a fortnight to clear the Cape...we saw a shoal of whales one day. We could see them spouting water. They sent it high into the air. There was one came close by the ship and there was any quantity of birds, such as I have never seen before. They caught 15 albatrosses, measured 10 foot across the wings. The captain had them skinned. I suppose the skin of their breast is to make lady's muffs, the feet make tobacco pouches. It will be some time before I go on another sailing ship.

It is such a long dreary journey and the food rather rough to what we have been used to. We had salt beef one day a week and salt pork one, and the others tinned meat. We had oat porridge four times a week. Biscuits every day. Bread three times a week, about half a loaf each. We have rice too and plum pudding three times and we had to make it ourselves, but I got on pretty well taking it all together.

I enjoyed good health the whole of the voyage. We had a very good passage, considering it being such a long one. It is a dreary journey from the Cape to Australia. We never saw another vessel from the time we were

abreast the Cape till after we got round Tasmania. We had about 7 weeks of very cold weather. Some days it was that cold we could not get on deck and the water would be flying over the sides and the ship rolling and pitching so that you could not stand without laying hold of something, then sometimes when you sit down to meals, she would give an extra lurch, then away goes your pea soup, porridge, tea or coffee or whatever was on the table and perhaps you could get a lot spilled on you trying to catch it. That is different to sitting in the Green Tree (Brotton) corner with a glass of whiskey over a fire and talking about sailing. That is being on the job, but our ship weathered every storm like the good one she was.

We passed Tasmania the 1st December. The wind blowing in the teeth of us as the sailors say. It took till the 18th December to get to Maryborough. All sail was set to catch any bit of breeze that might come, but a squall struck us on the port beam...I thought she was gone over and a lot more than so besides me, but every man was at his post in a crack and a lot of pulling at the ropes taking in sail, but there was no accident and no more than some of the sail carried away that breeze carried us on till we saw land. That was the great Sandy Island. We had to sail 20 miles alongside the coral reef before we could cross the bar to get into Harry Bay. We dropped anchor twice before a pilot boarded us, then it took him two days to get us the right anchoring ground ...but we got there quite safe near the quarantine station at the mouth of the river 27 miles up from Maryborough, then we soon had a steamer come to bring on board the Health Doctor and supply of fresh provisions. The tug took us up the river. We got there at half past two December the 18th after being on board 101 days.

P Trenholm and Mrs were at the wharf to meet me, so me and Joe went home with them. We stayed two nights, they behaved well to us. On Monday we went to Gympick, 60 miles, it is all gold mining there. You hear nothing but talking of taking up shares, quite a lottery, something like horse racing. Some get rich in a short time. Others get very little. There is a population of 7,000 all depending on gold mining. There was a lot out of employ, no chance to go to work, things pretty dear there, stayed there a fortnight. Had to pay a pound a week for board and lodgings. You can board at hotels for one shilling per meal and one for bed. Sixpence every time you want a drink and very poor stuff.

We went one day with Mr Duckworth the landlord of the hotel to various mines to see the gold stone being crushed. I saw one nugget that was picked up 19 years ago worth £30. Several smaller ones, saw 8 bars of gold ready for the bank. I had hold of one about the size of a brick weighed 992 ounces £3.10s.0d per ounce worth £3,472. It all came from a mine called the Great Eastern. A lot of shares were sold there a few months before for 1d. each now you can't get one under £4.

Came back to Maryborough could get nothing there so took a boat went to Brisbane 177 miles by water from there we went to Ipswich to look around the coalmines but found it a very poor place, pits on a very small scale so no chance to go to work. The largest pit called New Chance Pit had been on strike previous but just gone back to work again. They had had a union there but it was smashed up, the leading men were all sacked.. Joe Shepherd had been there but was gone. I saw one of his daughters there. He had cleared out in a hurry, men just work as long as they like in the mines, plenty of work 10 hours a day and such bad ventilation. I came back to Maryborough again thin. Went to some coalmines 18 miles from Maryborough but could not get a start. I began to wish the Devil had had Queensland before ever I had seen it. Hundreds walking about seeking work. We landed at the worst time of the year, sugar mills just finishing up, won't start no more till May and the weather fearful hot and any quantity of rain. The timber trade very bad, sawmills working short-time, some sharing hands, some stopped altogether. Farmers men working from light till dark for £40 per year and their meat. The young men for a lot less, saw mills 5s. a day for labourers, some on 25 shillings a week. The only miners who work 8 hours a day are gold miners. It is a shame to fetch people out here to starve. I should have been in a fix if it had not been for friends. The Trenholmes, they said I had to stay with them till I could get a job. Englishmen stood little chance in this colony. The coalmines are full of Scotch and Welsh, and Irish and cousin Jacks in the gold mines, Germans for the saw mills. They fetch shiploads at a time of South Sea Islanders to work in the plantations.

The police force is all Irish. The Queens and Blacks won't work, they are a miserable lot of wretches. Whenever I get money enough, I will be out of this colony, for I reckon nothing of being roasted alive. I had bad health for several weeks after I landed. I could not have done much work if I had had the chance, but it was all the same, I could not get any. There are a lot of slave drivers in this colony. Men work harder than they do at home when a bit of a job starts, they nearly knock one another down to see which can get to the boss first, but the weather has been so wet that everything is at a standstill. It has been raining nearly all the time I have been in Queensland. The oldest inhabitants never knew such a sea. At Maryborough the water was 8 foot deep in the Grand Hotel bar. Lots of farms had all their bits of crops washed away....."

(to be continued in the next edition....)

The Lamps

"Davy, ah'm tellin' yer, 'ord Norm's just come 'ome in an ambulance with their Gus. She's tumbled an' brock one ankle an' chipped t'other," said Marto.

Davy couldn't believe it. All his plans for her were slowly going down the drain. It was New Year's Eve and the 'Lamps' were giving 'ord Norm' an acknowledgement party at North Skelton Club. A few weeks previous, Duffy had called Davy to the bar and told him that he thought he should give 'ord Norm' an acknowledgement present – after all, she had made him famous all over the world. Davy thought it a great idea, and he and Tilly had been thinking what to get her.

Tilly's Xmas present from Davy and the kids was lovely. They had bought her a 'tranquillity fountain'. Tilly loved it, and thought it an ideal present for 'ord Norm' – that is until the night she told the Ladies' Committee! They all assembled around the table in the Concert Room. Tilly put her idea to them.

'Gob Almighty' Julie was first to speak, "A 'tranquillity fountain'! Well, she wouldn't like it! Now if it was some 'best bitter' tricklin' from a fountain, she'd love that!"

Poor old Tilly didn't know what to do. Linda spoke up, "'Ow about a lovely bouquet of flowers."

'Gob Almighty' jumped in, "NO GOOD!" she shouted, "Everybody got 'er them for 'er birthday and what 'appened? She said that when she woke up next morning she thought she was dead an' layin' in t' Chapel of Rest, there were that many full vases!"

Tilly hadn't a clue what to get. Joyce felt so sorry for her that she said, "Look Tilly, Norm' likes owt home-made. Get yer bairns to make 'er a small gift an' she'll love it, an' us lot'll organise a party!"

Tilly's face lit up, what a great idea!

"Now before you go Tilly," said Joyce, "tell us about this 'tranquillity fountain' of yours."

"It's lovely Joyce, it stands on mi' front room table and water tinkles down the florescent tubes onto some pebbles. Listenin' to it brings on a feelin' of tranquillity."

Deb B, sympathetic as usual, said, "Well, 'ow lovely Tilly! An' does it bring on, like, a feelin' of peace?"

"Yes it does, Deb, it makes me feel tranquil."

'Gob Almighty' shouted, "SHURRUP YOU LOT! Let's get on with organisin' this party!"

An hour later, all plans had been agreed on, and the meeting was brought to a close. As the chairs were being dragged back, Deb B shouted, "Who's gonna try to keep 'ord Norm' sober 'til she receives 'er accolade!"

"Accolade! Well, Deb, seein' as it sounds like yer've swallowed a dictionary, you can 'ave t' job!"

Deb B wished she'd kept her mouth shut! Tilly went home to tell Davy of the plans for New Year's Eve. 'Bazz-az-Clazz's Disco' would start at eight o' clock. At 10.30pm, 'ord Norm' would receive her acknowledgement present and then at midnight, the New Year would be brought in.

New Year's Eve had dawned bright, though very cold. A hard frost covered the roads and pavements, making travelling and walking conditions hazardous.

Marto's news of Norm's accident had been devastating. "Davy, get Tilly, we'll go round an' see what's up."

The three of them walked round to Norm's, slithering all over the place on the hard-packed ice. The two hefty paramedics

were just leaving.

"Happy New Year luv, if you can call it that!" they said.

As they entered the room, there in the chair sat poor 'ord Norm', both legs in plaster from knee to toe. Davy and Tilly looked at each other. They would have to tell her about the party.

"Norm", listen, cos you've made us famous and written about us over t' last 10 years in 'The Key', me and Tilly wanted to show you our h'appreciation by givin' you a party of acknowledgement in t' Club tonight. Now what are we gonna do?"

'Ord Norm' was gob-smacked. Fancy, an acknowledgement party specially for her! Well, that did it – somehow or other she was going to get there. Before she could answer, the door flew open. Everyone seemed to fall in at once.

"E-e-ee, Norm", we've just 'eard yer've tumbled, whatever 'ave yer done?" cried Deb B.

"Ah've brock one ankle an' chipped t' other, but 'ah'm telling yer all now, 'ah'm still goin' tonight. Davy's givin' me an acknowledgement party!"

Deb replied, "Right then Norm", let's think 'ow we can get yer there. It's too slippy for a wheelchair, an' we 'aven't got a sledge big enough!"

Next thing, the front door banged open against the wall. 'Florence Nightingales 1 & 2' ran down the passage, panting and shouting as they did, "Don't worry Norm", it's all sorted, yer party's still on! Mario's tractor's booked for eight o'clock. Yer gonna go to t' party in style! When yer get there, t' Mitchell's are gonna carry yer into t' Club! 'Ow's that sound?" "E-e-ee, it's good of yer. By gum ah'm gonna right enjoy this!" 'Ord Norm' looked around her. All her friends were there. "By 'eck," she thought, "it's nice to be nice."

Eight o'clock drew near. With the help of Joyce, Deb B and Gillian, Norm' was ready.

"Oh, yer do look lovely!" said Joyce as she put the finishing touches to Norm's attire. "That glittery top meks yer shine, an' yer necklace is flashin' like a 'undred watt bulb!"

A bang on the door signalled that Mario was on his way. Julie shouted in, "Yer carriage awaits Madam!"

Norm' tried to stand up but it was just impossible, and she flopped straight back down again. Gillian took hold of one arm and Deb B the other. Julie and Linda lifted a leg each and between them they carried 'ord Norm' down the passage and through the front door. It was a nightmare, but they finally reached Mario's tractor.

Everyone gasped, they couldn't believe their eyes! The normally mucky old tractor was as bright and clean as a new pin. There were flashing lights and streamers of every colour hung round the cabin. A Christmas tree stood proudly in the corner of the trailer, changing colour every few seconds. A red duvet lay on the base of the trailer for 'ord Norm' to sit on.

"Mario, it's marvellous, fit for a queen!"

"Wagons ho-o-o, Mario-o-o!" shouted Julie.

The roads were treacherous, but no problem to Mario and his tractor. Soon the entourage arrived at the Club doors. The Mitchell's stepped forward, with the 'Last of the Summer Wine' lads waiting to give assistance. Twes and Greenie took a leg each, Jigger and Merv an arm each. Bob opened the double doors and they carried Norm' gently through to the packed Concert Room. It was still decorated beautifully from Christmas. A loud cheer went up as they made their way to the stage.

"Ah see yer plastered again, Norm'!"

Norm' flung her head round, "Ah might 'ave known it'd be you!"

"Who was it, Norm?" asked Greenie, "ah'll chin 'im!"

"Well, Greenie, 'is name begins with 'T' and ends with 'abby'!"

Greenie thought twice. He'd already seen him in action. "Well, 'ah will next time..."

On reaching the stage, 'ord Norm's eyes widened. There, next to 'Bazz-az-Clazz's Disco', was a huge armchair draped with a red velvet curtain! The lads gently lowered her into the chair.

Baz stepped forward – he was a sight to behold. With his Elvis wig, slightly dipping to one side, his black and white satin shirt, and trousers so tight it was a miracle he was breathing, he said, "Will yer 'ave a gin and tonic Norm'?"

"Ah'd love one Baz, but ah'm on h-antibiotics."

"That's easy remedied Norm', don't start tekkin' 'em 'til tomorrow'!"

"Good idea Baz, ah'll 'ave a double then!"

'Ord Norm' looked around the room at all her friends enjoying themselves. The beer and spirits were flowing freely. By 10.30pm, everyone in there was merry, including 'Ord Norm'. She was sat back in her velvet covered chair, knocking G & T's back as if there were no tomorrow!

Baz approached her once more. "Are yer orright, Norm'?"

"Baz, 'ah feel great! In fact, 'ah think ah'm a bit h-inebriated! By, ah'd rather be drunk than drowned any day!"

Minutes later, Davy came onto the stage, picked up the microphone, and began, "TESTING, TESTING, 1-2-3! Right Baz, switch off. Ladies h-and gentlemen, as you all know, this is Norm's h-acknowledgement party. It's also 't' twins' birthday. I'd just like to say, come midnight, happy birthday to mi' bairns, Milly and Lenny Liam. Right Jigger, dim t' lights. Baz, strike up. Norm', stand up!"

Try as she might, Norm' couldn't. Her ankles were killing her, the plaster casts on her legs felt as heavy as two barrels of beer.

"'Ang on a sec (hic) Davy, 'ah can't ger' up!"

Davy went over to help, but he couldn't manage her himself. He had no need to worry, for here came 'Florence Nightingales 1 & 2' to the rescue. Each took an arm and lifted Norm' out of the chair and onto her feet.

"'Ey you lot," shouted Deb B, "ah'm 'er carer! Ah'm comin' up there an' all!"

Whereupon, the rest of the Ladies' Committee, *not* to be outdone, climbed the two steps onto the stage.

Baz was by now completely blocked out. He couldn't see a thing what with the women standing in front of him and his wig covering one eye.

"Hit it, Baz!" shouted Davy.

"Hit (hic) what?" replied Baz.

"The button, yer great galloot!"

"Thanks for the (hic) compliment."

Baz's finger pressed the button and the lights were dimmed. Davy and Tilly stood besides the microphone. The Ladies Committee lined up like the 4th Battalion Green Howards. Linda, Julie and Deb B held on to 'ord Norm'. The Concert Room door opened and a gangway was made down the middle of the tables. Very softly, the strains of *Auld Lang Syne* could be heard as through the door walked a little lad, it was Ed Lamp. He slowly made his way forward towards 'ord Norm'.

The silence was deafening as he held out his arms on which rested a red cushion. On the cushion was a key, a replica of the logo on the cover of 'The Key' magazine. Made of heavy cardboard, it was wrapped in a gold material that shimmered. Sequins had been lovingly sewn on, so many that a dazzling light shone in the dimly lit room.

"Mi' Mam an' Dad, an' me and our twins 'ave made this h-acknowledgement present for you Norm'. Mi' Dad says I 'ave to say 'thank you very much'.

Tears were raining down 'ord Norm's face as she struggled to stay standing on her feet.

"It's the most beautiful key in the world mi' bairn, an' ah'll



treasure it all mi' life."

Unable to bend and kiss him, she put her hand on his head and ruffled his hair. The sheer emotion of the moment was such that 'ord Norm' flopped back into her chair. Looking beyond little Ed, she saw Marto walking forward with the twins. They were holding a cage. Milly stepped up onto the stage followed by Lenny Liam.

In her tiny two-year-old voice, Milly whispered, "Vis is my Daddy's new 'fligeon' and we've called it after you."

Lenny followed up, lifting the cage into the air. As the pigeon wildly flapped its wings he said, "You said it wrong our Mil, it's called a 'pligeon' an' we've named it 'Ord Norm' the First, and it's going to Flance next week, an' then it has to fly 'ome." All eyes were on Norm'. Everyone knew she hated pigeons, or as she preferred to call them, 'muck machines'. As she stood up and wobbled, the three 'carers' moved in quickly to help her. She looked down at the twins, trying not to hear the sniggers behind her.

"It's a very great h-onour to 'ave your new pigeon named after me, and I hope it wins the race from France."

Little Ed piped up, "Mi' Dad said, if it's owt like you, it'll wobble an' hiccup all t' road home!"

The Concert Room erupted in laughter – everyone was on their feet laughing! Davy and Tilly looked at 'ord Norm', their faces red with embarrassment. She felt sorry for the pair of them.

"Thank you very much," she mouthed towards them both.

"Shush, shush!" went round the room.

Baz waited until the church bells rang out. Then he pressed the button and everyone made a circle, held hands and began to sing, "*Should a-auld acquaintance be-e forgot...*"

'Ord Norm' looked about her, the pain from her broken ankles faded from her mind, she'd had a wonderful night. A golden-studded key had been presented to her and, of all things, a pigeon had been named after her, 'Ord Norm' the 1st! Lifting her head upwards she thought, "Please God, don't let there be an 'Ord Norm the 2nd!"

Jean and Sally sat in their usual corner in The Bull.

"'Ave yer 'eard the latest, Jean? Tilly's got a 'tranquillity fountain'."

"They're nowt new Sal, I 'ad one fer years 'til my Tony put a new washer on it!"

"Aye, 'ah know what yer mean! 'Appy New Year, Jean!"

"'Appy New Year Sal!"

Happy New Year everyone, and a peaceful 2002.

W

A Life on the Ocean Waves

By Captain Jim Elliott

Since he wrote this and future articles for 'The Key', Jim has very sadly passed away. However, as a tribute to him, we are continuing to publish Jim's story with kind permission from his wife Anne . . .

(continued from the last edition...)



Captain Jim Elliott

In the last issue, the Korean War had just started and we were steaming up the Indian Ocean towards Ceylon and a visit to Colombo where we would take up an anchorage along with another eighty ships of all sizes in the harbour. In 1950 it was still before the air travel had taken off and many ships were big two and three funnel liners on their way to the far east and down to Australia. Ceylon was in the process of taking over their own rule but things really had changed little since it was part of the Empire. (I called there again in 1960 after I had joined tankers, the harbour was completely deserted).

Still in 1950 it was all very exciting, the harbour was full of small boats taking people ashore from the ships, both motor launches and the small rowing boat where the oarsman stood up in the boat and pushed on his oars. This transport was of course a lot cheaper and all that apprentices could afford. All the boats let their passengers ashore at the same decorated and covered jetty. One of the main things to catch the eye was the big sale in Ceylon tea from this jetty. (Before tea bags and still rationed). Box shaped packs in various sizes wrapped in strong silver paper was an endless source of business. Sapphires were another popular item, but again out of the reach of apprentices. Big polished carved wood elephants and stools from an elephants foot were also regular sale items in many shops.

As apprentices usually did in foreign ports, the run ashore always ended up at the seaman's mission. These were large well run places that catered for our needs, both from church to

post cards, snooker, football matches, (in those days, only soft drinks at the "Flying Angel" mission), along with special trips out to the countryside. The one at Colombo was big and cool with large overhead fans, ice cold milk-shakes and a good snooker table. Outside at the foot of the steps, was the local snake charmer with his cobra's coming up out of his open basket.

Our stay was going to be some three weeks discharging the sugar cargo and then perhaps a week in dry dock to see what damage and possible repair to the bottom plates after our call on the reef at Bird Island. So we had quite a few football matches arranged for us, not only against different ships but the Navy too. Then along came the big match in a large stadium, we were to play the Colombo Police. Now we had a total crew of 31 and many had to stay on board and work ship, not all could play football either, so it was difficult putting a team together. Before I went to sea, football was my life and naturally I carried my boots with me. We also had an ex South Shields schoolboy from amongst the sailors and the rest of our very limited team could all put on a reasonable show. Now the police had hundreds to pick from, and all well kitted out, although several still preferred bare feet. Getting a kick in the head from one of those bare feet was just the same as from the old style hard toed boot (I speak from experience). There was quite a crowd at the stadium and although we won, it was

however, a situation of the ref wishing to live afterwards in so far as the local crowd was concerned and he made us settle for a draw.

Well the long sea passage from the West Indies to Ceylon had washed away a lot of the grey paint from the ship's side, leaving it a proper rusty mess. So normal work at the anchorage was with stages over the side, chipping hammer, red lead and fresh coats of grey paint. The sailor who used to play football for South Shields schoolboys had an interesting experience one day. He had natural blonde wavy hair. Two men were on each stage as it hung over the ship's side. There was a slip up one day and not only did his end suddenly drop down with him on it but the open pot of grey paint also did, a fraction later. It landed upside down right on top of all his blonde wavy hair.

Mind this was not the only sticky situation, positioned alongside the ship's hull and suspended from the deck, was the accommodation ladder. As the cargo workers came on board each day they went up and down it, and especially when all left each evening, the ladder and rope rails became covered in sticky sugar. Each morning it was the job of two of the apprentices to wash it clean. Not a bad job this, for as we finished, we would dive straight in the harbour to cool and wash off.

It struck me that seamen must be a ghoulish lot, for as the sugar bags were discharged from number two hold, everyone went to have a look to see if any remains were still visible from the West Indian who had started to bring his inside up over them. As this number two hold emptied, we could certainly see how the bottom layer of sugar bags had been well saturated with black fuel oil. So whilst the bottom plates of the ship had it seemed remained tight when funning on the reef, the top of the double bottom tanks in the hold had sprung and let oil run into the cargo.

After all the cargo was out, the ship then went into dry dock and we had a look underneath. Well the bottom plates looked like a switch-back railway. A little patching up was done but when we got home, the ship had to go into dry dock and get

repairs done properly.

Returning to Colombo dry dock, when a ship was in port, it was usual for it to have someone on duty throughout the night as "night-watchman". Not a popular job as the hours were from 7p.m to 7 a.m.

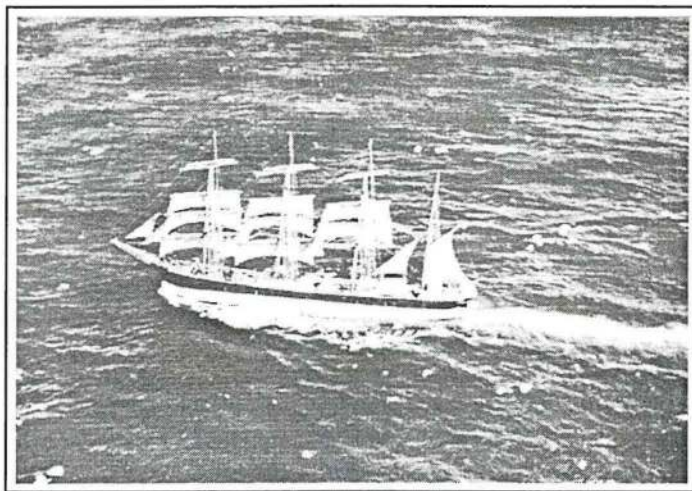
The duty called for regular walks around the ship, tending the mooring ropes if tidal waters required it. Making sure no undesirable persons came up the gangway, or the anchor chain if the ship was at anchor. Peel spuds for the next day's meals, light up the second fire at the galley stove, call the hands for the next day's work etc. Now this job was usually carried out by one of the apprentices and not at all popular. Come about 2 am and you were struggling to keep your eyes open, (a major offence of course to be found asleep on duty). You were supposed to sleep during the day, what a laugh! It was usually very hot, more so in the steel cabins. The stevedores made huge bangs and crashes clearing the hatch boards onto the deck just the other side of the steel plate bulkhead, close to your pillow. Not only every morning but after they had to open up again after frequent rain squalls, in order to start or resume work. These huge heavy boards would crash down from about 4 feet onto the steel deck along with long steel bars. Steam winches working the cargo would clatter away with lots of noise. Then of course there would be the outside doors of the accommodation opening and closing all the time with lots of bangs, people moving about in the passage-way just outside your cabin door and shouting to each other in different languages.

It was my turn to be night-watchman when the ship was in dry-dock. At the gangway (this was the long straight length of heavy wooden walkway, with battens across it to help avoid slipping when it was steep and which normally went our perpendicular the ship's side) as opposed to the accommodation ladder which had proper steps and was suspended over and parallel to the ship's side. Well always at the gangway, there was a lifebuoy and a coil of rope which the night watchman was supposed to have any person under the influence, tying round themselves before they climbed up. (None ever did of course). However this story relates to us leaving the dry dock in late afternoon to lay alongside the concrete jetty next to its entrance. We had no cargo in the ship and no ballast so we were very high out of the water. We were to sail the following morning and as our gangway would not reach from the deck to the jetty well below us, a long ladder was obtained. Around half past midnight I am standing by this ladder speaking with the 4th Engineer who had come off watch from the hot engine room and was getting a bit of air before turning in. Two engine room ratings (a donkey man and a fireman) came towards the foot of the ladder down on the concrete jetty. Each had a big pillow case like bag slung over his shoulder and they were both in merry song, making anything but a straight line. "Oh heck" says I, the heaving line went over to them but not only would they not have it around themselves, they would not have it around their sacks either so at least they could be pulled up. (Contents pineapples and coconuts). Up the ladder comes the first one, all of a wobble, with his sack over his shoulder and as he gets near the top, both the 4th Engineer and myself grab him and he is safely on deck. His pal comes up next, the same situation, but as he approached the top he gives bigger wobbles and both he and his sack crash down on the concrete jetty and railway lines for the cranes. Whether the crack, was his head or coconuts, I don't know, but it was awful loud. I dashed down the ladder and shouted to the 4th Engineer to get the captain while I went to phone an ambulance.

Normally the height of that fall would have killed a person outright, I returned to find the Captain kneeling by him and the man saying "I wasn't drunk sir! I wasn't drunk! Anyway the ambulance duty took him off to hospital where he remained. At daylight we moved back out to the anchorage and I found that I was wanted by the police, they wished to make sure that I had not tried to kill him.

All a bit scary for a sixteen year old, but I was cleared and we duly sailed heading back in a south westerly direction to call at Lorenzo Marques where we would load a full cargo of coal for a place called Takoradi on the West Coast of Africa. Lorenzo Marques in Mozambique was quite interesting, they had racing car races along the long length of main road on Sunday mornings. In 1950 it was still very much under Portuguese administration, but they had a money saving scheme whereby they would pick up any drunken seaman, throw him in clink to sober him up and then have him sweeping the roads the next day. A big interest for me was to see one of the last of the old sailing ships laying at anchor in the harbour. This was the four masted steel barque "Lawhill" the masts were 186 foot high, she had a crew of 28 and 23 sails to handle. When she was in Lorenzo Marques, she had been bought by a Portuguese owner, but he found he did not have the cash to operate her, could neither fit her with new sails or find a crew of sailing ship men to man her. She was subsequently left to rot, what a sad end for a fine old sailing ship.

The method of loading coal was unusual at "LM", coal trucks of a high rail would drop coal into a huge round drum. This was then hoisted over the open hold and the bottom of the drum, conical in shape on the inside would then open and the coal would pour in nearly the full open square of the hold. Quite a different set up to other places where the coal would pour into the hold from chutes. Still, fully loaded we sail and head back hopefully without disaster, around the Cape of Good Hope and up the West Coast of Africa.



A favourite sailing ship photo of Jim's

(to be continued....)

From Charlotte Street to 'Rosemont'

Ray Fowler was born at 23 Charlotte Street, New Skelton. Even as a 5 year old child he had a spirit of adventure. He and his brother, Arthur, liked nothing better than exploring the visiting fairgrounds. At that time, Sammy Crow and Carters dominated the fields where the fairs were situated. The two lads were so popular with the staff of the fair that one befriended them and to their delight let them help him on his goldfish and 'pick a straw' stall.

Ray wasn't a lover of school. He remembers very clearly the day he started Eston Technical College - he took an instant dislike to it. As his attendance records would show, he played truant as often as he possibly could. Ray's dad, Leonard, worked hard at Marske Army Store; Winifred, his mam, had her work cut out looking after the rest of



L. to R: Wendy (daughter), Ray, Mathew (son born in Aussie), Sandra and Lee (son)

the family - five sisters and one brother.

After World War 2 finished, Ray's dad came home but his uncle settled in Australia. He wrote many letters to Len asking him and his family to emigrate and join him. He promised to look after them until they got established, but after much thought, Ray's parents decided against it. From that day a seed was sown in Ray's head - he realized that there was another life outside New Skelton.

The day Ray left school was the happiest day of his life. He started work at Kilton Pit as an apprentice electrician and was transferred to North Skelton when Kilton closed down. He remembers, with a deep sense of respect, working and learning from Bill Turnbull and Fred Sunley. His next move was to Skinningrove Works. In Ray's own words he says of Joe Garbutt, "He taught me most of my trade, a good bloke". Ray's last move in this country was

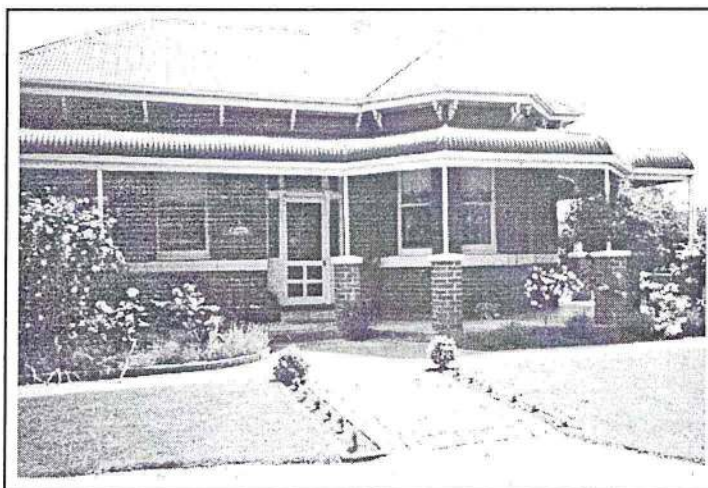
to South Bank, and it was here that his adventurous spirit rose to the fore - Australia beckoned!

He courted and married Sandra Leng and they settled in Sandra's home village of Liverton Mines. They had a son and daughter. By now, Ray began to take his thoughts of emigrating seriously. Finally on the 4th June 1971, Ray's dreams came true, and the family set off for 'Ozzy'. The years seemed to fly by, and any problems that arose they overcame, never once regretting the huge step they had taken. Ray's first job on the other side of the world was as an electrician, and he practiced his trade for 3 years. His final job in Australia was with the Water Filtration Industry. In February 1999 he retired - well he thought he had, but Sandi had other plans! They sunk their capital into a Bed 'n' Breakfast, and bought a beautiful ranch style house and called it 'ROSEMONT'.

It's now well established, catering mainly for adults. Business is always brisk - a short walk away is the breathtaking Lake Nagambie and many of their guests are golfers, a golf course being 'just around the corner' as they say in Australia. Sandi and Ray keep the 'Rosemont' immaculate and the two venues above make it an attractive place to stay. (For those of you with the internet, go to www.mcmedia.com.au/nagambie to see the breathtaking scenery of the area - 'Rosemont Guesthouse' is listed under the 'Accommodation' section).

Ray and Sandi have never forgotten their roots, and over the years they have returned to England many times, visiting family and friends. In a recent visit, Ray came alone, staying with Sandi's mum and dad in Staithes, and looking up his mother and family in Skelton and other local areas.

Nagambie is in Victoria - will you be in that area? If so, why not give Ray and Sandi a call, you'll be sure of a good old Cleveland welcome!



'Rosemont' - Ray & Sandi's beautiful guesthouse

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