



SLALEY NEWS FEBRUARY 2024



A New Volunteer is Needed!

These newsletters are distributed by hand to nearly every household in the parish, although it is also available online. This has been the policy from the beginning, and our thanks go to the many unpaid volunteers who carry out this regular task. However, we now need a replacement volunteer for the deliveries around Slaley Hall. This has been done for many years by Ken Bates, but he now wishes to stand down. Our heartfelt thanks to him!

Please get in touch with us, or Ken himself (673461), if you might be able to assist us with this. Ken will do the February delivery and show you what is involved, but we need someone to start in March.

Ladycross Nature talk

Talk by Martin Davison: “The Birds of Colonsay”.

On Monday 11th March at 7.30 pm in Slaley Commemoration Hall.

Entrance is £5 and a raffle ticket is £1 (to help with the ongoing upkeep of the reserve).

Colonsay is a small island with a diverse landscape and with that comes an exciting range of birdlife – the rasping Corncrake, Choughs playing on the wind, and the mighty White Tailed Eagle.

Martin is based in Kielder Forest but has been going to Colonsay for nearly 30 years to help survey its wildlife.



Contributions for March

***Contributions for the March edition by Friday 23rd
February or earlier, please!***

Send by email to slaleynews@icloud.com, or to
michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk

Keeping our village dog poo free

Please remember to clean up after your dog and don't forget that the school grounds/Community Play Area are out of bounds to them. If you observe any dog poo don't forget to report it to the County Council so that their dog wardens can take action and it can be cleared away. Reports can be sent via fix.northumberland.gov.uk, or the FixMyStreet smartphone app. More details about the app can be found at www.fixmystreet.com.

A Happy New Year from Slaley Community Shop!

It seems a while ago now but we can look back on a very enjoyable Christmas wine tasting, led by our new wine buyer Louise Bartholdi. We stock an excellent range of wines in the shop, great for drinking or gifting, so do have a browse.

January saw us say goodbye to the delicious bread, scones & cakes from Holly Cottage Bakery. We would like to thank Jon for all his hard work and wish him well. If you know of anyone who would like to help out with baking for the shop, please get in touch. The kitchen is available for use if needed and I'm delighted to say we recently received a 5-star food hygiene rating from Northumberland County Council.

We have also just heard that the shop has been shortlisted as a regional finalist in the Countryside Alliance Awards (Village Shop category). The awards, known as the "Rural Oscars", exist to celebrate rural businesses and their contribution to life in the countryside. Winners are chosen by a public vote during February. The other finalists are all owner-managed shops, we're the only community shop, and it would be a great tribute to our volunteers and members to receive an award. So please vote for us on the Countryside Alliance website - and spread the word!

Now that Helen has departed to sunny France, Slaley Shop has put its feelers out to find another local wine expert, and found Louise!

Louise has been in the wine trade for over 30 years, initially working in marketing for a national distributor, then followed a 12 year stint as an Event Manager for a Spanish Wine Producer. A change of lifestyle in 2015 led her to up sticks and move from London where she'd lived for 30 years and return home to the wilds of the North Pennines. Louise is still happily talking wine for a living, working as a Wine Educator, and Wine Event Manager. Her desert island tippie? It would have to be a chilled glass of Fino Sherry, ideally accompanied by a plate of olives!

I'm sure we're all dreaming of warmer, sunny and far less stormy weather, so Louise has chosen three wines from Slaley shop which should give you a taste of Summer:

Vilarnau Brut Rosado Cava – a delicious Spanish fizz made in the same way as we make Champagne. It a beautiful rose coloured glass of wine, packed full of

vibrant strawberry, blueberry and redcurrant. The packaging is gorgeous, a perfect bottle for Valentine's day, or just to sip and think of Summer. Vegan and Organic, £11.75

Domane Wachau Gruner Veltliner Federspiel from Austria. Federspiel wines have a maximum alcohol content of 12.5%, so this Vegan Gruner Veltliner is crisp, bright and very refreshing. Tons of zippy green apple, white pepper and delicate herbal flavours, this is a perfect match to a salad or light lunch. £15.75

Veramonte Pinot Noir – the grapes for this wine are sourced from Chile's Casablanca Valley, where they ripen slowly thanks to the gentle cooling breezes from the Pacific Ocean. There are layers of beautiful Summer fruits, think strawberry, raspberry, red cherry, cranberry and laced with silky vanilla oak. Vegan and organic, it's a great match to pizza or pasta dishes. £12.50

Church News

I was interested to read that the Bishop of Gloucester has berated Sainsbury's and Marks and Spencer's for stocking their shelves with Easter Eggs in Christmas week. I have some sympathy with her. Doubtless, you could buy Hot Cross Buns as well. It seems a pity that rather than enjoy each season in its time and place we must rush on to the next one. After all Easter is meant to be a Spring not Winter festival. Indeed, many are now observing 'dry January' and 'Veganuary' in response to the excesses of the Festive season. Personally, we always seem to have left-over Christmas chocolate and cake abounding in January - I simply couldn't face an Easter Egg!

The Church calendar sees things differently. We are presently in the season of Epiphany, a four week joyful reflection on the meaning of God coming among us in Jesus Christ. This season extends to 2 February, the Festival of Candlemas, which brings the Church's festive season to an end. So I've got till then to see off the cake and chocs. But times of restraint are not a modern invention. February 14 is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, traditionally a six week fast leading up to Easter when we might 'give up' some foods and drink as a spiritual exercise to increase our awareness of God. And every Friday is a fast day - it's why so many people still eat fish and avoid meat on Fridays because Friday is the day of the Lord's passion.

The truth is, balance is a good thing. It is indulgent if life is one long feast and austere if life is one long fast. Much of the year is perhaps somewhere between the two, which makes the times of feasting and celebration special. And there is certainly a place for cutting back as part of a healthy relationship with food and drink. If, like me, you are still munching your way through Christmas treats, perhaps Lent is a time to change tack and live a little more simply.

With my greeting to everyone in Slaley

David Kennedy

Church Services

St Mary's, Slaley - Sunday worship each week at 11.15 am, lasting about 45-50 minutes.

St John's Healey - Sunday worship at 5 pm on the Second and Fourth Sundays of the month (Feb 11 and Feb 25) lasting about 45 minutes.

Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Group, Local Natural History Photographs by Graham Dixon.

Monday February 26th 2024, at 7.30 pm in Slaley Commemoration Hall.

£4 for adults, 50p for anyone in full-time education.

Graham Dixon of Hexhamshire is a local, well-known, natural history, photographer. The fox shown here is one of Graham's photographs. Yes, you are correct, the fox is running so quickly that only one of its legs is touching the ground ... but which one? How long did it take to get this wonderful shot? This illustrated talk is not to be missed.

For more information contact Pat Wilson 673388, email: pat.wilson28@outlook.com



(C) Graham Dixon

The Rose & Crown

Valentine's Day, 14th February, 5 pm – 7.45 pm

Come and enjoy a choice of 2 steaks and a bottle of house wine. All for £32 !!!

Bring your wife, husband, boy or girl friend, or whoever!

Booking is essential: 01434 673996

Tracey and the team look forward to welcoming you all.

Having any stumps removed?

If anyone is getting a tree stump removed and has a stump grinder coming to Slaley, please will they contact Jason Abdelnoor (673 651) – thanks!

Slaley Parish Community Play Area

Slaley First School, its Governors and the Parish Council are pleased to see that use continues to be made by local residents of the Community Play Area/school fields. The land is the property of the County Council, but an agreement is in

place for its use as a community area outside school hours, this is of course conditional upon it, or the equipment in it not being abused.

If you or your children are going to use this wonderful space, please bear the following in mind:

- All persons use this facility at their own risk
- This facility must only be used for its intended purpose – a community play area
- Supervise young children at all times
- In the interest of safety please do not bring bicycles, dogs, glass, alcohol or restricted items into the area
- This is your facility, please keep it in good condition
- Respect the school premises
- There is no first aid kit on site
- The equipment is inspected for safety on a regular basis
- Neither Northumberland County Council nor Slaley Parish Council or their employees can accept responsibility or liability for any claim, loss or damage whatsoever which may arise from those using this facility

A new 'vibrant' sign, purchased by the Parish Council, and situated next to the entrance to the area seeks to reinforce these messages.

Slaley Show Membership

Calling all Past Members of Slaley Show!

It's renewal time again for this year's Slaley Show. After the success of last year's show, we are asking for your valuable support again to keep the show on the road!

The subscription is staying at £15 this year. We think this offers good value for money as it covers free entry, preferential parking on show day, complimentary refreshments, members area and the usual membership badge and early schedules.

We really hope you will renew & encourage friends & family to do likewise in support of this valuable village event. A membership form is at the end of this issue or can be found in the village shop, pub, commemoration hall & also on the website: slaley.org.uk

Many Thanks from the Slaley Show Committee

Moths and Muffins

Buff-tip, Angle Shades, Shark, Splendid Brocade and Silvery Arches, magical names of some of our night flying moths that silently and unobtrusively are key players in our environment, as well as providing valuable calories for bats and birds. There are many more wonderfully named and exotic looking species that come at night to our gardens, fields and verges that go unobserved.

Want to know more? Well, come to a “Moth and Muffin” morning to get inspired.

We are extremely fortunate that Dr David Wainwright, Head Conservation Officer for Butterfly Conservation (for the whole of the UK!), will kick start a yearlong citizen science project led by the Hexhamshire, Healey and Slaley Conservation and Environmental Group (CEG). With part funding from the Community Chest, the CEG have purchased a portable Moth trap, identification charts and books. These will be for loan so that everyone has a chance to get a glimpse of the nighttime moth visitors to their gardens, record their catches and help conservation in the process.

Dave Wainwright will guide us through the fascinating world of bats, how to set up the trap, what we might find and use best practice principles to empty and safely release the moths unharmed as well as many other **moth-tastic** facts.

There may be moths, there will certainly be muffins to munch and drinks to consume.

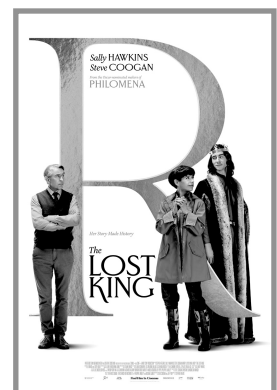
So come along on Saturday the 2nd of March at 10.30am to Slaley Commemoration Hall to be **moth balled over** and **mothstonished**.

To book your free place (all welcome, spread the word) contact anneporter3@gmail.com

Slaley Film Show

“The Lost King” (12)

In this inspiring true story, amateur historian Philippa Langley believes she has made the archeological find of the century: the lost burial site of King Richard III. She takes on Britain's most eminent historians, forcing them to rethink the legacy of one of the most controversial rulers in English history.



16th February 2023 in the Commemoration Hall at 7.30

Doors open at 7.00 pm

ADMISSION £6 (£3 for under 16's)

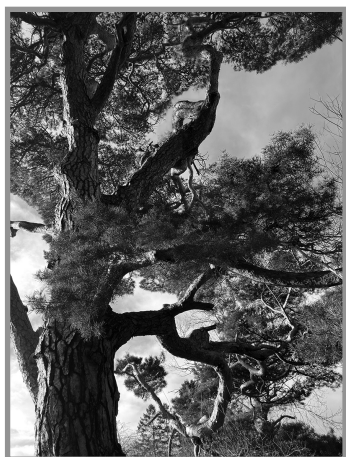
**Supper provided, but to confirm supper numbers please
ring Catherine on 07918 120125 !**

Karen Melvin

February Garden Notes

While walking this winter in Letah Wood, at the far end, a tree trunk grabbed my attention; what was it? When I looked closely at the surrounding fallen leaves I saw they came from a tall elm amongst a whole stand of young elms with bold zig-zagging bark which I had never really noticed before, like sharp upright arrows squashed together.

I continued looking. I was also searching for a typical Scots Pine for a picture I was painting. Scots Pines are so different from the serried ranks of other conifers, more sculptural than the pointy uniform spruce trees. As Scots Pines start to mature they branch out in all sorts of unsymmetrical individualistic ways, huge branches leaning out with clumps of needles in soft billowing shapes. There is space between branches to



Scots Pine in Juniper

let light to the forest floor allowing other things to grow, unlike the desert of needles under Sitka spruce. Also, the bark is a distinctive dark mottled russet red. I am so pleased that the conifer plantations near us are mostly Scots Pine with a richly mixed understory of young hardwood seedlings which made their way here from a few old oaks, mountain ash and beech growing in the hedgerow.

I'm finding this is a natural time to slowly cut back the herbaceous border as the seeds are scattered and stems easy to pull off - much simpler than having to cut back. Even tall stiff *Veronicastrum* stems can be wiggled around and pulled off in clumps, as can geraniums, campanulas and the stems of any plants that have flopped over or rotted. Irises with spreading roots have turned slimy and still need to be cut. I probably should have cut these earlier before they were difficult. Having to actually acknowledge this makes me much more observant. We still pile some old dry leaves or stems to protect hellebore flower buds just coming, lily crowns sticking up and also slightly tender ferns. In the first week of January white and yellow hellebore blooms are shining out, and it is always such a surprise to see a whole witch hazel shrub covered in yellow spindly petals. With occasional mild days some shrubs have very fat



Elm bark in Letah Wood



Witch Hazel

buds starting to open - disaster - way too soon. The Persian Ironwood, *Parrotia persica*, in my sheltered lower garden always blooms in winter cold, so surprising, even though tiny flowers the size of a pea are easy to miss. I love the look of Sacred Bamboo berries in mid-winter, pity I can't grow it here up north. Never mind, the winter box is so nice and scented right next to our kitchen door.



Persian Ironwood on
New Years day

The Commemoration Hall

SCH 200 December winning number was 36 and January's was 32. Whist in February is on Thursday February 8th.

The Badminton Group meet on Wednesday mornings at 9.30 in the Commemoration Hall. New members of all abilities are welcome to join us for exercise and fun.

Contact Fran Pugh on 673429 or fmpugh@btinternet.com for more information.

YOGA at Sleafy Commemoration Hall with Hans.

Fridays 8.30 am to 9.45 am. £7

Fun accessible yoga. No daunting yoga terms, no pressure. Take it easy or challenge yourself. Stretch out, then chill out. You will feel relaxed yet invigorated afterwards! Beginners welcome. Drop in. No booking! Mats provided.

Hans Bartholdi (01434 675596, 07834 336106)



Christmas Snack and Chat!

Our Christmas Snack and Chat was a great success with warming soup etc enjoyed by all.

Crackers, hats and festive themed treats were in abundance but the icing on the cake was the entertainment!

This real treat was the magnificent surprise visit from the WHOLE OF SLEAFY SCHOOL, walking down from school, to the hall and delighting us with readings and carols. Such a huge effort and so very much enjoyed and appreciated by us all.

Very well done and a big thank you - it made our Christmas Snack and chat very special indeed.

For anyone not aware a fortnightly snack lunch is held in our Community Hall, welcoming anyone who would like to join us.

We provide a choice of two soups, (often seconds are served!)..2 choices of tray bakes, cheese biscuits and fruit, followed by coffee/tea! Plus of course, the free raffle!

A friendly atmosphere! A suggested donation of £2 and a chance to meet up with friends and have a good chat!

By the time you read this we will be into February with our fortnightly schedule, preparing for the next snack and chat on Tuesday 13th February!

A warm welcome awaits you!

Best wishes from 'The Snack and Chat team'

Slaley Parish Council

The Parish Council met twice over the holiday season, on 11th December 2023 and 8th January 2024. Details of those meetings can be found at www.slaley.org.uk/spc-meetings-and-minutes-2022-3. Of note to emerge from them were the following points:

- **A New Parish Clerk** – Mrs. Susanna Nixon took up the role of Parish Clerk/ Responsible finance Officer on 2nd January 2024. Those wishing to raise any issue with the Parish Council can do so by contacting Mrs. Nixon directly at slaleyipc@gmail.com or calling 07535 543492.
- **Parish Council Funding (the Precept)** – In a close vote, Parish Councillors voted not to increase the Precept for 2024/25. That means the communities financial contribution towards the Council's activities remains at the 2023/24 level of £13,400.
- **Charitable Donations** – On an annual basis, just before Christmas, the Parish Council makes a number of donations to local/Northumberland based charities on behalf of the community. This year the beneficiaries were the Great North Air Ambulance Service (£150), Tynedale Hospice at Home (£150), ADAPT (£50) and West Northumberland Food Bank (£100). In addition, a discretionary grant of £750 was given to the Slaley Show Committee.
- **The State of the Roads** – On behalf of a number of residents the Parish Council has approached the County Council about the state of the roads in the Parish. A response is awaited.
- **Slaley Village Speed Limit** – A number of residents have shared views that there are an increasing number of vehicles breaking the speed limit through the village. The Parish Council are working with a number of agencies to ascertain if indeed this is the case and how best to address it if it is.

- **The Post Van** – The Parish Council have provided Guy Opperman's Office with details about the service, or at times lack of it, provided by the post van in the village. Guy has shared that directly with the Post Office in a bid to ensure a more consistent service. This follows the Parish Council's own approach to them back in July 2023.

Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council Meetings are open to the public. The next meeting is to be held on Monday 12th February at 19;30, in Slaley Commemoration Hall. All members of the Parish are welcome and the agenda can be found at www.slaley.org.uk/spc-meetings-and-minutes-2022-3, seven days in advance of the meeting.

Who to contact

Should you have any concerns or issues relating to our Parish, please contact the Parish Council at slaleyipc@gmail.com, or contact Susanna Nixon, the Parish Clerk on 07535 543492.

Slaley WI

Happy 101th birthday to us! We are celebrating with a special meal at the Travellers Rest who looked after us so splendidly for our Christmas lunch. There's lots to reflect on, what we've achieved, how far we've come, how many new members we have and more excitingly what this year holds.

Our table tennis evening was a lot of fun with members, mostly playing in doubles displaying hidden talents as well as a complete disregard for rules and no, it isn't the same as tennis! Everyone had a go and many adopted some new moves involving the floor, "As long as we hit the ball it was OK!" says our president Catherine Myers. Anyone who wants to continue this new skill could further practice as co-incidentally the table tennis group holds regular slots (6 pm to 7 pm) earlier on Wednesdays just prior to our monthly Wednesday evening meeting (2nd in the month)


We're a month into the New Year and full of resolutions that may or may not come into fruition but if there are any ladies in the parish are interested in joining the WI this year, now is a good time to come for a 'taster' session? Our 'year' runs April to April when we pay our fees; the March meeting might just whet the appetite to be regularly involved....just a thought?

March isn't that far away and we're going to be hand-decorating eggs at the meeting on the 12th. We'll have real blown eggs, wooden eggs, pottery and plastic and will learn about different techniques and a little bit of history to explain how eggs have become a synonymous symbol for Easter. How our efforts are going to look remains to be seen but we're having a go, which is what it's all about....and if anyone fancies a trip to Howick Hall to see the famous snowdrops

we are planning a little trip later on this month(Feb) – very much weather dependent!

Slaley Leek Club News

At last month's Leek Club AGM, the date for the Open Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Show was set as 14th September. This now means that it does not clash with the children's Great North Run race. Fundraisers are planned, including a cookbook, so if you have any speciality leek recipes to share, please email them to Jed Woodhouse (jed@europeansid.com), or leave in the envelope which is kept in the shop. The book will include a leek bhaji recipe which sounds great. The Club is always looking for new members, so please contact Catherine Lincoln (catherinereaston@icloud.com, or 07918 120125).

	SLALEY SHOW 10 th August 2024 MEMBERSHIP FORM For the year beginning 1 st January 2024
<p>Membership benefits include: the right to vote at the AGM, notification of all events throughout the year, membership badge with free entry to the show, early schedules, designated parking area, complimentary refreshments and being part of your local village agricultural show.</p>	
<p><u>NAME(S):</u> _____</p>	
<p><u>ADDRESS:</u> _____</p>	
<p><u>EMAIL:</u> _____</p>	
<p>I consent to be contacted by Slaley Show by the following method(s): <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Post</p>	
<p>Membership fee: £15.00 Life Members - Free Under 12 yrs - Free</p>	
<p>Number of memberships required: <input type="text"/></p>	
<p>Please circle payment method:</p>	
<p>BACS (Preferred) Sort code 30-94-19 Account number 00140729 Please quote your name as a reference</p>	<p>Cheque Made payable to: Slaley Show</p>
<p>Donations for Slaley Show are welcome and much appreciated. Thank you. <input type="text" value="£"/></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Through the Government's Gift Aid scheme, Slaley Show can claim an additional 25p for every £1 you donate if you are a UK taxpayer. Please tick the box below to confirm and we will use your details provided above to claim Gift Aid.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year then it is my responsibility to pay the difference.</p>	
<p>SIGNED DATE.....</p>	
<p>Please return this form and payment to: Hilary Chalmers, Slaley Show, c/o Cedar Lodge, Slaley, NE47 0AD or email to: membership.slaleyshow@hotmail.com</p>	
<p>Registered charity no. 505028 <small>The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This is a law that gives everyone more control over their data and how it is used, and it is important that we ensure that your data is handled correctly. We have updated our privacy policy in line with the requirements set out by the General Data Protection Regulation. If you DO NOT wish to continue to communicate with the Slaley Show Society or if you want to see a copy of our policy, please contact The Secretary.</small></p>	

SOME USEFUL CONTACTS

Badminton Group	Fran Pugh	673429
Carpet Bowls	Karl Beckett	07914 693199
St Mary's Parish Church	Rev. David Kennedy	633012
St Elizabeth's Catholic Church	Father Antony Connelly	673248
Commemoration Hall	Chairman: Ros Doonan	673173
	Bookings: Stella Douglas	673001
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
	Ian Hancock	673502
Mobile Hairdresser	Linda Johnston	673196
Northumberland CC	Report faulty Streetlights/ Potholes	0345 6006400
Parish Council	Chairman: Ian Stevens	07395 566997
Post Office Van	Martin Nichol, Stocksfield Post Office	01661 842110
Police	For non-emergency calls	101
Rose & Crown Pub		673996
Slaley Shop	Enquiries	673201
Slaley Community Shop	Sandra Innes (Chair)	673845
	(mobile)	07710 726338
Slaley First School	Head: Mrs. Hayward	673220
Slaley Notes in the	Stella Douglas	673001
Hexham Courant	Catherine Lincoln	07918 120125
Slaley Parish Website	www.slaley.org.uk	
Slaley Show	Chairman: Philip Cain	673647
The Travellers Rest	Lucy & Jed	673231
Women's Institute	President: Catherine Myers	673023
	Secretary: Hilary Porteus	07803 268947