

USEFUL NUMBERS & CONTACTS

Badminton Group	Fran Pugh	673429
Carpet Bowls	Jason & Jeannie Abdelnoor	673651
St Mary's Parish Church	Reverend Helen Savage	676852
Slaley Methodist Church	Reverend David Goodall	603139
St Elizabeth's Catholic Church	Father Jeroen Hoogland	673248
Commemoration Hall	Chairman Ros Doonan Bookings Stella Douglas	673173 673001
Community Trust	Chairman Norman Watson	673914
County Councillor	Colin Horncastle	618259
Craft Group		
Dial -A-Ride	A.D.A.P.T	600599
Film Club	Jean and Michael Elphick	673443
Friends of Slaley School	Andrea Foster	673317
Hexham Hospital	0344 811 8111	
Ladycross Nature Reserve	Joan Jewitt	673245
Leek Club	Malcolm Goodwin	673408
Local History Group	Pat Wilson Ian Hancock	673388 673502
Mobile Hairdresser	Linda Johnston	673196
Northumberland CC	Report faulty Streetlights/Potholes	03456006400
Parish Council	Chairman Anne Livesey Clerk Pat Wilson	673787 673388
Police	For non emergency calls please ring 101	
Post Office Van	Martin Nichol Stocksfield Post Office	01661 842110
Rose & Crown Pub		673996
Slaley Shop		673201
Slaley First School	Head, Mrs Debbie Brett	673220
Slaley Notes in Hexham Courant	Stella Douglas Helen Savage	673001 676852
Slaley Parish Website	www.slaley.org.uk	
Slaley Show Society	Chairman, Marge Rastall Secretary	673547
Slaley Red Squirrel Group	Margaret Bates	673461
Travellers Rest Pub	Ian and Darren	673231
Women's Institute	President Margaret Rowell Secretary Hilary Porteus	673589 673637



SLALEY NEWS DECEMBER 2020 JANUARY 2021



MERRY CHRISTMAS

And a happy New Year to you all, with special mention to our contributors, printer and the happy band of volunteers who faithfully circulate the News ten times a year. We can't manage without them!

As I sat in my office finger poised to press the send button the dreaded announcement that we would be in tier 3 from December 2nd. arrived. All too late for a complete revision so please check with organisers before rushing to a meeting. I'm sure that Slaley Notes in the Courant will keep you abreast of the situation.

Finally please continue to support one another, our pubs and the shop because they need us as much as we need them.

Slaley and Hexhamshire Oil Buying Group

December deadline dates:-

Orders to me by Tuesday 8th of December for delivery during week commencing the 14th weather permitting

January deadline dates:-

Orders to me by Tuesday 12th of January for delivery during week commencing 18th January weather permitting

Neil Whatmough, nbwhatmough@btinternet.com or by telephone on 01434 676949

There will be no meetings of the W.I. until further notice.



Contributions for February edition by Tuesday January 26th please.

Editors: Jim Bailey 673352 baileyjim128@gmail.com
Fiona McKendrick: 673281 fionamckendrick@googlemail.com

Slaley Parish Council November PC summary

A vacancy has been filled on the Parish Council. Mr. Ian Charles Stevens, Winter House, Slaley was proposed by Cllr S. C Douglas and seconded by Cllr J. Storey. There being no further nominations Cllr Ian Charles Stevens was elected onto Slaley Parish Council.

After many disappointments in trying to resolve the problem of the dangerous junction at Glen Corner, the PC and Cllr. Horncastle have been able to escalate the issue and involve higher management at NCC who agreed that there was a problem. Do keep the reports of incidents coming in to the Parish Clerk, it really helps (673388).

FoSS News

FoSS are thrilled that we have been able to carry on fundraising during the pandemic. Last week we had the Bags2School collection of second-hand clothing. We are very grateful for the brilliant amount of pre-loved clothes handed in by parents – we collected 360kg and raised £108 for the school which is fantastic!

We are hosting a Virtual Christmas Wreath Making event on Zoom on Tuesday 1st December. Charlotte Douglas has made wonderful wreath boxes, which will be used at the event to create Christmas wreaths. Charlotte will be on Zoom to offer advice and guidance on creating our wreaths! We also have a wreath night raffle planned, with some fantastic prizes, including Mrs English's delicious Christmas cakes, a gorgeous wire wreath created by Charlotte, a Christmas hamper and plenty of bottles and goodies! We have already sold many wreath boxes and we hope a good total can be raised for the school!

We are going ahead with our popular annual Christmas Hampers, virtually this year. Tickets will be sold via our JustGiving site <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/christmashampersandtrees>. We are also planning a festive treat for the children to decorate plant pots and plant Christmas tree seeds at school. We hope to have a Christmas tree parade in the future and see how the trees have grown!

FoSS are very grateful for all the support we receive it really does make a difference. We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and all the best for 2021!

Badminton Group.

Once we hear what is happening in our area after December 2nd, I will be in touch with existing members by email. For any players wanting to join our badminton group, please contact Fran Pugh tel: 673429

Exercise to Music.

Thanks to all those who responded to my request for information about whether they would like to resume classes in some form when Government guidelines allow. If you meant to reply but did not, then get in touch with me, as numbers will be limited. At the moment I have only a crystal ball, but would like to let you know how things are developing. Discussions on the requirements set down by both Slaley Commemoration Hall and Age UK are progressing well and I am hoping to be able to start sessions again in January 2021-GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES PERMITTING. Classes will be small and therefore those of you who wish to attend the aerobic session will be divided into 2 groups. I think there will be one aerobic group followed by a seated group on Monday mornings and an Aerobic group on Tuesday mornings. I have been advised that sessions should be a little shorter, as we have not met for so long, and also to allow for the necessary cleaning etc after each session. Once the plans for the sessions are agreed by Age UK, Slaley Commemoration Hall, and myself I will contact you again with further information. In the meantime, keep safe, Carol Ferguson

A View from the Vicarage

If people like me complain that Christmas isn't to do with having a roaring great time, we don't know what we're talking about. We don't know our history. To put the record straight, the church hi-jacked a riotous, pagan midwinter festival, which gave everyone a chance to forget the dreadful weather and all our worries. We did this well over three centuries after the birth of Jesus. The early church didn't make much of a fuss of his birthday at all, which, by the way, may well have been in early May, but we can't be sure.

A bit of fun and feasting cheers everyone up, as long as you aren't on your own or too poor to join in. What then really matters is that it's a time when we should look out for one another and ensure that no-one is left out, unless they really don't want to be part of the fun. It's no wonder that the popular press has wanted to bang on about 'Saving Christmas'. It really should be a time when families (and not just families) get together.

I accept entirely that in the middle of the present crisis in the colourful words of our PM, although Christmas is a time to be jolly it had better be a time when we're jolly careful too. Our fun and festivities may just have to be reigned in a bit, but I'm quite sure that there's nothing wrong and a great deal right in having a time off, with time for one another at the darkest, gloomiest time of the year.

And yet, of course, those of who care about what Jesus stands for also want to remember the story of his coming to us and the hope that it offers. I promise that we'll do our utmost to make sure that we have opportunities to celebrate that side of Christmas too, in, of course, as Covid-secure way as we can. We'll delight in telling the story of the God who takes us and our

world so seriously that he'll make himself utterly vulnerable in order to show us what love is really like.

Yes, there's a deeply serious and challenging side to all this, a message that should jolt us into thinking again what we can do to make love real in every aspect of our lives together; but the heart of it lies in learning what it means to be part of a family, a community, a society – of people together. The true spirit of Christmas can never come to life if we're forced to shut ourselves off on our own.

So then, whatever restrictions we need to make in order to protect the most vulnerable in our society, I challenge you, please, to find new ways to reach out to those who might all too easily be left out this Christmas, and see what you can do, what we can all do, to ensure that they're part of the party, this year especially – and then to build on that during the whole of the year to come. I wish you, this year especially, a truly Happy Christmas!

Helen

Church Services and News

We are able to begin public worship again this month, but with the proper Covid-secure measures in place that we were practising before the latest lockdown. The biggest problem we face is that we can't cope with the numbers we usually love to see in church for our carol service on 23 December. So ... we're moving it outdoors. It's going to be a bit shorter than usual, but please wrap up warm and come and join us – and we're thrilled to have some great musicians (Kevan and Rosaleen to help it all go with a swing). Please also see the great news about our Christmas Journey for families on 12 December. Having sheep on the vicarage lawn is by far the best way to ensure it's cut ready for winter.

There'll be a Sunday service every Sunday in December and January at St Mary's at 10am except for Sunday 27 December when we'll have a service of Holy Communion in the Commemoration Hall at 10.30am. We'll also have a service of Evensong at 6pm in Church on Sunday 10 January.

We continue to stream our weekly Sunday services on Facebook. They go live at 9am each Sunday and there's a weekly 'thought for the day' each Wednesday, also usually 'live' by 9am.

To find them please just click on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/moorlandgroup/> You don't need to join Facebook and you can listen to them all at any time of your choice.

Special Christmas Services

Wednesday 23 December at 2.30pm
The Christmas Story with carols and readings for all the family
In the churchyard extension
Christmas Day
9am Healey Christmas Service
10am Slaley Christmas Service

(NB numbers are very considerably restricted in Healey.
Please contact me to book a place: helensavage1@gmail.com or 01434 676852)

Sunday 27 December
10.30 Christmas Communion (Slaley Commemoration Hall)

*By the way, what Carol is heard in the desert?
'O Camel ye Faithful' (of course).*

A Christmas Journey: Saturday 12 December

10am to 12noon

The Christmas journey gives families a fun way to explore the Christmas story in a safe and secure way. Starting at the Commemoration Hall families will journey up the village meeting the different characters from the Christmas story along the way. It finishes at St Mary's Church.

Families will need, please, to book a slot to help keep everyone safe and secure. We expect the journey to take each family about 30 minutes. To book your slot please go to: <https://slaleychristmasjourney.eventbrite.com>

Our weekly ecumenical study group on Friday's at 11am via Zoom continues. The sessions have been very worthwhile and thought-provoking. If you'd like Helen to send you a Zoom invitation, please let her know. We'll take a short break on January 8 and 15 and begin again on January 22.

Let's Support West Northumberland Food Bank!

The box is out at the back of church (there's also one in the shop) for gifts of food for those really struggling at the moment – together we can make a real difference.

Amazing Church Wine Tasting!!

We're holding a Zoom wine tasting to raise money for our churches, (funds have taken a big hit this last year) on Thursday 10 December. This will be rather special - and not quite like the ones we've done so far for the shop.

It'll be a chance to try no less than 8 different, top quality wines at home - the Very Best Wines of Spain. Helen will talk you through, of course, and introduce them via Zoom. The samples will come to you in 5cl bottles which will be available from us here at the Vicarage - or we can arrange delivery if that's not easy for you. The cost is £20 per head, which considering the stupendous quality of the wine and the chance to have a really fun evening is a snip - I hope you agree!

Please can you let Olwen (olwensavage@gmail.com) know if you wish to take part ideally by 30th November (but we'll have few spare sets for latecomers!!)

There'll be several ways to pay - including BACS.

Slaley Community Shop Update

As we approach the end of a most unusual year, it's a good time to celebrate our Community Shop, and the role it has played during the pandemic. When the hall, pub, school and even the church had to close, it felt good to have one place in the village which was a focal point for both food and support. Thank you to everyone who made this possible.

One of the lovely features of a Community Shop is that people donate items for sale. In the Spring we had lots of plants, later in the year we had fruit and vegetables, and we've had numerous other donations from hand sanitiser and masks to toothpaste. Thank you to everyone who generously donated.

As the weather turns colder, and with the new cabin now in place, we have introduced a one-way system so that 2 customers can be in the shop at one time. In through the double doors, out through the front door - just follow the signs.

If you're preparing for Christmas, we have Christmas cards with local Slaley scenes. Helen has chosen some special wines for festive drinking which would also make great Christmas presents. She is always happy to provide advice on helensavage1@gmail.com. Thanks are due to Helen for her very popular Zoom wine tastings which have provided excellent entertainment during lockdown as well as boosting sales in the shop. Wishing everyone a joyful Christmas!

Slaley Shop Christmas Wine Boxes

Helen has agreed to put together some Christmas wine boxes of (six) special (and specially-priced) wines that you can order in good time for Christmas. Details are in the shop and the wines themselves will be available around the start of December. If you'd like any further information, please ask Helen (helensavage1@gmail.com).

December gardening column- Karen Melvin

We've had many generous donations of apples this season. Apples are such an iconic British fruit, but the genetic trail of the first apples takes us to remote isolated valleys in Tien Shan in China, where many precursors of fruit trees began, about 10 million years ago. Fruits like apricots, plums, pears, quince grew along with apples. Brown bears selected the largest and sweetest, scattering the pips in their faeces. When humans appeared, they further selected the best fruit, taking it along the migration corridors to Europe, where grafting allowed the best varieties to be reproduced, as apples don't come true from seed. This is all from writer Richard Maybe who also talks about the early apple varieties of the middle ages, with names like Gruntlin, Cowsnout, Cats Head, Hanging Body, and The Wise Apple, because it escaped early frosts. By the 19th century, there were about 20,000 varieties of apple, 6000 in Britain alone. In the late 1800s, there were catalogues and exhibitions of apples and at one such show, in 1880, over 2000 plates of apples appeared.

In one publication the Beauty of Kent was described, which was the apple that fell in front of Newton in his garden in Lincolnshire, inspiring the theory of gravity. "Fruit large, roundish, broad and flattened at the base, and narrowing towards the apex, where it is terminated by several prominent angles. Skin deeply yellow, slightly tinged with green, and marked with faint patches of red on the shaded side". That is a very serious study of an apple. There are so many wind falls around here; nature has been very generous with us this year.



(Red Lead Mill apple tree)



We still have some autumn colour around, notably on the smokebush, which is the last to colour. And there are so many hesperanthas (used to be called schizostylis coccinea) or Kaffir lilies still in bloom creating vibrant patches of bubblegum pink, although most of you probably didn't grow up with bubblegum. It is a welcome colour this time of year. The cones on Abies Koreana will be colouring up shortly. I have been sowing seeds of some spindlewood varieties and also decaisnea fargesii, the blue bean shrub. If it germinates, I'll be pleased as it is a strange small tree (*Spindlewood, euonymus*) with very large fat blue poisonous looking fruits. At another scale is the lichen in fruit up on the moors. Bright red fruits swell up on the rim of the cups if you look close enough. A great pleasure indeed awaits the beady eyed.

It is hard to believe that it is the Christmas issue already. A lonely Christmas awaits many of us but I wish you all a very happy one. (*Claydonia diversa* lichen)



Proposed Minsteracres' Christmas Service times

Christmas Eve

3.30 pm crib service followed by Vigil Mass of Christmas

6.00 pm Vigil Mass of Christmas

8.00 pm Vigil Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day

9.30 am Christmas Day Mass

Please note that under current guidance our numbers are strictly limited and we have an online booking system in place that will apply to all services. The details for this are as below.

Households who live together (up to 5 individuals) e.g. parents and children should only book two spaces. But this should be apparent on the booking site. The opportunity to book should be live early in December.

Website for booking is <https://www.heavenfieldpartnership.org.uk/news-information/bookings/st-elizabeth-s-minsteracres/>

December Update from Slaley First School

It has been a busy half term at Slaley First School. The children have settled back into school well and have been working hard. They are a credit to us and have brightened up our days with their energy and smiles. The children have been working hard to become more familiar with our new 'Google Classroom', a virtual classroom which enables them to upload work done at home and communicate with staff virtually. It has been very successful and the children have made good use of it, sending work and photographs of their work. This facility forms the basis of our Remote Learning Offer in the event of possible future changes to our current situation.

COVID 19 did not stop us celebrating Halloween at Slaley First School. FOSS has been very imaginative and creative, thinking of different ways to continue raising money for the school as well as providing fun events for the children. The final day of the half term saw the children arrive to school in Halloween costumes carrying the most fabulous collection of carved pumpkins. The pumpkins were judged and placed around the field in a pumpkin trail. All the entries were fantastic! Staff, children and parents really enjoyed following the trail and taking time to look at all the hard work and time spent on carving the pumpkins. We are incredibly grateful to FOSS for organising such events as the children have been unable to attend the usual birthday parties and events they would normally attend. It was a fun way to

end the half-term. Details of the event, complete with photographs of a splendid Halloween themed party lunch, can be found on the school website.

We are looking forward to the half-term ahead and have been designing a collection of Christmas Cards, which will be printed and made available for the community to purchase. They are looking wonderful and provide an opportunity to celebrate the fantastic artistic skills of our children. The pictures are all the children's work so watch out for the odd six legged reindeer!

Parents and members of the community have been having a 'clear out' and have been bringing bags of clothes to school to recycle. They have been collected and taken away to be weighed, the proceeds of which will go towards school funds.

Watch out for a collection of beautiful wreaths on the doors of many houses in the village as FOSS are organising a 'Virtual Wreath Making' event. This event has been well supported with a huge amount of households signing up. Hopefully, next year we can resume this in the Commemoration Hall. Could we please remind those using the school grounds at the weekend to treat the facility with respect and use all the equipment carefully, making sure it is replaced before leaving the premises. There have been a few occasions lately where resources have either been damaged or left in a mess.

A big thank you goes out to all our children, parents and members of the community for supporting us in keeping our school a safe, happy place during the current pandemic. We look forward to thinking of alternative ways to celebrate Christmas with the children and sharing special events and moments through our website, and of course, Slaley News. On behalf of all the children and staff at Slaley First School, we would like to wish you a very Happy and Safe Christmas and New Year.



Rose and Crown Slaley

A friendly and welcoming country pub



Our worst fears have struck and we must abide by tier 3 rules. We will resume offering take away meals on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Please take a break from cooking and support us by ordering a take away. At the moment in an addition to our regular menu we have

Salmon fillet with lemon butter £9.95 add Prawns £10.95
Sea bass fillet with a lemon butter and capers £9.95
Beef stroganoff, rice or hand cut chips or a bit of both £8.95*
Mushroom, Brie & Cranberry Wellington £8.50
All meals include potatoes and seasonal vegetables.

Local deliveries available on request. Telephone 01434 673996
Leave a message anytime and we'll get back to you.

Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Club

Mark Hatton has agreed to give us a second local history talk via **ZOOM** on Monday January 25th at 7.30 pm.

Understanding 18th Century Gravestones



A talk to illustrate and explain the symbolism used on 17th and 18th century gravestones, particularly in the Scottish Borders and Northumberland. These stones are often richly decorated in symbols of mortality, resurrection and trade. They are messages from the dead to the living that say far more than simply "in memory of" and tell us so much about the lives, the hopes and the fears of the people buried beneath them. But we have to learn how to read these messages by deciphering the symbols used.

Please contact Pat Wilson to obtain **ZOOM** log in details for this event. 01434 673388
Or email patwilson28@outlook.com

Slaley Commemoration Hall presents an exhibition of cribs from around the world.



Including "While Slaley Sleeps"

A festive exhibition featuring crib scenes from around the world to show how different countries make their Christmas Cribs unique to them.

Friday evening December 11th 4 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Saturday December 12th 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Sunday December 13th 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

(These are NEW post-lockdown dates)

Entry is free. However, when you visit, please donate generously to our renovation fund. We suggest a donation of £5 per person.

The exhibition will take place under the COVID-19 guidelines in place at the time.

Post Office van service times

Monday - 4.15 – 5.30 pm

Tuesday – No service

Wednesday & Saturday – 8.30 – 9.45 am

Thursday & Friday - 4.15 – 5.30 pm

And finally some really good news

Congratulations and best wishes to Mark and Suzanne Osbourne (The Old Barn) on the birth of a daughter, sister to Matilda, Oscar and Ralph.

A few useful dates

Tuesday	01/12/2020	FoSS Wreath making
Tuesday	08/12/2020	Order heating oil
Thursday	10/12/2020	Wine tasting (Zoom)
Saturday	12/12/2020	Christmas Journey 10am-12Noon
Wednesday	23/12/2020	Special Christmas service 2.30pm
Tuesday	12/01/2021	Order heating oil
Friday	22/01/2021	Ecumenical Study Group
Friday	29/01/2021	Ecumenical Study Group



A job for the boys, Well done everyone

What's

Next

Sir?

