



SLALEY NEWS

MAY 2025



Spring is with us, and lots of flowers coming out; especially dandelions! Although not always welcome in formal, manicured lawns, dandelions are a great way to attract wildlife and increase biodiversity in your garden.

And more to expect in May for Sleafy Parish:

By the time you read this we should be able to welcome our new Parish Council!

Four Councillors should have been elected unopposed, and we will soon be able to meet them when they hold a Council meeting open for all to attend.

However, until they have signed their acceptance letters & declarations, they aren't officially councillors, so look out for more information in a forthcoming notice!

We also have another fascinating portrait of an important Show member: Laura MacDonald, the Horse and Pony Secretary.

The Rose & Crown continues to flourish under its new tenants, and saw over a 100 meals served on Easter Sunday! Read their message of thanks below.

Once again this edition of the News only appears thanks to a generous donation, this time from Karl Beckett Business Walks.

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.

Contributions for the June edition by Friday 23rd May or earlier, please!

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

Fundraising for the Hall!

A Ride in the Countryside organised by Slaley History, Whist & Ladycross Nature groups on Easter Sunday made a donation of £184.82 to Slaley Commemoration Hall, as the contribution to help keep the affiliated hourly hire rate at a cost all three groups can afford. As hoped, the event brought in a much wider participation than local residents, whilst showcasing our scenic area and the Hall's facilities.

And some lucky contestants received a box of duck's eggs!

We have more fundraising events to look forward to in May and then June.

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



Help with book-keeping needed!

Could anyone help the treasurer of the Slaley Commemoration Hall to assist in setting up an Accounting package such as Xero, QuickBooks or similar?

This would be greatly appreciated by Jim Bailey, and if you think your expertise could help just contact Jim: 01434 673352.

A Heartfelt Thank You from David and Samantha at The Rose and Crown

As we come to the end of our first month as the new landlords of The Rose and Crown, we wanted to take a moment to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped bring the pub back to life.

The past few weeks have been a whirlwind — from getting the keys to opening the doors, it was all hands on deck. We had only a few days to get everything ready, and we simply couldn't have done it without the incredible support we received.

To Board members, our brilliant family, friends, partners, and the contractors and suppliers who worked tirelessly — thank you. Your time, energy, and expertise made all the difference. A special thank you goes to the wider Slaley community for the warmth of your welcome, your patience during the preparations, and your enthusiastic support from day one.

Most importantly, we want to thank our amazing staff. Their hard work, dedication, and good humour have been nothing short of inspiring. They are the heart of the new Rose and Crown, and it's thanks to them that the pub has started this new chapter on such a high.

We've been genuinely staggered by the response. The popularity of the re-opened Rose and Crown has far exceeded our expectations, and we're truly grateful. It's clear that this pub means a great deal to so many people — and we are honoured to be its custodians.





We're excited about the future and all that's still to come. With your continued support, we'll do our best to make the Rose and Crown a place everyone in Slaley can be proud of.

Thank you all once again — and we'll see you at the bar — if David can escape from the kitchen !

David and Samantha

Slaley Show's Horse and Pony Secretary

Laura MacDonald is the Slaley Show Horse and Pony section secretary who organises everything from jumps (20-95cms) to judges and the classes which run for the entire day of the show on its own dedicated space just beyond the main showground.

Shire based Laura really knows her horses. She was the one responsible for the memorable Native Horse Parade at the '23 show with New Forest, Welshie, Connemara, Exmoor, Dales, and Fell breeds topped off with a Highland which had been previously owned by Queen Elizabeth 2nd, some of which were bred and raised in the area.

"I have been riding since I could walk" Laura says. She was a keen and successful competitor as a youngster "I don't ride anymore, but I am finding I prefer to be behind the scenes" she says. "My previous relationship with horses was more about my own enjoyment and the excitement, I was very 'gung-ho'! Now the horse comes first, and I get pleasure from being able to use all the knowledge and experience I have gained over the years." She is already busy accepting entries for this year's event, and she has witnessed many young riders' skill improvements over the years as they progress through the age ranges.

"The riding passion starts at a very young age with the fancy dress competition and pony games, and we know of several local competitors who have continued right through to British Eventing, with one qualifying for the British Games Team. As well as organising her own section, Laura is busy organising a horse parade again which will showcase in the main show ring with demonstrations during the day of traditional raffia and ribbon 'dressing' of a heavy horse mane and tail. "Northumberland breeds some fine horses which were traditionally used for carts in towns and for pulling the plough in farming. Some of the regions breeders now export to the USA and Canada and are used promotionally in brewery marketing."

Another extension of the Horse and Pony section Laura has organised is a farrier demonstration; again, another rural service vital to the equine community with its origins in droving when Smithy's sprang up alongside drovers' roads to shod horses and surprisingly cattle, as the Scottish Drovers made their way south to the southern markets.



Laura's pride and joy is her own Dales mare "She has been successfully shown and bred her first colt foal 4 years ago and a filly last year; the colt has already been placed 2nd at the Dales Society breed show" she says. This native breed is from the Upper Dales of the Eastern Pennine range and was used locally to carry pig iron in the 1800's during the height of the local lead industry. "It is thought to originate from the 17th Century Scottish Galloway breed which were the best pony for 'pack' use as well as farm and mining cart work; sadly, also for war which almost saw the Dales breed die out" she says. Even today they are on the critically endangered list by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. The Dales are a popular breed and considered to be a good all-rounder, intelligent, kind natured with an impressive trot, lots of stamina, weight bearing and keen to jump so are ideally suited for riding, hunting and even forestry work.

Summer at the Shop!

With the longer days and warmer sunshine, there's a buzz of activity at Sleafy Village Shop — both inside and out! Open: 8:30am - 12noon, every day.



Blooms & Garden Chats

Our amazing Shop Gardeners have been busy planting beautiful spring flowers and giving the garden furniture a seasonal spruce-up. Why not pop by for a coffee, a biscuit, and a chat in our lovely front garden? It's the



perfect spot to take a breather and catch up with friends.

Sleafy Seedling Swap Returns!

We're celebrating the start of summer with our annual Sleafy Seedling Swap.

Starting on Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May, and running for a week. It's your chance to swap cuttings and seedlings with the great gardeners of our village! Look out for more details in the shop and on the Plant Stand.

Ways You Can Support Your Shop

Sleafy Shop continues to support our community in lots of small but meaningful ways. Here are a few simple things you can do to get involved:

Games & Puzzle Exchange

We've introduced a new Game and Puzzle Exchange in the newly

refurbished Bake@TheShop area. You're welcome to donate or exchange puzzles and games using the space provided.

Garden Bird Watch – Can We Reach 30?

A huge thank you to the 20 wonderful volunteers who have already signed up to take part in the British Trust for Ornithology's Garden Bird Watch. Your enthusiasm is helping to put Slaley on the map in this brilliant piece of citizen science. We'd love to reach 30 participants, so if you're interested in joining, pop into the shop to find out how to take part - it's easy, fun, and makes a real difference.

Bake@TheShop – Now on Saturdays Too!

We're thrilled to announce that Bake@TheShop has extended to Saturday mornings, with fresh scones (both cheese and fruit) now available. Our volunteer bakers are in the shop kitchen every Wednesday afternoon from 2 pm, and you'll find fresh bakes ready on Thursday mornings but they go quickly, so don't miss out! If you'd like to volunteer to bake, just pop into the shop or join us on a Wednesday to see what it's all about.

Stay Connected Don't miss out on the latest shop updates, special offers, and community news:

 Facebook: @slaleyshop

 Instagram: @slaleycommunityshop

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/

Spring Cleaning at Messy Church

Our next Messy Church is on Saturday 10th May 09.30-11.00 at Slaley Commemoration Hall. Join us to think about Spring cleaning and the story of a Lost Coin.

As usual there will be fun crafts, games and some food. Children of all ages welcome with their parents/ carers. Hope to see you there!

May gardening column

Karen Melvin

Spring - it's like two different worlds, leaves off the trees, leaves on; the landscape clothed feels so different. And now it is so fresh and vivid, those lemon green leaves, especially the maples. I picked some stems of the hornbeam leaved maple which emerge in a folded precise zig-zag, each leaf with veins exactly lined up and little flowers dangling one beneath the other. The wild cherry blossom is always gorgeous filling the sky above. And we have seven mature wild cherries surrounding the garden. There is colour in the borders in every direction. The reliable spreading dicentras are emerging fully leaved in the borders. I don't like the larger modern dicentra Amore Rose so much as the wilder looking dicentra formosa and dicentra oregano. The majestic crown imperials are looking fine. My poet friend says we must admire and bear witness to spring: the slow unfolding, the warming light, more nectar for insects, blossom on the native cherries; I love it all.



Magnolia soulangia

I had my 'sakura' experience (surrounded by petals) in mid March, when matching flowering cherries were in full bloom down both sides of the south London road where I stay with friends; towering old magnolias were also fully out in front gardens. Up in town, I was shown the hidden door to the Inns of Court within which ancient trees were in blossom. Then coming home, waiting expectantly for buds and blossom I experienced spring all over again.



Crown Imperial

The crown imperials look so unlikely early in spring shooting up very quickly, not blowing over. Every day new things to see. An early alpine clematis winds through a rose and is covered in dangling pale mauve flowers. This is next to a new camellia, Blood of China, planted here in the shelter of a southeast wall. Each year I think I may have lost my mother's favourite plant, a double bloodroot, but it has bloomed again quite beautifully. Although tiny, it is luminous. The single form originates in

North America where it grows in shady woodland spots.

The food cycle starts afresh. The soil is ready in the veggie garden with only the last of the asparagus broccoli just sending up succulent shoots to eat, stem and all. We have started to plant the potatoes, broad beans, early lettuce, spinach, rocket, seakale. The tomatoes are in the soil in the greenhouse with a new hooped cover over them. Pots of courgettes, sweetcorn, and french and climbing beans and trays of onions and leeks are waiting to go out when the soil warms a bit more. We'll put up the pea supports in a few weeks. Winter brassicas are the latest to be sown in pots, along with successional greens. The warm and dry spells have spurred us on this year.



Abies Koreana Silverlocke



Sanguinaria canadensis

Cheers for Charity at the Slaley Beer Festival – June 7th, 2025

Raise a glass and raise some funds! The Slaley Beer Festival is on Saturday, June 7th, 2025, promising a day of fun, flavour, and fundraising at the Slaley Commemoration Hall.

From 12 noon onwards, festival-goers can sample a selection of local beers and Yorkshire ciders and wine alongside soft drinks and 0.9% lager for those after something a little lighter. Whether you're a craft beer connoisseur or just in it for the cake, there's something for everyone—including the little ones!

This year's festival is not just about good times—it's all for a great cause. Proceeds will go towards the Great North Air Ambulance, The Cleft Lip and Palate Association, and much-needed repairs to the village hall roof. Families are especially welcome, with children invited to enjoy the festivities until 6pm. There'll be a bouncy castle, bubble machine, games, and even an ice cream van on site to keep smiles wide and energy high. And for those with a sweet tooth, don't miss the home-baked cakes on sale throughout the day.

There will also be live music from the Boys Of Brass from 8pm and an acoustic guitarist from 4-6pm.

Tickets are available via Eventbrite (note: additional booking fee applies) or can be purchased directly by emailing lucykbrain@gmail.com.

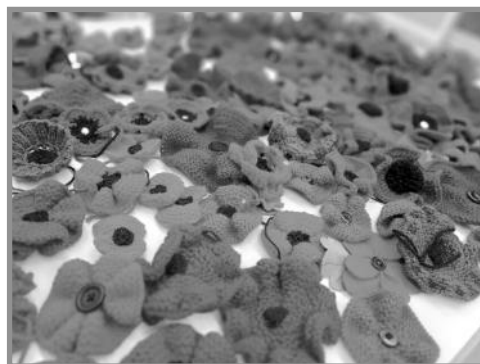
So come along, support some incredible causes, and enjoy a great day out in the heart of the community. It's the perfect way to kick off summer—with a pint in hand and a purpose in heart!

Slaley WI report



At the time of writing 30,000 ceramic poppies were delivered to The Tower of London to create an amazing installation to honour lives lost in wartime. What we are doing in Slaley may seem small fry in comparison but President Catherine Myers idea, to 'clothe' the church wall in a net covering of knitted and fabric poppies in time for this year's Remembrance Day, is slowly gaining momentum.

Our meeting in April, dedicated solely to making a start on the project and discussing technicalities has resulted in almost 200 highly individual poppies 'in the bag'. It's a great start. Some balls of wool are still available in the poppy box within the village shop, but we'll be using that same box for collecting finished poppies from now on. Thank you to everyone who has contributed



so far; we still have a long way to go, but there's 7 months to go before November!

Many of our members are active walkers and have, over the last year, met up with their equally active dogs and gone for hikes; a favourite destination being over the moors to Blanchland and back (7.7 miles) with a coffee and cake break in the middle. Late last month, their walk took place on a brilliant sunny day which they described as 'the icing on the cake.'

This month's meeting on 14th May is our AGM where we either re-elect or re-form our 'managerial line-up' i.e. our committee and are visited (and assessed) by a regional WI representative. Without tempting fate, the general consensus we feel currently, is that we are quite 'healthy', we have what we hope is a good variety of social activities for members, an increase in membership and opportunities to contribute to the wider community (This month's contribution is to sponsor the cookery section at the forthcoming Slaley Show in August). So, with everyone bringing extra cake and wine, it will surely be an enjoyable evening once the officialities are out of the way

The later in May trips to see stage show Kinky Boots in Newcastle and the boat trip to the Farne Islands are all booked and paid for, and members have all been informed of the travel arrangements.

Looking forward to June, details of our meeting on the 11th will be announced in the next newsletter but there's an additional event run by Whitley Chapel WI that we are all invited to on the 14th; a Ukrainian 'bring a bit of supper' event to meet Ukrainian refugees who have settled in the Sunder songs and dances of their homeland. Its open to all, i.e. members and non-members alike, and the evening starts at 7.15pm. Tickets are £5.

And there's still time to express interest in the Moorland Group organised visit to the Harrogate Flower Show on the 19th of September. The Moorland Group have provisionally booked a second bus in case of more interest. The cost is £30 for members and £40 for non-members. Do let President Catherine Myers know ASAP.

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