



SLALEY NEWS

APRIL 2025



We wish a Happy Easter to all our readers!

For everyone at Easter, the Rev'd Diana Johnson would like to share a prayer for the "Common Heritage" of Jews, Christians and Muslims. Details of all Easter services are listed below.

Also for April we have more profiles for Slaley Show - this time featuring the longstanding Industrial team and the Sheep secretary.

For a day out you can take part in a "Ride in the Countryside with Clues to Solve!" And for the Commemoration Hall there will soon be a formal recognition as an Emergency Hub.

Papers and TV these days are full of news of local pubs struggling, and some closing down - but following the March evening celebration of Tracey's many years of running the Rose & Crown, Slaley is now welcoming new tenants to run the community-owned pub!

As Good Friday falls on the third Friday this month, the Film Shows end this season on the 11th of April, a week **before** our usual evening. See posters in the Hail, and more by email if you're on our mailing list.

Contributions for the May edition by Tuesday 22nd April
or earlier, please! Send by email to
slaleynews@icloud.com, or to
michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk

As is now a regular remark, this edition of the News again only appears thanks to a generous donation from an anonymous donor, which will be much appreciated by all who read this!

We thank all our regular contributors for their continued support, and if anyone else has something they would like to publish, just get in touch by email: slaleynews@icloud.com.

The Commemoration Hall is an Emergency Hub!

We are now able to offer the Hall to members of the local community as a place where they can find warm space with gas cooking facilities whilst their own private electric supply is off. There will be sufficient power in the main hall to use the gas cooker, charge your mobile, or watch a small TV, but not to use anything like the water boiler, microwave or radiators.

This follows an occasion in late January when the village electricity went off during a storm. An event was taking place inside the Hall and apart from a slight blip in the supply the event carried on oblivious of the power cut elsewhere in the village.

When the village electricity goes off the Hall's batteries automatically kick in and provides power to phase 2 of the Hall's supply which covers the kitchen, toilets storage area main hall (not the wall lights), and the gas central heating pump.

There will be a more detailed announcement soon, online and in the Hall itself.

And the Hall now features on the ACRE's Village Halls Week volunteer gallery:



The Rose & Crown!

From 1st April 2025, David Elphick and Samantha Charlton will officially take over the lease of our much-loved community owned village pub. They are doing some exciting "tweaks" over the first couple of days, and on Friday 4th April at 6pm, David and Samantha invite you all to a "Meet the New Tenants" preview evening. It will be a relaxed and informal gathering—so pop in, say hello, and enjoy some complimentary nibbles.

The pub will then officially reopen on Saturday 5th April at 12 noon, with regular daily opening hours of 12 noon – 10pm (11pm on Fridays and Saturday - closed on Tuesdays until summer). Food will be available every day until 8.30 pm.

David and Samantha can't wait to get to know the village, hear your ideas, and raise a glass to this new chapter for the Rose and Crown.



A ride in the countryside with clues to solve!

Easter Sunday / April 20th 2025



Choose your vehicle, invite some friends and collect your clues from 2 p.m. at Slaley Commemoration Hall.

£6 per Paper Clue Sheet
Or pay £5 online by 11 am to:
Slaley Commemoration Hall
Sort Code: 20-40-09 Account No: 1080842
Then register with pat.wilson28@outlook.com and the
clues will be emailed to your device

Afternoon tea @ £10 pp will be served from 4 pm, and you can have your answers checked then.

This is a combined Commemoration Hall fund-raising event, organised with Slaley History & Whist Groups & Ladycross Nature Reserve.

Show April '25 News

The Slaley Show, throughout the years, developed a strong rural heart beating at its centre as it evolved from a floral competitive event in 1845 run by the Reverend Blythe Hurst. This month we'd like you to meet our Sheep Secretary, Gemma Common, who is continuing the rural tradition, developing and taking it forward in her own way. She represents a new generation of committee members who will go on to run the show in the years to come.

Gemma from Hexhamshire has been running the sheep section now for 4 years and has a great deal of experience and understanding both in raising and competing sheep and is currently busy with lambing.

Gemma raises Texels X lambs out of the Texel ewe and mule alongside her pure Texel flock on the family farm. "It's more than a job it's a way of life" she explains while describing the tasks of a typical year "there is no quiet time, its 'full-on' all the time!". A keen competitor herself, she looks amongst her flock at show time for

an individual sheep with pricked ears, a sweet head, good skin, a good back end, being overall robust and solid and most importantly a 'look at me look' "she says. Gemma has successfully competed at the Roman Wall (winning Texel Champion), St John's Chapel, Alston Show, Allendale (winning overall champion) and Slaley (winning overall champion) in previous years.

The Sheep Section that Gemma now organises isn't just competitive; she has spent time and energy encouraging competitors and has created a section that is informative and educational. The section has clear signage describing the different breeds, histories, their personalities and she answers questions for example which breeds are hefted to the land? Welsh's who thrive out in the open in the wind and the rain and Texels which need to be closer to the farm; "There's always going to be something for everyone to learn" she says.

"Things I've learned so far is never to be afraid to ask a lot of questions. I've learned so much more about MV Accreditation and now have developed quicker formulas for entries. I've also got to know many more judges and sponsors and try to secure their 'services' for the show as early as January" she says.

"Our competitors are livestock farmers who specialise in particular breeds and they in turn encourage their children to go in for the young handler class. For last year's show (24) we had a record breaking 170 entries."



And our Industrial Section evolves too! Everyone is likely to recognise these two!

Collectively Margaret Rowell and Catherine Myers have been Slaley Show's Industrial secretaries for 36 years. This mother and daughter Slaley farming family combo organise and process up to 1,000 entries every year of baking, crafts, countryside and photography classes which are hugely popular to visitors to the show. Margaret began to help at the show in 1989 when there were just 80 classes. Catherine joined her as joint secretary in 2010 and in recent years they have expanded the section to 120.

The family had been entering show classes for 50 years at least at that point.

"Slaley show was always the highlight of the school summer holidays" says Catherine "Mam spent days baking, my brother and I spent hours with my Grandma collecting wild fruits, flowers, and grasses for the children's section and making miniature gardens. Our children have followed in our footsteps and from now on the grandchildren will be involved. It's a family tradition".

“We try to change the theme of some classes every year to represent events relevant to the year, sport, royal occasions or any other topical events” says Catherine. “This year the under 16 collective exhibit of a flower arrangement, a drink, a cooked item and decoration is entitled ‘Women’s Rugby World Cup’ and the dressed peg doll in the handicraft section is dressed for VE day.”

New classes in the Baking section include a dairy-free cake, a pair of meringues and the Brownies can also now be Blondies. “We were pleased with the response we got when we introduced the Men’s baking class a couple of years ago and now, we find that they are winning more in general classes including the most hotly contested cheese scone class” says Catherine. “Scones are very popular classes, as are jams and preserves. Last year’s jam winner received the highest judges compliment we’ve ever known as being the best jam she had ever tasted. It’s all highly competitive but great fun and visitors clamour to see the results when the tents re-open in the afternoon. There’s always a queue!”

Members of the show will get advance notice of this year’s schedule, estimated early May. Membership forms are available within Slaley Shop.

Spring@TheShop

Spring is in the air, and there’s plenty happening at TheShop! As we shake off the winter chill, we’re embracing the brighter days with fresh initiatives, seasonal treats, and community events to bring everyone together.

Easter Goodies & Our Own Hot Cross Buns 🐣🍪

Easter is just around the corner, and Bake@TheShop is getting ready to celebrate with delicious seasonal bakes. Thank you to everyone who supported National Stottie Week - we loved seeing your enthusiasm for this regional favourite! Keep an eye out for our own special hot cross buns, made with love and available soon at the shop.

Join the BTO Birdwatching 🦜🔍

Do you love spotting birds in your garden? Why not take part in the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Birdwatching Scheme? It’s free to sign up, and by doing so, you’ll be helping vital citizen science efforts to track bird populations and protect our local wildlife. More details in the shop – sign up and make a difference!

Get Gardening Let’s Grow Together 🌱

With the arrival of spring, we’re all eager to get back into our gardens. Beautiful primroses are now on sale at the shop, perfect for adding a pop of colour to your flower beds! We’re also gearing up for our Annual Seedling Swap, and this year, we’d love to make it bigger than ever. Watch this space for more details and start thinking about what you’d like to share.

Launching in April 8:30-9:30am Free Coffee for School Run Parents!

Mornings can be a rush, so why not take a break and enjoy a moment to yourself? Starting in April, we're offering free school run coffees for parents and staff doing the morning drop-off. The perfect excuse to pop in, say hello, and see what's new in the shop, while you enjoy a freshly brewed cuppa on us!

Open: 8:30 am - 12:00 noon, every day
Don't miss out on the latest shop updates, special offers,
and community news:
Facebook: @slaleyshop
Instagram: @slaleycommunityshop

As always, Slaley Community Shop is here for you - run by the community, for the community. Thank you all for your continued support, and we look forward to sharing another wonderful season with you!

Church Services

A full list of services may be found on our "Church Near You" web page at:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/16182/service-and-events/events-all/

And for Healey:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/16174/service-and-events/events-all/

April 2025: **Eastertide**

Sunday 6th April: 11.15am Holy Communion

Sunday 13th April, Palm Sunday: 11.15am Service of the Word

Mon/Tue/Wed 14/15/16 April: A short service in church each day at 9am.

Thursday 17th April: Maundy Thursday: 11am Diocesan Holy Communion at Newcastle Cathedral - all welcome

Friday 18th April Good Friday: 2.30pm to 3pm Reflection on the Cross

Sunday 20th April Easter Day: 11.15am Holy Communion

Sunday 27th April: 11.15am Service of the Word

Our Common Heritage

The season of Lent has come, falling at the same time as the Muslim festival of Ramadan, which ends on 30th March this year. Practising Muslims try to give up bad habits during Ramadan and many will fast. It is a time for prayer and good deeds. They will try to spend time with family and friends and help people in need.

Many Muslims will attempt to read the whole of the Qur'an at least once during Ramadan. There will be special services in Mosques during which the Qur'an (Koran) is read.

On Ash Wednesday many of our church community - Methodists, Roman Catholics and Anglicans together - gathered to receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads, a sign of our mortality and vulnerability before God, as well as a sign of repentance. We also spent time during Lent discussing ways we hope to commit to ***living our faith***, whether this is through forms of fasting, reading the Bible, joining a Lent Group or helping our neighbours in a variety of ways (volunteering, giving to charity and so on).

The season of Lent leads to Easter in the Christian Calendar, on 20th April, when you may well be reading this. Easter is timed to coincide with the Jewish festival of Pesach (or Passover, 12th-20th April 2025). The story of the first Passover, in the book of Exodus, forms part of the common foundation of '*the religions of the book*' – Jews, Christians and Muslims.

It is good to feel in solidarity with our brothers and sisters from the Muslim and Jewish communities as we mark these several holy times in our different religions. This year, I want to share a common prayer with you:

A prayer written by Christians, Muslims and Jews

*Eternal God, Creator of the universe, there is no God but You.
Great and wonderful are Your works, wondrous are your ways.
Thank You for the many-splendoured variety of Your creation.
Thank You for the many ways we affirm Your presence and purpose,
and the freedom to do so.
Forgive our violation of Your creation.
Forgive our violence toward each other.
We stand in awe and gratitude for Your persistent love
for each and all of Your children:
Christian, Jew, Muslim,
as well as those with other faiths.
Grant to all and our leaders attributes of the strong;
mutual respect in words and deed,
restraint in the exercise of power, and
the will for peace with justice, for all.
Eternal God, Creator of the universe, there is no God but You. Amen.*

The prayer was authored by Christian, Jewish and Muslim clergy and used in many places in inter-religious worship services and private prayer around the time of the Gulf War in 1991. I believe the unaltered words to be just as relevant now: you may wish to pray the words yourself over the Easter season.

Rev'd Diana Johnson

St Mary's Electoral Roll

A new Church Electoral Roll is being prepared. Everyone who wishes to have his or her name entered on the new Roll, whether it is entered on the present Roll or not, is asked to apply for enrolment not later than Friday April 25th.

Forms are available in St Mary's church and should be returned to Paula Darrington, Middle Grange, Slaley.
If you have any questions, please phone her on 01434 673440.

Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Group

Lord Carlisle's Railway, by Joe Melvin

Monday 28th April 202
p.m. Slaley Commemoration Hall.
£4 adults 50p anyone in full time education.

In the last years of the 18th century the Earl of Carlisle opened wagonways from his coalfields on the Naworth Estate to the nearest market, which at the time was Brampton. When the Carlisle – Greenhead section of the Newcastle & Carlisle opened in 1836 a junction was installed at Milton and horse-drawn carriages provided a connecting service along the line to Brampton. Steam engines were employed from 1881 but operations ceased after a Board of Trade inspection in 1890. It enjoyed a modest revival later.



2025 gardening column

Karen Melvin



Crocuses have been lovely in the warmer start of spring before this week's snow. Daffodils have been held back by the cold. As the bulbs flower, then leaf up, we get patches of nodding Anemone blanda. In the wild wood anemones are fragile and delicate, an ancient woodland indicator species (showing that woodland has existed there since at least AD1600). They don't set seed easily so only expand slowly, about 6 feet every 100 years. The flowers face towards the

Anemone blanda

light, unlike wood sorrel - also out this month which hang down and don't mind the shade of conifer woods. In the garden I have wind flowers from the anemone family, opening their coloured flowers to the sun on a loose stem to blow haphazardly in the wind.

Next to them should be alpine irises, all lost this year. Two wet years in a row have not suited these plants from Persia and Turkey. So showy: will buy more.

What have been very successful are the hellebores, around 50 mature clumps in the wild spring garden amongst the carpets of bulbs - aconites, snowdrops, crocuses, daffodils. They stand out above the bulbs, with a path running through under big trees, a real spring extravaganza viewed from the quarry drop-off. The backdrop of a wide spreading dark yew shows off the hundreds of starry yellow flowers of the cornelian cherry. This plant is named after the Greek word for horn, cornus, as the wood is so hard it was used for spears and javelins by the Greeks. In front of the yew there is space where I could put another *Lonicera x elisae*, in addition to another which has been flowering through all weather in full shade behind the house since February. I could then view it's dangling creamy bells from the kitchen.



Lonicera Elisae

The winter flowering cherries are usually out beginning February, but have still not bloomed now in mid March; the years are getting stranger and more unpredictable. In cold springtime, it is no surprise that many flowers are warmer than the outside air. The flowers make a sheltered attractive haven for their pollinators; daffodils are 8 degrees warmer inside their trumpets than the air outside.

Bulbous spring snowflake flowers are up now like a snowdrop on steroids. The foliage that follows is quite vigorous so I am going to move them from the rockery down into the summer shade of the wild garden, where they can spread amongst the other bulbs. I must remember to go see the wild daffodils in Letah Wood. I still remember the first time I saw wild daffodils, driving in the Lake district along Ullswater. There were big clumps all along the lakeside. I stopped the car and could go no further; I just had to walk and look. Before the first world war the Great Western Railway used to run "Daffodil Specials" from London 100 miles towards the Welsh borders just to see such a sight.

Slaley WI report

Martyn Farrer's talk on Honeybees last month, proved to be fascinating, full of facts, figures, history and observations into the complexities of bee behaviours and the care taken by beekeepers to provide perfect conditions under which they can thrive.

Often bewildering to the unscientific mind but mind-blowing when you see that there has been a working relationship between man and bees for thousands of years. There's archaeological evidence from cave paintings in Valencia, mosaics in Ancient Egypt (depicting man-made hives in clay pots), and more recent 900 BC finds of intact skeps of straw and sun-baked clay. Ask any of us to demonstrate a 'workers' waggle dance now and we'll certainly try!

On a more serious note, if we do spot the dreaded Yellow legged Asian Hornet, try to catch it in an aerated jam jar, contact Hexham Beekeepers or Martyn directly (Tel: 07446 897692) and the team will use it to track where nest building has started. The hornets are moving north and have already been spotted in Yarm. Good news on the Poppy Project; patterns and balls of cotton are still available within the Community Shop (but fast disappearing) and those of us who have already started knitting have produced at least 150 so far!

What we've found is that once you've knitted a few, its easy to knit without looking whilst watching the telly. A bit more difficult is knitting and watching subtitled films, however this can produce interesting textures, and even more interesting is the 'falling asleep mid row' technique. Waking up and forgetting what you are doing produces a mixture of different stitches! Playing around with the number of rows knitted produces nice big floppy poppies which are even better. Variety is welcomed so don't be afraid to experiment. Crochet patterns will also be available in the shop early April.

Consequently, to really get going on the project, our next meeting on April 9th is a 'knit-in' at the Commemoration Hall. We must stress this is a non-competitive evening and it will be interesting to see a mock-up of the church wall with a variety of poppies laid out on tables. Wearing their other 'hats', as Industrial Secretaries of Slaley Show, Catherine Myers and Margaret Rowell, have let us know that 'a knitted poppy' class open to WI members, has been added to the Handicrafts Section of this year's Slaley Show. So that's an extra incentive!

An 'extra' trip in early March, to see the new Bridget Jones film, was marvellous and those who still haven't seen it? Spoiler alert, she finally found love again! At the time of writing, another 'extra' on the 26th March is/was a walk, weather permitting, to Blanchland, with and without dogs, culminating in tea and cake at Monks Tea Room.

Looking forward, our AGM is on 14th May and we've organised extra trips to see Kinky Boots at the Theatre Royal in Newcastle on 7th May and a boat trip to the Farne Islands on the 28th to see the puffins.

Members are also being reminded that the collective Moorland Group trip to the Harrogate Autumn Flower Show on 19th September is almost booked up, but, if there is a bigger demand for places, a second bus is being considered.

...and a final piece of good news, we welcomed two new members this month who had both attended a non-obligation visit in March, so, if anyone else wants to join in please call President Catherine Myers 01434 673023 to have a chat.

Looking forward to May and beyond ...

come along to enjoy

AFTERNOON TEAS

SAT 10 MAY

SLALEY COMMEMORATION HALL 2.30 – 4.30pm

IN AID OF SLALEY COMMEMORATION HALL FUNDS

RAFFLE, BOOKS & GIFTS
plus KIDS' COLLAGE &
ACTIVITY TABLES
Home-made cakes, sandwiches,
scones, tea, coffee
& squash



SLALEY COMMEMORATION HALL FUNDRAISING

BEER FESTIVAL



SATURDAY JUNE 7TH 2025

NOON- 11PM

WITH LIVE MUSIC FROM

THE BOYS OF BRASS

USEFUL CONTACTS

Badminton Group	Fran Pugh	673429
Carpet Bowls	Karl Beckett	07914 693199
St Mary's Parish Church	Rev. Diana Johnson	682768
St Elizabeth's Catholic Church	Father Emmanuel Kabinga	673248
Commemoration Hall	Chairman: Christine Johnston	682270
Bookings	slaleych@gmail.com	
County Councillor	Colin Horncastle	618259
Dial-A-Ride	A.D.A.P.T.	600599
Film Club	Michael Elphick	673443
Friends of Slaley School	Andrea Foster	634865
Hexham Hospital		0344 811 8111
Ladycross Nature Reserve	Joan Jewitt	673245
Leek Club	Catherine Lincoln	07918 120125
Local History Group	Pat Wilson	673388
Mobile Hairdresser	Linda Johnston	673196
Northumberland CC	Report faulty Streetlights/ Potholes	0345 6006400
Parish Council	slaleypc@gmail.com	
Post Office Van	Martin Nichol, Stocksfield Post Office	01661 842110
Police	For non-emergency calls	101
Rose & Crown Pub	David & Sam	673996
Slaley Community Shop	Shop enquiries	673201
	Sandra Innes (Chair)	673845
Slaley First School	Head: Mrs. Hayward	673220
Slaley Parish Website	www.slaley.org.uk	
Slaley Show	Chairman: Dale Holden	
Secretary: Fiona Pattinson	secretary.slaleyshow@hotmail.com	
The Travellers Rest	Lucy & Jed	673231
Women's Institute	President: Catherine Myers	673023
	Secretary: Hilary Porteus	07803 268947