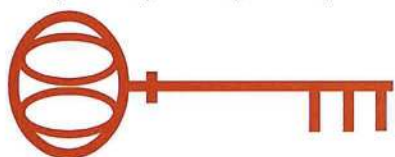
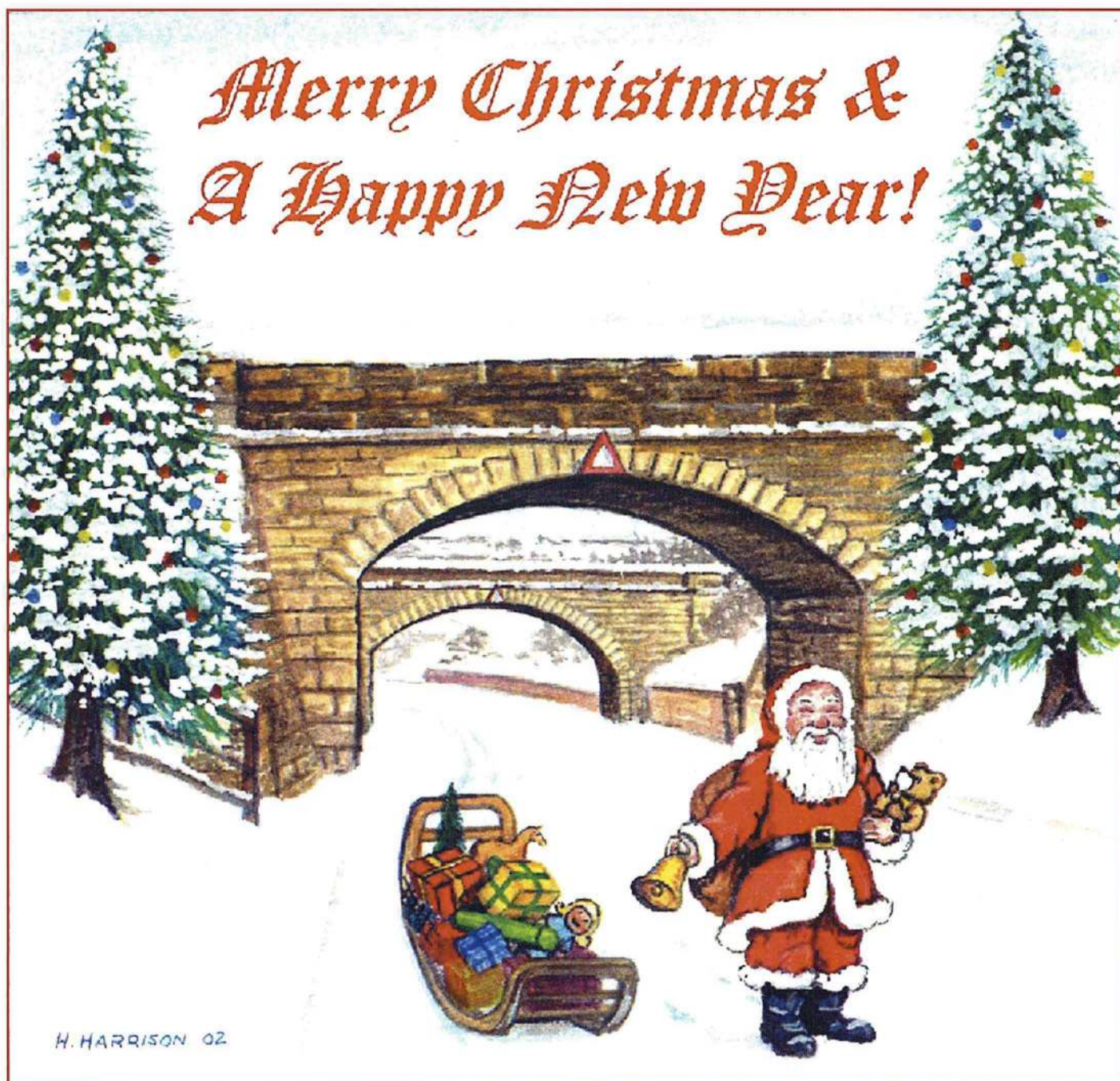


THE KEY



A NEWSPAPER FOR NORTH SKELTON & LAYLAND

*Merry Christmas &
A Happy New Year!*



H. HARRISON 02

Editorial

Sadly in this edition we have to say goodbye to 'Davy Lamp' and his family. I have written 34 tales of 'The Lamps' and I'm afraid I've simply run out of storylines. 'The Lamps' have played a significant part in the success of 'The Key', bringing together characters of North Skelton in fictitious circumstances. It has always meant to be village humour. Finally, I have always appreciated every letter and phone call from home and abroad expressing your enjoyment of the stories.

With each and every edition of 'The Key' the correspondence gets heavier. Please be patient if we haven't got round to answering your letters and e-mails - we're only a small team and these things take time. We will reply as soon as possible.

Thank you once again for all your donations. Please continue to make cheques payable to 'The Key'.

Finally, to the volunteers who help me deliver the magazine to all the households in North Skelton & Layland (i.e. Alan, Lynn and Debby) - THANK YOU!

Norma

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Some photos and articles from Issues 24 - 29 of 'The Key' can be viewed on the Internet (more will be added later). The website address is:

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

Shine as a Light in the World



In the darkness of that first Christmas Night the light of the star shone out lighting the way to the Christ-child. In the darkness of our world today His light still shines as a sign of hope and the way by which He can bring justice and peace to our world. May every Christmas light bring the love of Christ into your lives as we celebrate His birth again this year.

A Happy and Blessed Christmas from Rector Graham and everyone at the churches of All Saints, Skelton and St Peter, North Skelton.

Christmas Belles

The Christmas Lights Committee have now raised enough money to complete the seasonal display of lights on Vaughan Street.



They would, therefore, like to thank the villagers and all the sponsors for their generosity in helping to raise the funds needed.

These Christmas lights now belong to North Skeltoners - you bought them! The Parish Council will kindly maintain them.

Special thanks go to Jean Spychala who donated the full set of lights which will illuminate the War Memorial.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!

Keep Your Hair On!

In 1998, a conversation took place in North Skelton Workingmen's Club. Tad Adams, Heather Hayes and Col Pledger each bet Phil Taberner £10 that he would be bald by the year 2002!



For four years the friends 'watched' every hair on Phil's head - unfortunately for them, Phil's 'rug' remains intact. Phil had long since forgotten about the bet but Tad, Heather and Col hadn't and in October they paid Phil his £30 'winnings'.

None of them have a clue what Phil has done with their money - well we can now reveal that he has kindly donated £25 of it to 'The Key'. The other £5 will buy Tad, Heather & Col a drink this Xmas! **Thanks Phil . . . !!!**

Action North Skelton OAP's Christmas Party

The Annual Christmas Party for the Senior Citizens of North Skelton will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday, 14th December, 2002 at 4.00pm.

Please ring Marjorie Matthews (01287 650106) or Jean Tokarski (01287 652025) to book your place.

Enjoy yourselves & Merry Christmas to you all!

A Village's Lament

The last edition of *The Key* published the passing of one of our senior citizens. Sadly, this edition features yet another obituary to a much younger member of our community.

Obituaries, for all their solemnity and sadness, provide us with bitter sweet memories of loved ones who have been taken from us for varying reasons. Therefore, they could happily be called, '*a detailed celebration of a life and love we cherished dearly whilst we were together.*'

Linda Westbrook, aged 46 years, died peacefully on Tuesday morning, 8th October, after an 18 month illness borne with great dignity and courage.

It was a traumatic period in which there were high and low moments during an illness she so desperately tried to overcome. Even in the uncertain times she remained defiantly determined that this was a battle she would not lose.

One everlasting memory of her optimism surfaced when she jubilantly announced, "*I've been given the all clear!*" This made Christmas 2001 a very special time. Unfortunately, her hopes were soon to be dashed when several medical symptoms hampered her recovery.

Realising the gravity of the situation, her concern



was only for her family when she decided to go back into hospital so she wouldn't be a burden to them at home.

Sometimes the nature of an illness or other calamitous situation defies our comprehension..... "*Why...?*"

That is the question never far from our lips on such occasions.

Linda Perrow met and married Ian Westbrook, affectionately known to us all as '*Twess*', in 1975 and they have lived in the same house in North Skelton all their married life, bringing up their two children, Donna and Lee.

Linda's popularity was very much in evidence on Friday 11th October when All Saints Church, Skelton was almost packed by a community eager to pay their last respects to a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend of many.

Although being of another generation, Linda seemed to adapt easily into a village lifestyle of a different era when friends and neighbours really mattered.

Ian, Donna, Lee, Edna, Dave, Susan and other members of a closely knit family - we all share your grief. They say that time is a great healer so hopefully we will soon be able to reminisce about the happy times and memories we shared with Linda, times we will never forget.

IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The families of Linda Westbrook wish to thank all the people who sent them cards and their condolences at the time of their recent sad bereavement.

They were deeply moved by the overwhelming number of cards and messages received.

Edna and Dave Perrow, Linda's mother and father, feel very strongly over their seeming inadequacy in replying to such an emotional show of sympathy.

Accepting that this was a most improbable task for them to undertake, *The Key* readily volunteered to convey the gratitude that all the family feels.

Bridge Across The Glen

(Known as the Halfpenny Bridge)

by Cath and Tony Lynn of Saltburn

As early as 1861 the building of a bridge across Saltburn Glen was discussed, but it was not until 31st August 1868 that the foundation stone for this bridge was finally laid, the bridge being opened for use in 1869. Construction of the bridge was carried out on the instructions of Mr J.T. Wharton of Skelton Castle in order to develop land on the east side of the Glen.

Local people called it the *Ha'penny Bridge* because the toll for each person not being in charge of a horse or vehicle was 'one halfpenny'. The toll-keeper occupied the booth on the west side from 8.00am until 5.00pm - users between 5.00pm to 10.00pm called at the cottage on the east side to pay and after 10.00pm pedestrians and cyclists were able to have a free passage.

The bridge was 650ft long with a maximum height of 120ft. It had several trestles of varying height, and each trestle consisted of four braced, cast iron columns with lattice girders spanning between columns. The structure was built by Messrs Hopkins, Gilkes & Company Limited of Middlesbrough. Edward Gilkes, a partner in the business, had previous experience in the construction of two major viaducts for the South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway at Belah and Deepdale.

Sadly, during the erection of the bridge, three men were killed when placing a girder on the third trestle - they were George Simpson and James Miller of Marske, and James Denny, the foreman from Middlesbrough.

During the hundred-plus years that the bridge graced the skyline in the Glen, it never fulfilled its original purpose of providing access to new development on the east side. However, it did contribute in many other ways to life in and around Saltburn. For instance, there was a path for miners which led from the east end of the bridge across the field to a wooden footbridge spanning the Saltburn Gill beck. It was ironic that just as the development of Cliffden Court took place, and people were moving in, that the bridge was finally closed and demolished.

It is claimed that the first successful telephone call to be made in this country was made from Cliffden on the east side by a Mr Irvine, via a cable laid across the bridge, to Judge Ayrton's house on Balmoral Terrace, the instigator of the experiment being Mr Fox of Woodlands.

In 1912, 300 members of the Barnsley Liberal Association came by excursion train and crossed the bridge to Rushpool Hall to hear speeches by Winston Churchill MP and Herbert Samuel MP.

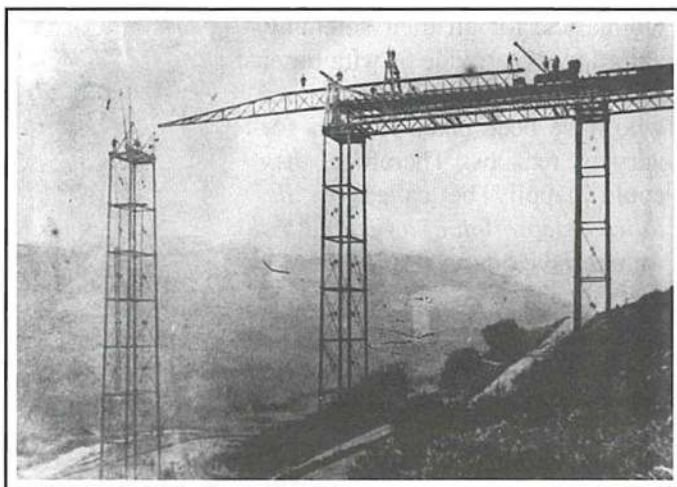
During WWI, Cliffden, on the east side of the Glen, was used as a Red Cross Hospital - recuperating wounded soldiers were brought from Hartlepool to Saltburn by train and then pushed on trolleys by Saltburn volunteers from the station then across the bridge to Cliffden.

Sadly, the Halfpenny Bridge was also an 'attraction' for people wishing to commit suicide, and its presence appears to have instigated over 70 deaths.

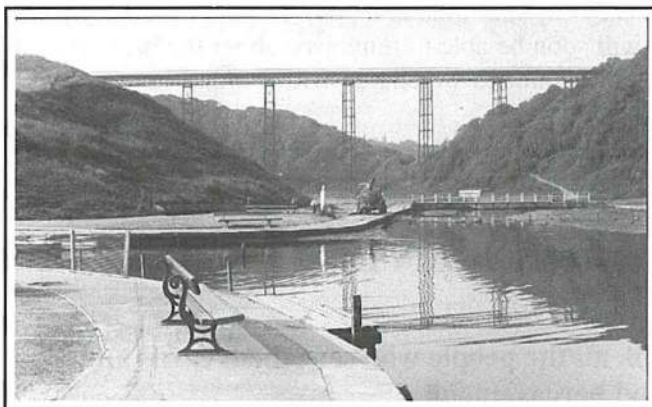
Although motor traffic was banned from using the

bridge, one of our friends tells the story of his passage across after 5.00pm on his motor bike. He duly knocked on the door of the cottage to pay his dues and when the toll-keeper came to the door he asked if he had just crossed the bridge on that motor bike. When he replied "Yes," he was duly ordered to return to the other side because motor vehicles were not allowed on the bridge!

Ultimately, through both neglect and poor maintenance, the Halfpenny Bridge became unsafe and was demolished at 9.30am on Tuesday, 17th December, 1974. There was a great deal of sadness felt by many who witnessed the demolition of a feature that had been very much part of their lives.



The Halfpenny Bridge under construction - 1868

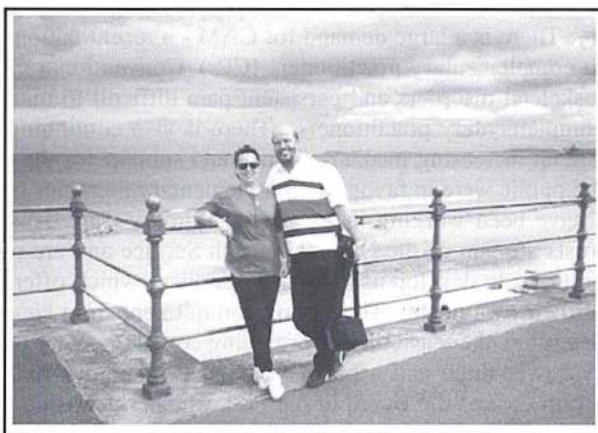


The Ha'penny Bridge from the boating lake

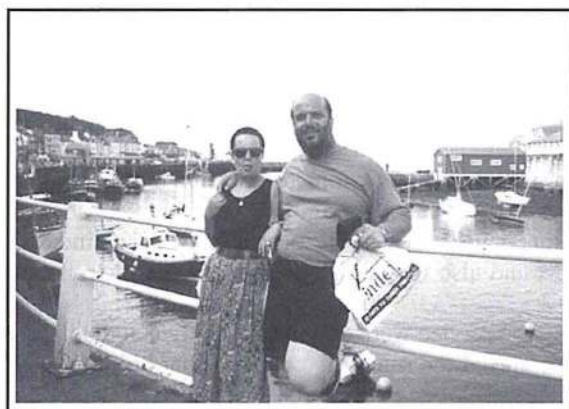
A Visit to the North-East from Malta

We have just returned from a very enjoyable holiday in England, where we stayed with relatives in Stockton-on-Tees. Although this is not a tourist resort we did enjoy it while we were there, visiting "The Tees Barrage", several walks along the river and did some excellent shopping and discovered some lovely pubs. After we'd had a wonderful week in Wales we spent the rest of our holiday exploring the North-East, which we would like to share with your readers.

One of the nicest days was when we went to visit Robin Hood's Bay and Scarborough. The only hitch was that during our short stay in Robin Hood's Bay it rained all the time and this did not let us see all that we wanted to - mostly we missed the wonderful scenery which would have been much more charming had it been sunny. And this was on the 11th July! We come from a country where we never expect anything else but hot sunny days all summer. So it was an experience to be running in the rain, all in raincoats and with our umbrellas open during July, which for us is the second hottest month of the year! But we still enjoyed our visit to the museum which had been the old coast guard station in Robin Hood's Bay. We then went on to Scarborough. The weather there was much better and it did let us enjoy a stroll on the beach and visit some of the numerous amusement arcades.



Paul and Marian at Seaton Carew



Enjoying the scenes of Whitby Harbour

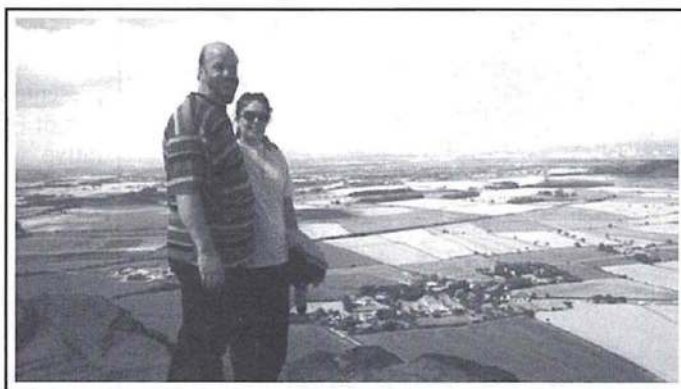
and the Mela Festival in the Albert Park in Middlesbrough. But it will take up all the space of this magazine to tell all our experiences.

We had a pleasant last day when we visited Saltburn-by-the-Sea. This was quite a lovely surprise because we did not expect such wonderful scenery. A walk in the lovely valley led us to the Saltburn Valley Woodland Centre. A must was a visit to the "Smugglers Heritage Centre" and a ride on the Cliff Lift. The scene from the top was memorable. But all good things must come to an end and sadly we had to return home...but with lovely memories, lots of photos and over 3 hours of video. We would like to come every year to enjoy your beautiful countryside, if we could afford it...but come again we will.

We had a good meal when we visited Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe. This village is very quaint and picturesque and we relished a visit around. Then we proceeded to the Yorkshire Gliding Club where we enjoyed watching from close range the gliders going up and down, and talking with gliding enthusiasts.

We did not have time to visit Whitby this year, but we had been there a couple of times before on our previous visits. Fish and chips wrapped in paper was an experience we will always associate with Whitby! And we shall never forget going up all those steps (who was counting!) to the Abbey. But it was worth it just to have a look over the harbour.

Memorable visits which we will never forget were when we visited Redcar, Eaglescliffe, Great Ayton, Roseberry Topping (we tested our stamina going to the top), the Metro Centre



The magnificent view from Roseberry Topping

Paul and Marian Abdilla - MALTA

Complementary Therapy – Available on the NHS???

I was very interested to read the article by Dr Neville-Smith back in April, about Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM). It seems that the issue of people being able to get safe access to CAM is being faced by many GPs across the country. There is a large demand for CAM - a recent national survey has shown that 4 - 5 million people per year in the UK go to complementary practitioners (CPs). Conventional medicine finds stress-related diseases, functional conditions, musculoskeletal disorders and persistent pain difficult to manage and these are the conditions which most often patients take to complementary practitioners. There is also continuing public scepticism about conventional drugs and their side effects and an increasing media optimism and support for the complementary 'alternative'. A survey in 1989 showed that 74% of the public were in favour of complementary therapies being made available on the NHS.

I have been working in Newcastle Primary Care Trust as Pharmaceutical Adviser for the past four years. Primary care trusts are part of the National Health Service and are responsible for developing services to improve healthcare. The PCT policy is to develop user-sensitive services which offer a greater range of choices which will enable people to take control of their own health. This strong commitment from Newcastle PCT has enabled us to develop and deliver a unique pilot to determine the feasibility of providing complementary therapy in the NHS.

Just over three and a half years ago Community Action on Health, a group that represents over 300 local community groups, asked the Board of the PCT whether it was possible to provide complementary therapy as part of the care received in the GP surgery. Particular issues were a demand for a wider range of therapeutic choices by local people and inequity of provision because privately funded complementary therapy was beyond the reach of people on low income. As I had an interest in this area I 'volunteered' to look into it - little did I know how much this was going to involve! I got a group together of local complementary practitioners, GPs, a public health doctor and members of the public. We started the very long process of agreeing the type of service we wanted, which therapies and where they would be based. Next came an even more fraught process of negotiating the money, and just after a year of the group first meeting we were ready to get up and running.

The project gives patients with chronic pain, stress, disability and long term illness, access to six complementary therapies via their GP: Homeopathy; Acupuncture; Osteopathy; Chiropractic; Shiatsu; and Aromatherapy/Massage. The therapies chosen were those with the strongest evidence, except shiatsu, which was due to a high interest by the local residents. This decision was later backed by the House of Lords Select Committee report which gave cautious but definite encouragement for our first four therapies to be integrated into the NHS. It was felt that NHS provision was already a reality for aromatherapy - particularly in terminal care medicine, and as such would be part of the pilot.

At the start of the pilot there were mixed views from GPs as to whether the NHS should fund complementary therapies. Some GPs had very firm beliefs that the limited resources of the NHS should not be 'wasted' on treatments that had little evidence to say they worked. Others welcomed the move feeling that it provided more options for the care of their patients. I have seen a change in perceptions over the course of the pilot; some of the GPs that had originally expressed concerns are now referring their patients for treatment. The complementary practitioners are based in GP practices. This has increased GPs and other health professionals awareness and knowledge of CAM and also the complementary practitioners knowledge of mainstream medicine.

The evaluation of the pilot has shown that 62% of the patients accessing the service were extremely satisfied and 34% very satisfied. In 68% of the cases the patients condition got better and 28% stayed the same. A couple of hard hitting quotes from the survey include: "After the first session I was free of pain for the first time in 10 years..." and "The horrific pain I was in is now improving every week, even though I may have to have an op according to my MR scan, I'm keeping my fingers crossed I wont need it." The pilot work has confirmed patient and GP interest with approximately 100 patients per month being treated.



The pilot has gained national interest and was runner-up for an award for good practice in Integrated Healthcare, Prince of Wales Foundation for Integrated Health. This was very exciting as we got presented with the certificate by Prince Charles himself. We are also one of five sites nationally participating in the Foundations Collaborative, which is where pilots across the country are working together to develop services to provide complementary therapy within the NHS. This has meant yet another trip to meet the Prince at the launch of the Collaborative, which was very nice as it was at St James Palace!

Prior to the start of the pilot the Health Authorities policy was not to fund the provision of complementary therapies. This policy is now under review and the pilot has brought the subject forward in priority. The results from the evaluation of the pilot will determine the feasibility of the continuation and extension of the service, including all or some of the therapies in the pilot, to the whole of Newcastle.

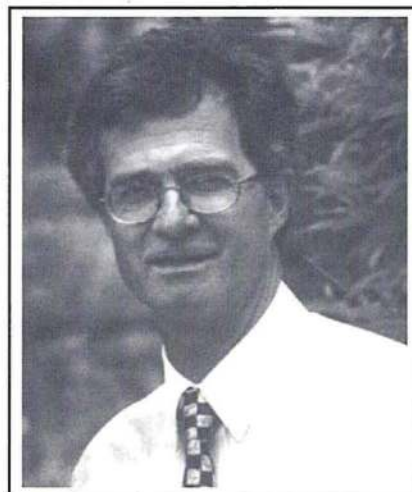
Dawn Solomon (nee Cruickshank), Newcastle (forever a Skeltoner!)

Doc Spot...

'Nitty Norah' and School Nit Inspections

I have had a long and wonderful letter from Sheila Bocking telling me about this impressive lady. No one has yet named her but I am led to believe her identity is known! I quote from this letter.

"We viewed her arrival at Skelton Green School with fear and trembling. One's first instinct was to rush for the front of the line to keep the 'nitty' amongst us at the back. The frantic scramble would soon be halted by a navy clad arm and you'd find yourself at the back of the queue. There were always two lines - boys in one - girls in the other. She had large combs but these were unisex.



Dr Roger Neville-Smith

"The combs stood in a large jam jar half full of oil of sassafras and were big and black. Sometimes by the end of the 'rounds' they were missing a few teeth."

I presume the oil of sassafras was used as an antiseptic although I have not found a reference to this use. I believe it has a very strong smell rather like camphor and has been used as a medicine since the American Indians discovered its properties. It is said to be a stimulant and sweat producer; when used in concentrated form it is alleged to be a potent aphrodisiac! I think I need to talk with Norah about this - any news and I will be back.

"When it was your turn, you were grabbed and hauled against Norah's ample bosom in a hold destined to smother any cries of protest. The comb was swirled a couple of times round the jar. Plaits or hair bunches were lifted and the comb poked in and out of the straining hair underneath the plait. If clean you were released and returned, rather smugly to the classroom. If not, then at the end you were given a letter to take home. Of course everyone knew then that you had 'got them'. The smell of the oil of sassafras was as obvious as a neon sign.

"The weekly ritual of head lice detection went on in many homes. White glossy paper from the Co-op butcher proved to be a good background for nit detecting. The double sided nit comb was used and oh the horror of head lice or glossy white nits when they were found. Small consolation to be told that head lice like clean hair."

Onions and Garlic

I have had lots of advice from readers on remedies. Onions and also garlic have obviously been very effective favourites. Rita Beckham writes *"For Colds; boil a pan of onions with plenty of pepper, take at night before going to bed. It certainly makes you sweat."*

Again more help from Sheila. *"Earache; boil the onion and put in the ear, bound in by a scarf."* I hope the onion was allowed to cool!

"On one occasion having been banged over the ear with a tuning fork by the teacher.... treated with a mixture intended for dog ear canker containing garlic and linseed oil ... the wild garlic came from Saltburn woods although not gathered at midnight at full moon ... It worked a treat."

Please keep sending in your memories of old remedies and your experiences of the medical services. I will include more gems in the next issue.

Dr Roger Neville-Smith

SOFTWARE

"A fairly big topic Neil", you might say and you'd be right, & fitting in even a small amount on the subject in this column space is a big task. However I do intend to just skim the surface on this one to put right some popularly held misconceptions that I hear quite regularly. Software is the computer programming code that makes your computer work. You can't touch it, feel it, or even see it. Although lots of software comes on CD ROMs or floppy disks, the CD ROM or the floppy disk are both considered to be hardware. It's the stuff that's written on them that is software. So that's the software / hardware issue sorted out. Now software itself breaks down into two basic camps:

Operating Systems:

Windows 3.1, 3.11
Windows 95, 98, Me, XP
Windows NT, 2000
Unix, Linux
OS2



Applications:

Word Processing
Graphics Editors
Desktop Publishing
Web Authoring packages
E-mail, Web browsers
Spreadsheets
Databases

An **Operating System** is the coding that makes all the parts that make up your computer (CD ROM drive, Floppy Drive, Hard Disk Drive, Keyboard, Mouse, etc..) talk to the main brains of the computer, (the CPU or processor), and also produces the screen that we see on the monitor so that we can tell the processor what to do. Without the operating system none of your other software would be able to run and, as such, is very important. One of the major players is *Microsoft*, mainly because they were one of the first, (but not *the first*), companies to produce and, more importantly, market the Windows interface that we all know and love today. The latest desktop operating system from Microsoft is known as XP. If you're buying a new computer expect to find Windows XP on it. This is usually good practise as it ensures that you are protected for as long as possible against any other software that you may buy. For example, if you have a computer that is running Windows 3.11, a lot of the modern software will no longer run on this operating system and requires at least Windows 98 or beyond.

Applications on the other hand are the programs that the processor uses to manipulate the information that you may input into the computer. An application converts the data kept in a file into the picture that you see on a screen. So for instance if you are writing a letter you will use a Word Processing application. You will start by running the Word Processing Application, then you input via the keyboard and the mouse instructions to the application to produce the letter as you want it. You then save it and print it.

This is a good example of what is happening between the two types of program:

Your operating system is used to start the word processing program, and also allows you to enter characters and instructions from the keyboard and the mouse.

Your application arranges all these characters and instructions and presents you with a graphical picture of what they represent on the screen.

Finally your operating system allows you to store all the neatly arranged information as a file on your hard disk or floppy disk.

So breaking all this down, you need an operating system on your computer before you can do anything meaningful on it, but an operating system on its own is pretty boring and you need to buy some applications to make it do the things you want.

I'm presently offering to put villages and communities online via the www.UKVillages.co.uk website. North Skelton will have a space on this website and it's just waiting for information to be put up there. If you would like to do this but don't know how, then get in touch with me - 01287 201088 / 624843 or mob. 07929 955045 - and I'll show you how.

Also I'm setting up some seminars on the following subjects:

Internet Safety

Computer Virus's

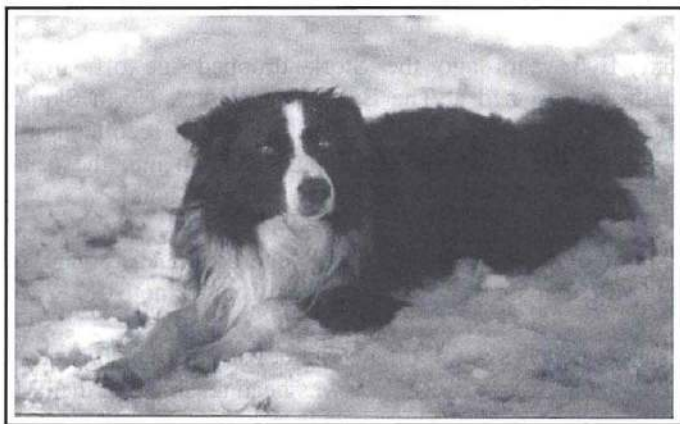
What to look for when buying a PC

E-mail

Please let me know if you or your community group or society would be interested in hosting one or more of these events – They are all free, all you have to do is be there !

Neil Harland

Cap's End of the Year Round-Up



Hello All !

*It's been a better year down here on the farm. For a start my master seems to have regained his sanity and is no longer cleaning Wellingtons and then dipping them in the smelly liquid like he was last year. Also he is **not** habitually cleaning the tyres of cars, tractors and trailers all the time, (just now and again). He certainly seems to be more cheerful and he can round up the sheep when he wants to. No readers, life seems to be getting back to normal, with the exception of the weather which just seems to have lost the plot al-*

together. Warm sunny spells in March and April, then it chucks it down most of the summer – what's that all about?

Anyway, despite all that, there's been so much grass around, the lambs are looking well and the hayshed is full. That coupled with lamb prices getting back to what they were in 1995 has certainly put a smile on the master's face. It was good to see walkers back on the moor as well, particularly as they always want to fuss over me when I go up to them. Despite the fact that it is well over a year since the last case of Foot and Mouth in the country my master still foams at the mouth when anyone mentions the word 'DEFRA'. It seems that they are still imposing movement restrictions of 20 days whenever anybody buys any livestock. This has meant that in order to sell the lambs this year my master could not go to the local tup sale and instead is going to one in a place called Hexham.

It seems that at the time of writing there has just been a big march in London. The biggest march that peacetime Britain has ever seen. The Government said that they were going to ignore it. "That's fine," said my master, "I'll just ignore my call up papers for 'Tony's War'".

On the subject of the Government, it says they are going to do something about the cause of Foot & Mouth Disease. They have had three enquiries by very important people, and they have concluded that the source was very likely to have been illegal imports of meat. I have it on good authority that at the time of writing there are only two dogs for the whole of this massive country that are being used to sniff out meat in the luggage at airports. So the livestock farmers are being asked to put up with Draconian livestock movement rules, (the only country in the world to do so), even though there is no disease in the country, and what are we doing to prevent the disease coming back in? Two dogs! Well, Mr. Blair, here's one dog that's ready to do his bit in the fight against Foot and Mouth, (so long as I can eat everything I find that is!) Just tell me which airport I'm to be stationed at!

Anyway readers I wish you well for the festive season, and whatever you're tucking into for your Christmas Dinner I hope that it's been the handiwork of some British Farmer.



Jess, (The undisputed Boss)



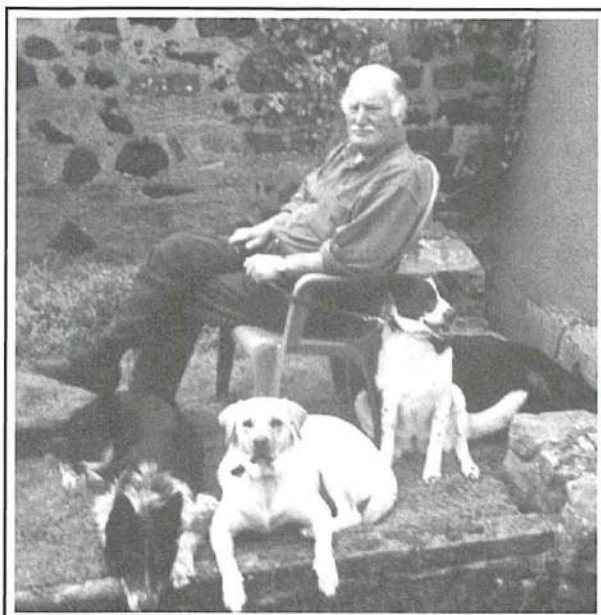
Dan



....and Me (the handsome one)

HAPPY DAYS AT NORTH SKELTON

By Brian Addison (Young 'Nimble Nat')



Brian Addison - young 'Nimble Nat'

Sixty-five years ago the Stork dropped me off, in my mother's best bed at The Bulls Head Hotel, North Skelton and 'Young Nimble' had arrived. My first recollection of living in The Bull was being carried down into the cellar, wrapped in blankets in case Gerry dropped a bomb.

I was taught to swear at an early age by the customers, the reward being one penny but never in front of mother.

I started North Skelton Infants School at five, which is now a D.I.Y store. Laura B. Ramsey was head teacher and then Mrs Kirkbright was her assistant. I've had many a good clip around the lug off Miss Ramsey, which did more good than harm.

There was never a dull moment at the Bull. I could throw a good dart as a toddler and once played Fred Housam for my pudding one dinner time. Fred won and ate the pudding - I remember it was 'Spotted Dick'.

The highlight of the week was The Buffs Lodge held in the upstairs function room. The door had a small sliding hatch which was opened when one of the members knocked. My brother Bob and I would knock and as soon as it opened we would let fly with our peashooters. Many a time mother heard us shouting and came upstairs to find us tied to the bed. I have still got my father's Lodge Medal, from when he joined in 1932.

Father started a Cork Club where members were given a cork and rules laid down. If they swore or held their beer glass in their right hand they were fined one penny, and if any member called "*corks up*" and they did not produce their corks they were also fined a penny. A good day out was had by all with the proceeds.

I started Stanghow Lane County Modern School aged 11 and the best lesson I liked was 'sport'. Joe Reed took us for football. Barry Bloomfield, Maurice Jeffels and I were chosen to represent Cleveland against Redcar in the *Festival of Britain* - score in our favour 3-1. We received no cups or medals, only a fish and chip supper!

After leaving school I started work at North Skelton Mine as an apprentice Joiner and worked under a few Managers - Mr Slater, Mr Tomlinson, Mr Roberts and Mr Pearson. I remember one incident - coming back from the Saw Mill the yard lights were on and here was Mr Tomlinson standing further down the yard and he shouted "Light boy!" I took no notice and carried on to the Joiners Shop. About a minute later the door burst open and in walked an irate Mr Tomlinson saying, "When I say light boy, I mean light, so go and switch the bugger off!" Which I promptly did! Needless to say I kept out of his way after that episode.

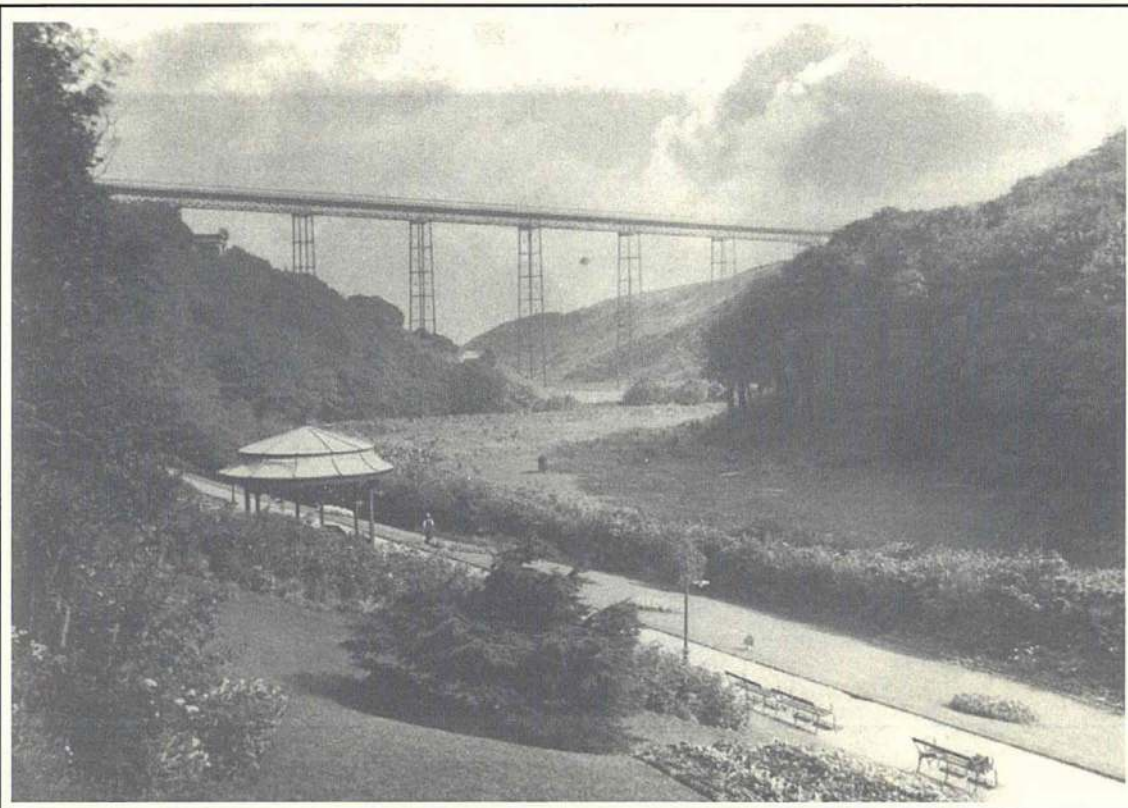
Now Mr Pearson was a different kettle of fish - he was like a father figure to us all. In an earlier edition of *The Key*, Jeff Temp said if the pit opened up again he would be the first in the queue and me alongside him - it's the best job I've ever had.

I noticed that two houses have been built on our old Badminton Hut site. Your grand-dad, Norma, taught me how to play badminton and I graduated from a learner to playing in the League. So playing football for Skinninggrove Juniors on a Saturday afternoon and badminton on a Saturday night kept me quite fit.

As a village we had almost everything and as I look back to the 1950's we had a good life.

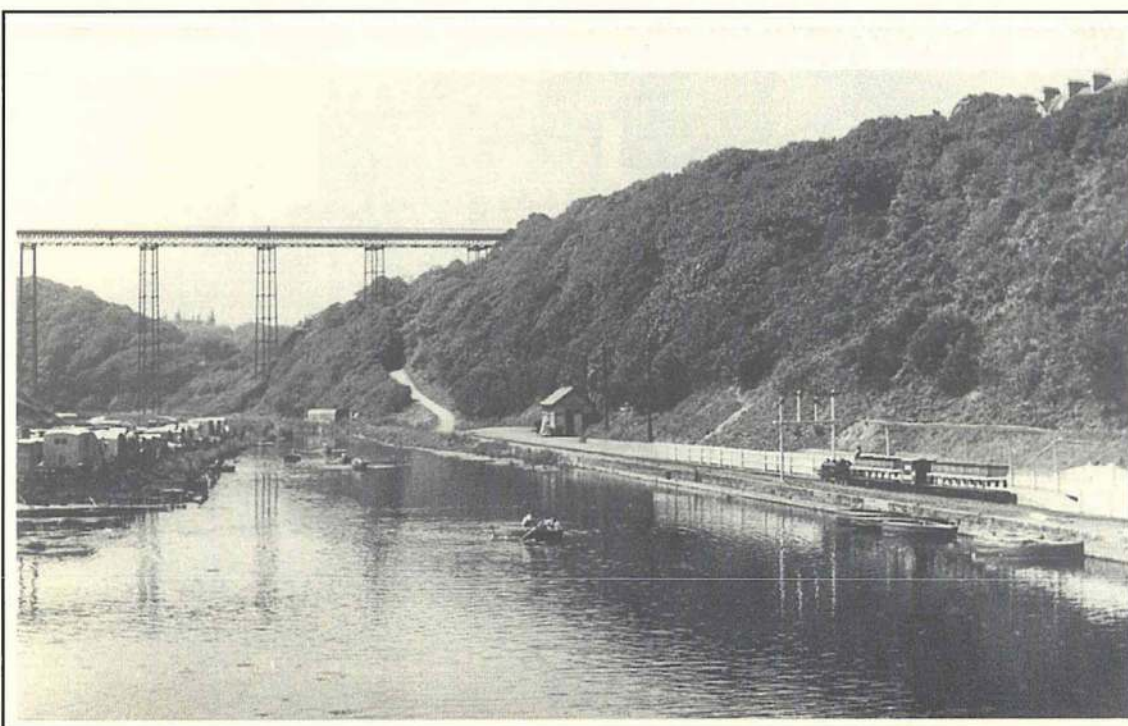
Lastly, in case you ever wondered, in the Bull the counters were lower than they are today, and at any sign of trouble my father would vault over into the bar, hence the nickname..... *Nimble Nat*.

PHOTO GALLERY



A couple more old photographs of the Ha'penny Bridge (see page 4)

Above, looking north-east from the Italian Gardens . . .



*. . . and here looking south from the Boating Lake c. 1948
(note the miniature railway train on the right of the picture)*



Boosbeck High Street - early 1900's?

*The shoe shop between the two groups of people is now Boosbeck Post Office.
The right-hand shop - S TUCK'S - is now a private dwelling.*



Post Office, Boosbeck Road, Skelton Green - early 1900's?

*The Post Office is now a private dwelling.
The bay-windowed pub just beyond the children is still the Green Inn.*



'Time for a Break' - at North Skelton Ironstone Mine

Half-hidden at the top is Ray Beckham

On the grassy bank are L. to R: Les Bousfield, Brian Addison, Keith Gosling, Bill Turnbull



Another lovely photo, this time taken in the 'pit yard'

Lorry driver - Wilf Wheatley, then L to R: Frank Radcliffe, Ron Hugill, Les Bousfield



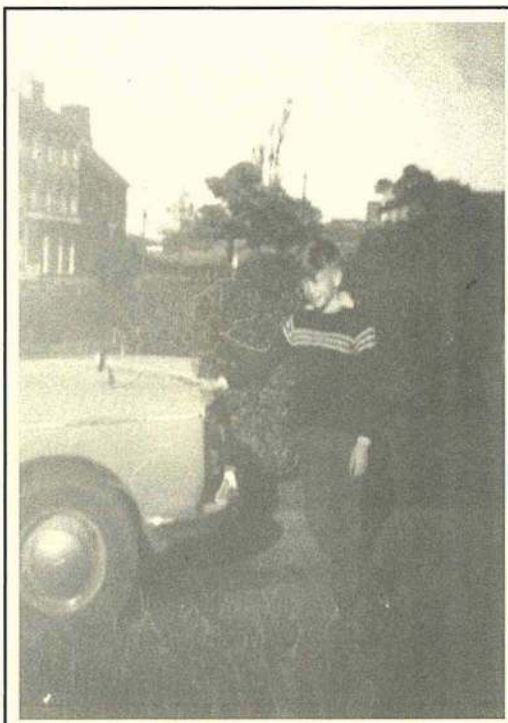
Skelton Infants School Orchestra - early 1950's

*Back Row L. to R: Anthony Stringer, Peter Dunn, Margaret Bell, Martin Bell, -?-, Neil Drury
Middle Row: Sandra Skipper, Pamela Pratt, David Bell, Jean Ward, ? Dowey, Valerie Hird, Felicity Stoward
Front Row: Gillian Young, Andrea Dunn, Pat Corner*

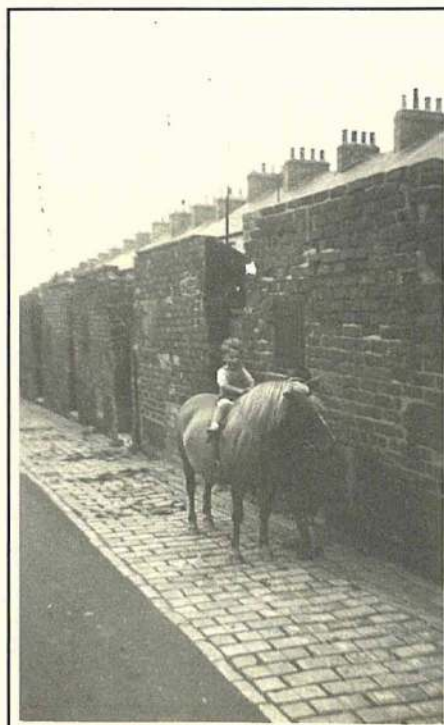


Skelton Infants School 'Panto' - Dick Whittington (early 1950's)

*Back L. to R: Margaret Bell, Margaret Just, Martin Bell, -?-, Carol Dent, Stephen Stringer,
Eileen Agar, ? Dowie, Penelope Proctor, Ann Parker, Valerie Hird, Gillian Young
Front: Ian Thompson, Judith Skeldon, Maureen Pigg, Pamela Pratt*



*Trevor Warren leaning on Dr Stevenson's car
outside the surgery at York House, Skelton
(note the West End Stores - now demolished - in
the background next to the Duke William pub)*



*Lee Ingleby on Dave Swan's horse 'Sandy'
with James Swan just hidden behind
(We think it's near the top of Bolckow/
Wharton back street - c. 1957)*



Skelton Infants School - c. 1947

*Back Row L. to R: Neil Harrison, Brian Forster, Robert Taylor, Alan Brown, Paul Whittaker, Stuart ?,
Ivan Hoggath, Anne Ashton*

Middle Row: -?- , -?- , Sheila McCann, -?- , Sylvia ?, -?- , -?- , Hillary ?, -?-

*Front Row - Barry Mogridge , -?- , Wilda Stevenson, George Hanson, Janet Hodgson,
Lawrence Williams, Sylvia Nicholas (?) , Elizabeth Kingston, Pat Young*



Skelton Infant's School Outing - early 1950's

*L. to R: Elizabeth Fox, Gillian Young, Margaret Bell, -?- , Martin Bell, Ian Thompson, -?- , -?- ,
Diana Hutchinson, Maureen Pigg, -?- , Pamela Pratt, Stephen Stringer, Margaret Just*



On a 'trip' from the Bull's Head - does anyone recognise the building in the background?

*Included on the photo are: Sid Cole, Den Padgett & Alec Batterbee (8th, 9th & 10th left),
Hilda Ruddy (looking out of bus doorway), Nick Carter (in front of Mrs Ruddy),
Bob Bolton (with stick), Ginny Johns (grey hair), Jack Ruddy (light suit),
Edie Gordon (3rd right), Mrs Addison (2nd right), 'Nimble Nat' Addison (far right)*



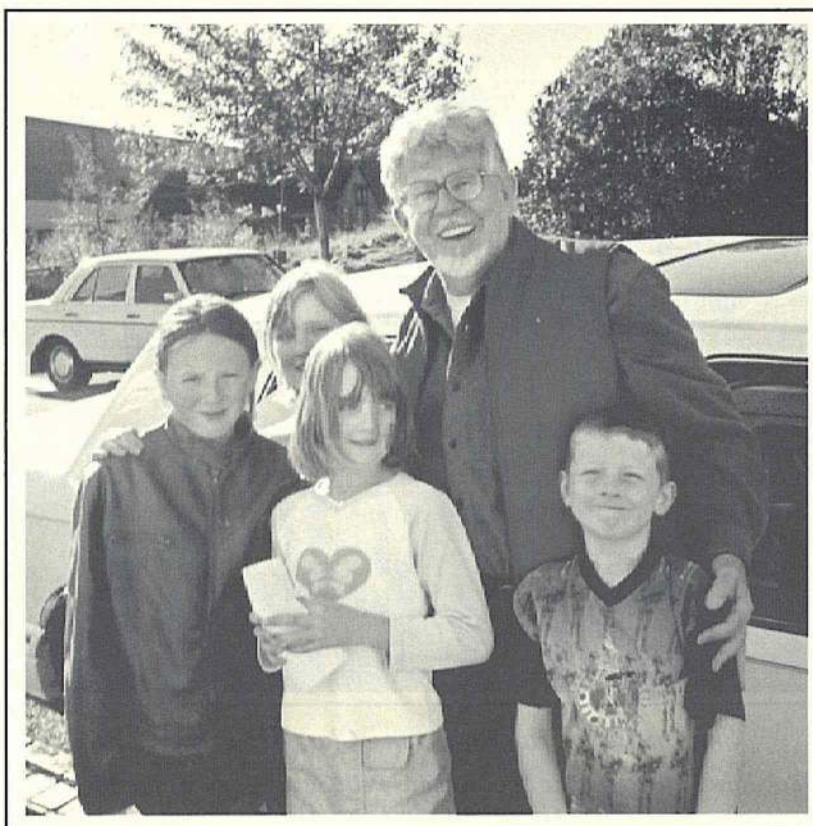
Skelton Junior Hockey Team - Class 4, November 1977

*Back Row L. to R: Jackie M? , Kendra Pell, Susan Jones, Jane Richardson,
Gillian Green, Angela Tilley, Debbie Brown
Front Row: Heather Britton, Angela Watts, Debbie Bolton, Jill Wass, Jackie Bushby*



Skelton 'All Stars' v Skelton Ladies c. 1961 at Hollybush Football Field

*Back Row L. to R: Billy Ward, 'Abbey' Robinson, Cliff Drinkhall, Bob Wilson, Owen Rooks,
Alan Craig, Alan Burluraux
Middle Row: Mrs Sherwood, Jean Hill, Pat Wilson, Christine Prothero, -?- , ? Johnston
Front Row: Alan Cummings, -?- , -?- , -?- , -?-*



Rolf Harris visits North Skelton to 'surprise' Jean Tokarski

Here Rolf is pictured with Jamie, Natalie & Kaleigh Brewster and Leanne Ward



Jean Tokarski and daughter-in-law Jean, on their way to see Daniel O'Donnell at the Royal Albert Hall last year as part of her 'surprise' for the Rolf Harris Xmas Show

A Brief History of East Cleveland Schools - North Skelton Infants School

No history of North Skelton would be complete without mentioning the one building that just about anyone who was born or brought up in the village would at some time have known well. No, not the Workingmen's Club or the Chapel, but North Skelton Infants School, known to locals in the old days as *'The Little School'*.

In researching its history I called in on the present business that occupies the old school buildings, the very popular DIY business *'Betterhome Ltd'* owned by Mr & Mrs Prior, who have run their family business from there since 1980. They have supplied all sorts of building materials to the local community. Mr Prior and his family were only too glad to help, and even produced the original deeds to the School for me to examine.



North Skelton 'Little School' - now Betterhome Ltd

Like all other deeds to buildings of that period, they were hand written, this one on an A1 size piece of wax paper, in black ink with a hand drawing of the site and marked with the original wax seals of the co-signatories. The County Council purchased the land from John Thomas Wharton Esq., of Skelton Castle, on 13th May 1864. On the plan, 1222 yards is indicated in a square between the Beck's of Layland and Holmbeck. Incidentally, the road that now runs past the school's frontage is only proposed at the time. It is difficult to read the deeds with all the 'legal jargon', but it looks as if the school was finally finished in 1881, after several extra extensions such as the bike sheds and toilets were added, ready to take in the new pupils. The school, like the others in the Skelton & Gilling Estate area, was built of red brick. Others examples are Stanghow Lane (now private dwellings), Skelton Green (demolished), Boosbeck (nursing home), Margrove Park (visitor's centre/museum), Lingdale (flats), and Moorsholm (nursing home).

I am told the school has changed little on the outside, but has been converted to open-plan on the inside. The outside toilets were removed along with the brick air raid shelters which were common until recently at most of the schools in the area. Previously, the children had to run to the air raid shelter under the railway line at the 'Park' at the bottom of Richard Street. The first head teacher was Mrs Caroline Douglas but little is known of her. In the late 1930's, as many of our readers will probably remember, Anna and Gerty Kirkbright from Brotton joined the school to supplement the teachers who headed off to war. Anna ran the Infant side of the school, then later on Mrs Readman and Miss Jorden joined the staff. The head teacher was Miss Ramsey who, according to Norma, was a lovely headmistress. Danny Morrish, she remembers, had a lovely singing voice and Miss Ramsey would sit at her desk and ask him to sing. "I am sure," remarked Norma, "that his voice soothed her." Miss Ramsey was also the first person in North Skelton to wear the famous 'new look' dress that was ankle length. "I have vivid recollections," said Norma, "of her walking into school with the red striped dress on, and a huge smile on her face! Both the Miss Kirkbrights said in unison, "O-h-h, Miss Ramsey!" Miss Ramsey went on to live into her 90's, retiring to Ingleby Greenhow. The two Miss Kirkbrights never came to school looking anything but prim and proper, and never without the standard woollen twin-set and felt hat.

For the children, one of the main highlights of the year was 'Sports Day', always well attended by parents. Norma still has her prizes for running which she treasures to this day. I wonder what Miss Ramsey would make of Norma and her great magazine!

There was no kitchen provided at the school - the children were walked, rain or shine, to the 'tin hut' (later to become the site of Boocock's car showroom and now Cleveland Country Store) for dinner. In subsequent years, the children had to walk up to Stanghow Lane School for their dinner hour. When the school was finally closed to pupils it was purchased by Mr Hodgson as a supply depot for the building materials of the then new Layland Bridge Estate, which was being built opposite, across the road.

Stuart McMillan

The Lamps

North Skelton was in shock. Every house was getting ready for Christmas. Thanks to the Christmas Belles, Vaughan Street was lit up like it had never been before. The arranging of parties was taking shape. All these, and more festivities were forgotten when the sensational news broke.

The Lamps were leaving! No-one could believe it. There was to be a public meeting in the Club at 7.30pm. Various rumours were running rife around the village.

When the Club doors opened, there was a rush of people all vying for the front seats. The room was packed to capacity. Whispers and gossip were passing to and fro between tables. Duffy and Benson walked in making their way onto the stage where a table had been set up. Four chairs were pulled out. The two landlords took their seats motioning the crowd to be quiet.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Davy and Tilly Lamp," announced Benson.

As Davy was to say later, it was the longest walk he and Tilly had ever made. Then Davy stood on the stage, ready to speak. The drop of a pin would have been deafening. He cleared his throat.

"Well, mi' old pals, there's good news and there's bad. The bad news is that I've 'ad mi' heart broken. All mi' blood tests 'av come back positive."

A gasp went round the room. What on earth could be the matter?

"Aye! Doctor took me in an' sat me down and said them terrible words, 'Davy, you've got pigeon-itus!'"

"WHAT'S THAT?" I shouted.

"You have an allergic reaction to pigeons."

Davy's head bowed, a tear dropping onto his cheek as he continued. "Ah' said to 'im, 'But Doc, pigeons is mi' life!' The Doctor sympathised. "There's nothing I can do for you. The best thing is to get rid of your pigeons."

"Ah'm absolutely gutted folks..."

The crowd gave a sigh of relief, then waited for the good news.

Davy coughed and wiped his eyes before he continued.

"The good news is, me an' Tilly had a letter from a solicitor asking us to call on 'im. We were gob-smacked when we 'eard what he had to tell us. It appears an uncle of mine worked down North Skelton Pit many years ago. He got sick of it so he upped sticks and went bag and baggage to Australia. Then, six months ago he died."

Davy took a deep breath before he went on.

"In 'is will he left everything to me. The lot! House, money, and land!"

A gasp went round the room. Eyes widened as big as saucers, lugs the size of dinner plates as they waited for more.

"Well, everybody, we've decided we're off! Me, Tilly an' t' bairns are going to go to Australia. We're emigratin'!"

Not a bigger bombshell could have hit North Skelton. The place erupted. A thousand questions were waiting to be asked.

Tabby was first to shout. "Davy, ah'll tell yer summat, you won't last five minutes, cos its too hot for you lot, not to mention spiders as big as Whitby crabs."

Marto sat quiet, he couldn't believe it.

"When's all this happenin' then Davy?" he said.

"Next month. We leave on December 23rd."

"But that's Christmas!"

"Yes," replied Davy, "we'll be spending Christmas Eve on t' plane. New Year will be rung in at our new 'ome on t' other side of t' world."

Davy sat down. Tilly's turn came next.

"Davy and me and the bairns have talked for hours on end and we want to try it. The house is in a small town near the Barrier Reef."

Everyone said it at the same time.

"Barrier Reef! Tilly, you get lost down Skelton Ellers! Where will you work Davy?"

Davy once again stood up.

"Ah' don't need to work. He's left enough money to keep us going for a few years. Then if we 'aven't settled we'll come home. Now, no more questions. Ah'm goin' into the bar for a pint. Ah'll be saying ta-ra to you all in the next four weeks."

Julie, Gill, Jayne and Debby walked up to Tilly.

"If you want any help packin' Tilly, just ask."

The crowd dispersed. Phones were red hot as the news spread far and wide.

"Ah' can't talk tonight Marto cos that Doctor knocked the wind out of mi' sails. Will ah' see yer tomorro' to sort out mi' animals?"

"Course yer will Davy. Don't worry."

By the next day everyone knew and began to plan for Davy's departure. Julie and the others pushed notes through everyone's letter box inviting them to Davy's farewell event. Flags were made ready to be strung up and to wave. They all had to meet on Vaughan Street at 11.30am. Jean arranged for the Christmas lights to be switched on early. The time drew nearer. Everything was falling nicely into place.

Davy and Marto sat in the club. "Well Marto, packin's nearly finished. There's only mi' livestock. Will yer 'ave mi' royal pigeons please?"

Marto answered him. "Course ah' will Davy, an' Benson an' Duffy are takin' yer dogs. Yer know them two, the dogs'll want for nowt. That only leaves yer ferrets."

Jim piped up, "Ah'll 'ave them!"

His bravado in accepting them without asking their lass was short lived. She was behind him and whispered fiercely in his ear.

"Ovver my dead body! It's them or me!"

Jim took a while answering, "No, on second thoughts I can't..."

"Well Tabby's not getting 'em cos I know 'im. They'll be up for auction tomorro'!"

"How about you three?" said Davy as he spied the 'Last of the Summer Wine' lads.

"OH NO!!" shouted Merv. "What the 'eck are we goin' to do wi' six ferrets?"

Jigger had sat very quietly, which was unusual for him. "Hang on lads, don't be too hasty. Don't forget, wi' Davy gone we'll be leading very dull an' sheltered lives. Walkin' ferrets will open a few doors to us. An' better still, we could show 'em!"

It was agreed.

Tilly was finished packing. Many tears had been shed as she gave away small keepsakes.

Today was the day. Davy was up early as he needed to walk around North Skelton on his own. Present day thoughts turned to lasting memories as he made his way up one street and down another. Tears squeezed through tightened eyelids as he remembered the good times he had spent with his loyal friends. "Oh, dear," Davy spoke aloud, "ah'm really goin' to miss all of this."

He squared his shoulders and set off back home to begin his new adventure.

Vaughan Street and Holmbeck Road were full to capacity. Everyone lined the pavements. Flags were flying everywhere. The band was in position. Four Father Christmas's walked up Richard Street, each with a Santa sack in their hands. Mario hooked up the tractor to Fraggie's lorry. Murphy, Tabby, Ferret and Stef walked on either side. What a parade! The band struck up, and began to march towards the Lamps' house.

Marto said, "I'm afraid it's time to go Davy..."

Davy grabbed him and gave him a big hug as he said, "Ah'll miss yer Marto..."

They both coughed as they made their way outside. The noise was deafening. The crowds shouted, the flags were flying. They made their way to the gate. Their eyes widened as they saw the procession. The band belted out 'Waltzing Matilda'. Baz led them in his full disco regalia. Behind them were the four Santas. Mario's tractor came next - it and Fraggie's lorry were a sight to behold. Lights and tinsel glittered from one vehicle to the other. Taking up the rear and controlling the crowds were the Mitchell's. As they reached Davy's the procession stopped. The four Santas walked forward. Reaching for a small sack, the first one approached Davy and Tilly and said, "Merry Christmas to you all and a safe journey. This is just a small token of friendship."

The beard and hat were thrown off. The first of the Santas was Julie! Then the second one walked towards little Ed. "Merry Christmas! This is a present from the children of North Skelton."

Once again the hat and beard came off. It was Gill! The last two took hold of Milly and Lenny Liam's hands and they both said, "Merry Christmas from us all!"

They also revealed their identities - they were Debby and Jayne. The six lads who had accompanied the lorry now made a line of honour as Marto led the family forward to take up their seats on the lorry.



Meanwhile, in the Club, Benson and Duffy were frantically trying to lift 'Ord Norm' and Joyce out of their seats. Benson was livid!

"Get out there Norm', Davy's been in that magazine eleven years! It's only right you should wave him off..."

Ann Hutchy rushed forward. "Ah'll see to these two. You go see to the lights."

Ann finally got 'Ord Norm' and Joyce up from their seats and out onto the steps of the Club. The procession drew nearer. The band was playing 'Away In A Manger'.

Benson shouted, "NOW DUFFY!"

A switch was thrown. The front of the club was illuminated. Words were flashing on and off. "Happy New Year To The Lamps!"

Tilly said, with tears in her eyes, "Thank you, and a Happy New Year to you all!"

The procession moved on towards New Skelton Bank and still people from Green Hill View and Layland came out to line the pavement. Benson, Duffy and Ann followed behind. 'Ord Norm' and Joyce propped each other up and Norm' shouted after them, "Parley-voo-Frogsay!"

Joyce's head flew up. "What's that mean?"

"Ta-ra in Australian, Joyce!" cried 'Ord Norm'. "Ah' can talk foreign yer know!"

Joyce took her arm and led her back inside. "What will you do now the Lamps have gone Norm?"

"Ah' don't know Joyce, but they've 'ad a good run. Ah'll think o' summat."

The procession finally stopped at the top of New Skelton Bank. Mario unhooked the tractor. The lorry pulled slowly away. The band and what sounded like a thousand voices began to sing.

*"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of auld lang syne . . . ?"*

The Key will never forget 'The Lamps' . . .

Meanwhile, back in The Bull:

"Are we goin' out to wave The Lamps off Sally?" said Jean.

"No, we won't bother Jean, we're warm an' comfy sat here. An' anyway, ah' reckon they'll soon be back. Half on 'em who go out foreign, end up comin' back home again."

"Ah' know Sally, everythin' will be different. Just think, when we go into Brownie's for our Christmas chicken, Tilly will be asking for a leg of kangaroo!"

"Aye! Well it might do you and me a bit o' good, Jean. Put a spring in our step, or keep us on the hop!"

"We'll miss 'em though, Sally, won't we? Let's toast 'em with a drop o' Brandy!"

The two ladies held their glasses high and in unison they said, "To the Lamps, who have brought village humour to North Skelton! And God bless you all this Festive Season."

TO ALL THE CHARACTERS WHO HAVE APPEARED IN THE LAMPS OVER THE YEARS. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR SENSE OF HUMOUR - AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT...

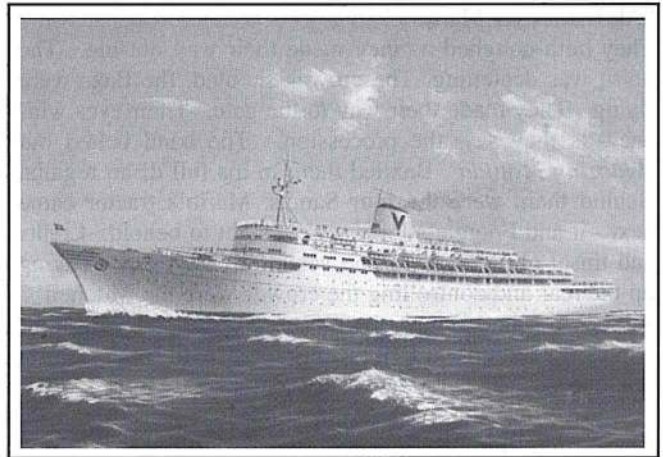
Norma

From North Skelton to Brisbane, Australia

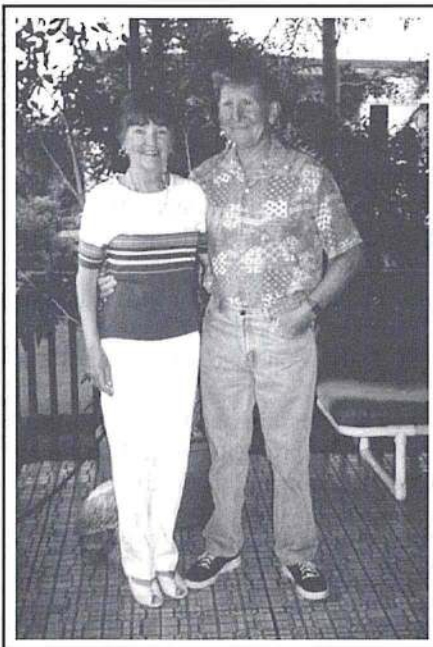
In 1959 with a real threat of Nuclear War, shortage of work and talk of a recession, my husband, Peter, and I decided to emigrate to Australia. We chose to go to Brisbane in Queensland, which is in the sub-tropics and has cool dry winters and warm summers.

Peter was a carpenter, and tradesmen were in demand in Brisbane, so we were soon accepted. His mother, brother, sister and her husband and children also decided to go. So in June 1959, nine of us left Southampton for Brisbane aboard the 'Fair Sky' for a journey which was to take five weeks. A lovely holiday cruise we thought....

First, the Bay of Biscay was very rough. There was trouble going through the Suez Canal so we had to wait for a convoy of ships and all go through together. Soldiers were patrolling the banks carrying guns, not a pleasant experience. At Aden, our first port of call, we were not allowed to leave the ship, so it was on into the Indian Ocean bound for Freemantle. Once out into the ocean we were hit by a hurricane, waves as large as mountains rolled in. Most people were confined to their cabins as the ship rolled and pitched so much. Ropes were criss-crossed between the gangways, and if you did leave your cabin it was like mountaineering, pulling yourself along between the ropes. The ship's hospital was full, stewards went from cabin to cabin with drugs for people unable to get out of bed. I personally prayed the boat would just sink and put us all out of our misery.



'Fair Sky' - the ship on which Audrey and her family sailed to Australia



Audrey and her husband, Peter

Freemantle was only a day's sail away when we were told there was a wharfie's strike in Freemantle and we would have to continue on to Melbourne. Fortunately the weather moderated and we soon reached Melbourne. Again a strike was in place and the tugs would not berth the ship. The captain decided to berth it himself, much to the disgust of the water-side workers. They paraded with banners, black-listing the ship, and dumped all our fresh food into the harbour. Again we were told it was not wise to go ashore, but after a month on a tossing ship everyone decided they were going. To stand on dry land was wonderful, but the next day we set off again for Sydney. Sydney Harbour Bridge was a welcome site, and we all then disembarked for our train journey to Brisbane.

Brisbane in 1959 was a quiet country town, the people were friendly and, although it was July and the middle of winter when we arrived, the sunny days and cool nights we found wonderful. Peter started work within three days of arriving, I arranged a flat for us to live in then started work the next week. We both loved it, everyone was so informal, it was certainly an easygoing way of life. By the end of the year we had moved into our own home by the bay. Brisbane stands on a large bay - Moreton Bay - it has two large islands enclosing the bay and 300 small islands dotted around. One of the islands, St. Helena Island, was where the convicts were sent. It's safe for sailing and boats soon became part of our life.

Our children, a girl and then a boy, were born within a few years, and life was good. The house we bought was a Queensland style house with verandas and a large garden. All houses were on large blocks of land as it was so plentiful at that time. Fruit trees were already planted and we had orange, lemon, mandarin, mango, paw-paw, bananas, passion fruit, vine, grapes and a macadamia nut tree all bearing fruit. It was always a treat for us to pick our own fruit. Peter built a boat and Sunday morning we would all pile in, armed with fishing rods, and catch enough fish for a lunch time barbeque. Even our cat knew when the boat came back that he could expect a feed of fish!

As the children grew up, our speed boat gave way to a sailing boat, and that became our great love, sailing.

As children do, they soon married and left home, and Peter and I decided to retire early. Our aim was to visit my mother in North Skelton then come back and 'go sailing'. It had been 25 years since I had left and what a wonderful reunion I had with my mother, sisters and brother. We spent a lot of our time visiting the beautiful countryside; places like Runswick Bay, a favourite of mine when we were young, seemed not to have changed at all. When the time came to leave, it was very difficult to say 'goodbye'.



Peter and Audrey now love sailing in Moreton Bay

Back in Australia we packed the boat and set off for the Great Barrier Reef. What a wonderful, spectacular place it is. We had two months visiting all the islands, swimming, snorkelling, fishing and sailing the lovely blue waters. Winter is the only time to visit the Reef - in summer the temperatures soar and storms are always a threat.

We still sail in Moreton Bay - it's so peaceful out on the water, and if you are lucky the dolphins follow you. They are curious creatures and swim alongside occasionally flipping backwards on their tails.

Brisbane in 2002 has grown from a country town into a very cosmopolitan city, with lovely shopping malls, parks, museums, art galleries and theatres to rival most cities. Its climate is its greatest asset, with most days being sunny and warm. To the south of Brisbane, one hour's drive away, is the Gold Coast, a popular tourist destination. To the north is the Sunshine Coast with its beautiful beaches. The Barrier Reef and Cairns are a short plane flight away.

We have never regretted coming to Australia, life has been good to us. North Skelton, however, will always be 'home'. When we see photographs of the countryside we are filled with nostalgia, and wonder what our lives would have been like had we stayed.

Audrey Arch (nee Bowers)

Letterbox

Dear Norma

For many years now, I have been researching the air war over the north of England during 1939-1945 and I have written a number of books on that subject. Thus I was intrigued when a friend showed me a copy of the August 1997 issue of 'The Key', which contained a brief account, by Colin Berwick, of a German aircraft that

came to grief in North Skelton. Seemingly, the aircraft jettisoned bombs near 'Mucky Lane' before crashing near East Pastures Farm.

If any readers can give further details of this incident, I would be very pleased to hear from them.

Bill Norman

Tel. 01287 280429

E-mail: normawlnj@aol.com



Letterbox



Dear Don,

Thank you for the many hours of pleasure I have spent looking at your website. It keeps me in touch with 'home'.

I grew up in a house across the road from you - 'York House'. In fact I was born there the day before war broke out - 2nd September 1939. My Dad was the village doctor - Dr William Stevenson.

I had a happy childhood, playing and taking the dog for walks around Skelton. We often went through the woods to Saltburn, up on the Hills or just up 'Dick Pashley's Field', along Back Lane and down through the fields coming out by the water trough at the bottom of Rectory Bank. An interesting point here Don, we used to call the wood at the bottom of Rectory Bank 'Crow Wood'. I noticed you mentioned Crow Wood as being, I think, in Saltburn Woods. There used to be 'crow shoots' there on Friday evenings in the summer.



I did my nursing training at RVI Newcastle, then met and married Dr Peter Tallentire. In Jan 1969, after 5 years in the Skelton practice, we emigrated with our three sons to

Western Australia. We live on a rural property here and enjoy the life style. We do though enjoy our trips back to see the family and to visit many of the places where your walks take you.

I have in my photo album a photo taken at Skelton Infant School in about 1947. You might like to make use of it. That's me sitting in the front row in an unladylike manner!

(see Wilda's photograph on page 15 - Ed.)

Wilda Tallentire

E-mail: petal@gidgenet.com.au

Hello Don,

I cannot explain how I felt when I went into your fantastic website and saw all those pictures of Skelton Green and Stanghow Lane schools. Of course, I recognised many of the pupils, but for some reason I was not among them. I went to Skelton Green Primary School from 1945 until 1951/2. I passed the first half of the old eleven-plus exam, but as a result of a broken arm I had to go for an interview for the second half places. As was the case back in those days, you only got to go to Grammar School if you had a relative who was a doctor or something like that! Not much chance for sons of miners.....!

I went to Stanghow Lane School from 1952 until I was awarded a scholarship to Eston Tech, and started there in 1953. I finished there in 1956/57 and became an apprentice centre lathe turner at I.C.I Wilton. I have been able to contact a couple of my old school friends through 'Friends-Reunited'.

I was particularly interested in the picture of the men holding the billiards league shield. My 'dad' (Ellis WILFORD) was secretary of the Burroughs and Watts Billiard League, and secretary of the Skelton Green Working Men's Club for many years until his death in 1949. He was also a printer by trade but was sent to work as a blacksmith at the Dorman & Long Mine at Boosbeck. I have been unable to trace any photos of dad, although I know he had his picture in the Evening Gazette on a couple of occasions. The Burroughs Shield was in a large wooden case under our stairs in Harker Street for several years.

I played a cornet in the North Skelton Silver Band during the fifties, and sang in the Church of England Chapel on Boosbeck Rd., Skelton Green, also during the fifties.

This is the first time I have been able to contact anyone from 'The Green' and see some photos. Thank you for your great effort and good old fashioned community spirit. Keep it up.

Sincere Regards,

John Braven.

(ex-26 Harker Street, Skelton Green)

50 Years Ago . . .

Tea bags go on sale for the first time in Britain.

Britain develops its first atomic bomb.

Zebra crossings are to be marked by orange beacons.

Agatha Christie's play 'The Mousetrap' opens in London.

Grace Kelly and Gary Cooper star in 'High Noon'.

South African golfer Bobby Lock wins the British Open.

17 year-old 'Little Mo' Connolly wins Wimbledon.

Newcastle United win the Cup for the second year running.

25 Years Ago . . .

Charlie Chaplin, Groucho Marx and Elvis Presley die.

The US Space Shuttle makes its first flight.

The average price of a house in London & SE is £16,731.

In the UK, new smaller pound notes are introduced.

'Star Wars' takes a record \$185 million at the box office.

Niki Lauder wins the World Motor Racing Championship.

Red Rum wins his third Grand National.

Virginia Wade wins the women's singles at Wimbledon.

A History of Bells & Bell Ringing For All Saints Church, Skelton

To trace the history of Church Bells in Skelton we must first go back to the medieval church of All Saints that still exists near to Skelton Castle in what is known as Church Lane. In the tower of the ancient church, much altered over the years, hung the first known bells - of early design with steep sided copes. One bell from this tower can be seen near the font in the new All Saints Church, High Street, Skelton.

Many bells were made in this early period by itinerant bellsmiths who travelled the country digging pits in the earth into which the bells were cast. The evidence of their passing is still to be noted by the names given to particular fields - Bellacre field is a typical example. The bellsmiths were regarded as special people, as the mystery of changing raw metal ore into something that could 'speak' gave them a special place in medieval society.

Many bells have the names of people who subscribe or donate a bell or bells to a church, as is the case with the bells of All Saints, Skelton. All the bells have inscribed into them, "*These bells are the gift of John Thomas Wharton.*" As Skelton people will know, Squire Wharton, of Skelton Castle, was a great benefactor of our church.

The Rev. Gardener strove to have the new All Saints Church completed by 1884 to cater for the spiritual needs of the mining families who moved here to work the pits to win the iron ore from our Cleveland Hills. The original ring of 6 bells were made in 1883 by 'John Taylor & Co, Loughborough' - they are the six heavy bells known as the 'back six' of today. In 1903 a further 2 lighter bells were hung to bring the ring to its present number of 8.

Some progress in bell development can be seen at All Saints. First the bells themselves were tuned in different ways - the original six by ear, the younger two by Taylor's development of 'scientific tuning'. This has led co-called 'experts' to say that the ring at Skelton is wild and distorted and rather 'heavy-going', a view to which Skelton ringers would *never* agree!

Past and present bell-ringers represent some of the long-standing families of Skelton. In the 1920's, the band acquitted itself to some distinction by winning the Sunday Service Ringing Competition several times. A particular reference is made to one Jack Appleton who rang for more than 20 years at both Skelton and Saltburn, running and walking between towers on a Sunday! It was said that a more punctual ringer it would be hard to find. In memoriam, after his death in December 1925, a simultaneous muffled peal was rung at Skelton and Saltburn. A large plaque, recording the details, can be seen on the wall of the ringing room, along with many manuscripts of other recorded peals from over the years - a peal is a feat of quite some skill and endurance, lasting over a period of 3 to 4 hours.

Another distinguished bell-ringer, later to become the tower captain, was the late Cecil Robinson. In 1925, to commemorate the re-hanging of the bells, a new team consisting of Cecil, A Laing-Turner, W Ainsworth, A Rug, P Welford, A Reeder, W R Young, G Smallwood, K Speke, C Barnes and I Kingston, rang a peal of 5024 changes of '*Bob Major*', the first peal on the bells by a local band and the first of very many rang by Cecil during his bell-ringing career of almost 60 years.

Cecil became tower captain in 1929 and remained in that capacity until his death in 1984, although for the last few years of his life he was unable to take any active part in ringing. One of the highlights of his ringing career was the success of the local team in a competition introduced in 1924 by the 'Cleveland and North Yorkshire Association of Ringers'. The local Skelton team entered the competition along with Saltburn, Middlesbrough, and Whitby, points being awarded according to the length and degrees of difficulty of peals rung. In 1925/26, Skelton were runners-up but went on to win the competition the following two 'seasons'. By virtue of winning twice and being runners-up once, they were given the Certificate to keep, and it still hangs in the tower to this very day.

Cecil would travel miles on his bicycle for any ringing meeting, being accompanied on many occasions by Joe Bennison and Alf Dowey, both non-ringers but both enthusiastic cyclists! One Saturday afternoon, he cycled to Pickering to ring, returning at midnight through a dreadful thunderstorm.

Cecil trained many ringers himself and one of his successful teams consisted of L Ridsdale, D Snaith, A Kirby, L Bonnard, G Crame, A Robinson, C Robinson and T Jefferson. All lived at Skelton except Tom Jefferson who was a bus driver from Staithes. One New Year's Eve we took Tom home after ringing in the New Year. We only got as far as Loftus, as Boulby was blocked with snow. Tom ended up walking the rest of the way to Staithes while we had to push the car back up Brotton Bank and only just made it home. At 11.00pm, when the bell-ringing had begun, the roads were just wet with heavy rain - we couldn't believe how quickly the weather had changed!

Cecil was always grateful for the help given by ringers from other parishes and everyone was made to feel most welcome. I am sure he would be delighted to know that the ringing is now in the trusted care of another keen enthusiast - Geoff Scott.

Audrey Kirby (nee Robinson, Cecil's daughter)

Recipes . . .



Ginger Cake

Ingredients

8 oz Self-Raising Flour
 ¼ teaspoon Bi-Carbonate of Soda
 2 teaspoons Ground Ginger
 4 oz Margarine
 4 oz Sugar
 2 tablespoons Black Treacle
 ¼ pint Milk
 2 Eggs (beaten)

Method

1. Put in pan margarine, sugar, treacle and milk.
2. Melt - do not boil.
3. Take off heat when melted.
4. Add beaten eggs when cool enough so eggs don't cook in melted ingredients.
5. Pour onto sifted dry ingredients to form a batter (don't worry how runny the mixture is - this is how it should be!)
6. Pour into lined 2lb loaf tin.
7. Cook for 1-1¼ hrs on 135°C (275°F) or Gas Mk1.

Linda Westbrook

(This was the last recipe Linda gave us before her sad passing away - she wrote it while she was still very ill)

St Martin's Pie

Ingredients

250 g Dates (cut in small pieces)
 200 ml Warm Water
 125 g Self-Raising Flour
 200 g Walnuts or Roasted Hazelnuts (crushed)
 100 g Dried Figs (cut in small pieces)
 1 large Egg (beaten)
 ¼ teaspoon Ground Cloves
 ¼ teaspoon Ground Cinnamon
 Juice and Grated Rind of 1 Orange
 1 spoonful Crushed Almonds.
 Cake tin: 23 cm diameter.



Method

1. Soak dates in warm water for 1 hour. Grease cake tin with a little melted margarine
2. Add the flour, walnuts (or hazelnuts), figs, beaten egg, ground cloves, cinnamon, orange juice and grated rind to the dates and warm water. Mix well till all ingredients blend together to a soft consistency
3. Place mixture in cake tin and sprinkle the spoonful of crushed almonds on top of the mixture.
4. Bake in the centre of the oven for 30-35 minutes or till top is golden brown. Gas Mark 4, (180°C, 350°F).
5. Remove from oven - leave to cool before serving.

Marian Abdilla (Malta)

North Skelton F.C.



Back Row L. to R: Dave M, Martin Willis, Steve Welsh, Anthony McCabe, Dave Cairns (manager), Philip Barnes, Darren Anderson, Mark Sherwood, Shaun Mathews.

Front Row L. to R: Alan Cumming, Steven Wildmore, Craig Hodgson, Joe Kitchener, Mark Hanson, Wayne Clements, Simon Glenton

North Skelton FC would like to thank all its sponsors for their support and wish everyone a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year!

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Shanghai Night

This year saw the refurbishing of the Chinese 'take-away' in Vaughan Street, namely 'Shanghai Night'. The quality and variety of the food, under the new manager Simon, has been greatly improved. The portions are generous, and the waiting queues are proof of its popularity. We all wish you success, Simon.



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 I tried my best to give it away
 To everyone I chanced to meet
 As I walked down the street*

*But everyone that I could see
 Gave my smile back to me
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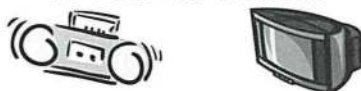
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