



SLALEY NEWS SEPTEMBER 2023



It's that time of year again ! – Lots going on for farmers, and activities also starting up again in and around Slaley. There's news in here of the Harvest Festival, the Slaley Leek Show on Saturday 9th September, Film shows in the Hall and much more. We also have two final contributions from Helen and Olwen Savage before they say farewell in October and move to their new home in France!

Slaley's Leek Show – Saturday 9th September 2023

Or as it is officially known – the Slaley Open Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Show – is on Saturday 9th September, in the Commemoration Hall. Details are on the village website – the flyer shows what you can enter – it's not just leeks! There is also an under 16s class for vegetable creatures, open to all.

Taking part is not onerous, and this year's growing season has given us all the challenge of finding something that managed to survive both the heat and rain thrown at it. Although my leeks last year did not come anywhere near Clive Weatherley's – as shown here – I did have a go at some of the floral classes. However, coming first is not the same achievement when you are the only entry, so more competition would be very welcome, especially in the "buttonhole" class.



Clive Weatherley, the 2022 winner of Best Leek in Show, and Best Stand of Two Leeks. Clive retired as a member last year – having joined in 1958. During his time, he won the Best Stand of Two Leeks seven times and the Best Leek in Show six times

As ever, the committee is asking for more help with running the club – so if you can contribute in any way, please contact me. Our committee meetings are a very informal gathering of two men and one woman, round a table and some pints in the Rose & Crown. And don't last long!

Catherine Lincoln, Chair, Slaley Leek Club –
Mobile 0791 812 0125, email
catherinereaston@icloud.com

Contributions for the October edition by September 25th or earlier, please!
This allows us to spend time arranging and refining the layout in good time,
before sending it off to the printers. Send text by email to
slaleynews@icloud.com, but for the moment send images and other
attachments to michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk

The SCH 200 Monthly Lottery

Since its inception in September 2020, SCH 200 has raised £10,205.00, has given out 36 prizes totalling £2,667.00 and has provided £753.93 towards general running costs, while the remaining £6,784.07 was allocated to fund raising. However, participation which at its highest was 67 has dropped to 42. Consequently, the prize money increased from 25% of total income to 28% and in December to 30%. SCH 200 is a unique fund-raising activity because there are no overheads whatsoever – no hire, no heating or electricity, no catering, every pound goes to SCH 200! We do ask for an annual commitment of £60 per number, however you can take part with a £5 payment each month, a BACS transfer or a cheque. To join simply email: pat.wilson28@outlook.com or telephone Pat on 01434 673 388.



Slaley, Healey & Hexhamshire Community Environment Group

Young Environmentalist Awards Presentation

Join our young people for a Butterfly-themed tea and support them as they receive their awards

Saturday September 23rd from 3 – 5 p.m. Recycle sale, quizzes, butterfly friendly plants.

Young Environmentalists eat free! Visitors pay a small charge.

Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Group

Geomorphology of Slaley and surrounding area, by Terry Douglas

Geomorphology as a subject lies on the border between geology and geography. It refers to the study of landforms - literally “the shape of the earth”. The Slaley area lies between the North Pennines and the Tyne Valley. Elements include the upland moorlands as well as many hidden valleys. The Carboniferous rocks which underlie the area form the geological backbone, whilst the detail has often been fashioned through the Quaternary ice age by glaciers and frost. Terry has contributed a chapter on Northumbria in the text ‘Glacial Deposits in Great Britain and Ireland’ and will put the glacial features of the landscape history of the Slaley area in the context of the broader regional picture.

Monday September 25th 2023, at 7.30 pm in the Commemoration Hall.
£4 adults, 50p anyone in full time education.

The Rose & Crown

We've had a great summer, culminating in our 10th Birthday celebrations on 19th August. Many members came along to share their thoughts and reminisce about how quickly the time has passed since the Rose and Crown became a community asset in 2013. To all those that have supported us over that time, no matter in what capacity, we offer a very hearty thank you.

Ten years on, we seem to be more popular than ever, with increasing numbers of friends and customers coming through the door and the restaurant is getting busier, as the reputation of our cuisine grows. In fact, the restaurant is now so popular that we're no longer able to seat people without a reservation - so if you're thinking of dining with us, please do book in advance by calling 01434 673 996.

With the popularity of the pub increasing, shareholders were treated to an upbeat quarter 1 financial report in August. Whilst life still remains difficult in the hospitality sector, we were able to return a small profit of £8,015 for the first three months of this trading year.

The next big milestone for us is our AGM on 19th September at Slaley Commemoration Hall. Doors open at 18:30 and the meeting itself starts at 19:00. Being a community owned pub, we'd love for you to come along and share any thoughts you may have about the pub with us.

Don't forget you can follow all the goings on at the pub via our website or our Instagram account ([rose_and_crown_slaley](#)).

Slaley Film Shows

We begin our next programme on Friday September 15th with a light-hearted comedy: "**Mrs Harris Goes to Paris**".

Lesley Manville plays a chirpy London cleaning lady called Mrs Harris whose backdated war-widow pension kicks in at the same time as a win on the football pools, and she heads off to Paris with a big dream: to buy a beautiful Christian Dior gown.

We start at 7.30 pm (doors open at 7 pm), and the admission charge of £6 (£3 for under 16s) includes your supper, but not a drink (you're welcome to bring your own).

Recycling News

First the Good News ... although there has been a fall in the value of used ink jet cartridges, we have found an organisation which will take specific cartridges and donate the proceeds to any specified charity. Therefore the Community Environmental Group will again ask you to bring your used cartridges to Shedquarters at the Community Shop; we will sort the donations

and the proceeds will go, as before, to the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS).

Now the Bad News ... due to the enthusiasm of so many folk trying to recycle their used medicine blister trays the pharmacists at Superdrug have been overwhelmed by sack after sack of “empties”. As a result they will now only take a few trays at a time from individuals. So now we can no longer collect the trays on your behalf and advise that they are popped into the general waste wheelie bin at home.

Village Green

Will your next car be an electric one? If you, like many others are unsure about going all electric, the following website is a good place to start: <https://electriccarguide.co.uk/>.

In the July Parish News, we wrote about the NCC’s Warmer Home Grants. If you are applying and are happy to talk to us, we would like to know how you get on and if there is anything we can help with. In the first instance, please contact the parish council – slaleyipc@gmail.com

NCC’s free tree scheme is back again this autumn!

Residents and community groups in Northumberland are being encouraged to do their bit to help the natural environment through the County Council’s free tree scheme. Northumberland County Council is offering 15,000 tree saplings to residents, schools, community groups, town and parish councils, as well as charities and businesses, to help make Northumberland a greener and cleaner place to be. Groups can choose from Hedge, Copse or Native Harvest species and residents will be given a choice of species depending on their garden size, whether small, medium or large, and even those with limited outdoor space, such as balconies, can apply.

Saplings are now available to order online at:
treescheme.northumberland.gov.uk/SelfService

Slaley Commemoration Hall’s solar and battery project is now complete. The solar panels have been operating throughout the summer and excess energy has been exported to the grid. Now, the long-awaited battery storage is in place. This will allow the hall to store the energy created during the day, for use in the evenings for lighting, boiling the kettle and heating the community room. It will also provide a level of resilience during a power outage. Many thanks to Northern Powergrid, The North-East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub, Slaley Parish Council and Slaley, Healey and Hexhamshire Community Environmental Group for grant funding for this.

Polite request to dog walkers

Nearly all dog walkers are considerate and do pick up dog waste on their walks round Slaley, but a few are not.

Please, please, please – if you are walking on the footpaths across fields round here, be aware that grass is a crop, it is either food or bedding for cattle, sheep, and horses. Dog waste can carry two particular diseases that cause abortions in cattle, and brain disease and death in sheep, it can also affect the health of horses. These diseases may also get into the water supply. If dog waste is not picked up, another animal could eventually eat it or sleep on it.

Thank you – from Catherine Lincoln (a dog walker)

Church News

Weekly Sunday services at St Mary's Slaley (every week) are at 10.45 am.

Harvest Festival at Slaley will be on Sunday 1 October at 10.45 am, followed by a snack and chat-style harvest lunch in church. There'll be a collection for WaterAid and gifts of tinned or packaged foods will go to West Northumberland Food Bank.

At St John's Healey, the next services are at 5 pm on Sunday 10 September (Holy Communion) and Sunday 24 September (Evensong).

The next Messy Church will be on Saturday 23 September at 9.30 am. We'll be circulating more details very soon. Please phone Helen if you'd like to know more – it's always super to see new faces as well as familiar ones.

Helen's thought for the month

We sometimes sing a hymn by John Bell, a leader of the Iona Community, that suggests that God 'patterns the morning with slithers of gold or glory in grey.' Olwen has taken against it, pointing out that we've had far too much grey this summer to be able to perceive any glory. Only someone who's lived much of his life in Glasgow, she says, could write such a hymn.

I don't argue - I'd lose, but I tend to see the world through slightly more rosy-tinged, Bell-like specs. Yes, I know it has been a washout out of a summer. I don't think we've eaten a meal outdoors since mid-June, but there have been some gloriously heart-lifting moments, like Show Day. Wasn't it just a magnificent Show this year? And as I write, the light on the golf course and forest as I look up to Colpitts is breathtakingly beautiful. I shall miss it so much.

As I begin to look back over the last eight and a half years here, it's those moments of joy and delight that stand out far more strongly than the frustrations with weather, planners or church authorities (not in Slaley I hasten to say) or my frantic efforts in the early days to take up to five services every Sunday.

Above all, I have so many happy memories of people and friendships that will keep me cheerful even when the November skies open in south-west France, as they often do, with rain that beats anything I've known here.

In John Bell's words: today I affirm the Spirit within me at worship and work, in struggle and rest. The Spirit inspires all life which is changing from fearing to faith, from broken to blest.

And that's my prayer for you too.

Slaley weather report – a very unsettled year

I thought I'd give you a round-up of the weather in Slaley so far this year as this will have to be my final report in Slaley News.

2023 has been very topsy-turvy so far. Apart from January 1st, when most of the month's rain fell, January was unseasonably dry. March, April and May continued the trend. June was a month of two halves with plenty of dry weather in the first half followed by a wetter end to the month. July was very wet and August, so far, has had quite a few dry days (13) interspersed with very high accumulations. Here are the figures (in mm): Jan 49, Feb 12.5, Mar 56.2, Apr 54.4, May 21.8, Jun 46.8, July 110.8, Aug (so far) 59.4.

Our hottest day of the year was 12th June at 29.7° C. Do you remember that far back? We thought it would be just the start of summer! Our coldest day was 15th March at minus 8.2° C. This month to date (24th August), much of the rainfall came on one day August 15th with a massive 27.6mm – the wettest day of the year. Today is very pleasant, just 22° C.

The forecasters have called this a wash-out summer. Compared to some parts of Wales, Northwest England and the West of Scotland, we've had more dry days, but it's often been dull and chilly. I do so hope Slaley is blessed with some golden days in autumn!

Olwen Savage

Helen's weekly 'thought for the day' each Wednesday is available on video. Please just click on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/moorlandgroup/> and via You Tube via our website: www.moorland-group.org.uk.

Slaley WI – busy as ever

July (where did that go?!) saw us at Ladycross Nature Reserve where Colin, Joan and Robin gave us a very enjoyable, interesting, informative and exclusive tour; our thanks to them, it made a very nice change to be out amongst nature in such a unique setting on a beautiful summer's evening. And to top off the evening... a quick meeting and an early nightcap at the Rose & Crown.

Our August meetings are always a little disjointed as some of us are very heavily involved with Slaley Show (what a corker that was!) so the 'formal'

August meeting was delayed until the 23rd where we had an eye-opening informative talk by one of the dedicated volunteers from The Hedgehog Trust. We were able to donate many cleaning, power and food supplies so any lost and found undernourished and ill prepared little hedgehogs will be helped to bulk up before hibernation in the coming autumn months.

Now it's September our regular meeting night, the second Wednesday of the month (13th) is an established date for the rest of the year. This month's meeting offers something we all need advice on, cyber security and scammers. Often a daily occurrence these days with random phone calls or emails, we are delighted to welcome Maria Bartley a Northumbria Police Force Specialist who is the new Cyber Protect and Prepare Officer. Ask us to share any interesting insights we are sure to learn? We all need to know...

But that's not all for September, we'll be hoping to get to see the glorious dahlias at Halls of Heddon with a spot of lunch and we're hosting this year's Macmillan Coffee Morning on the 29th September (see separate note). Do come and join us. New members always welcome, contact Catherine Myers 07530 439 978 or 01434 673 023

Slaley WI: Macmillan Coffee Morning

The ladies of Slaley WI are hosting the annual Macmillan coffee morning on Friday 29th September in Slaley Commemoration Hall from 10.30-12.30.

Come and support this worthwhile cause while enjoying coffee, cakes, chat and good company, a raffle, stalls, and a display of 100 years of Slaley Women's Institute.



All help and donations welcome,
Contact Catherine Myers on 01434 673023

Slaley Parish Council

Over the summer your Parish Council have pursued a number of issues on behalf of the community:

- The Post Van – earlier in the year, the reliability of the post van was questionable. As a Council we wrote to the Post Office about this and encouraged those parish councils whose communities used the services of the post van to do the same.
- Slaley Village Infrastructure – excessive road grit and the state of our pavements are just two of the issues we have pressed Northumberland County Council to address. In recent weeks, a road sweeper has been through the village and workmen have begun to treat the pavements.
- Grants Policy – we have updated our grants policy to make it more accessible to groups or individuals in the parish or organisations that deliver

a benefit to the community or its members. A key feature is the introduction of deadline dates for grant applications, two per annum, October and April. More details are available at <https://www.slaley.org.uk/spc-parish-council-main-page>

We would also like to raise your awareness of the following:

Northumberland County Council have introduced a new online service to report things like graffiti, fly tipping, potholes, etc. via a system called FixMyStreet Pro. You can find out more at nland.cc/fix. Parish Councillor Jon Storey is a particularly keen advocate of the system and encourages its use.

We have received a number of complaints about hedges overhanging pavements through the village. Now that the nesting season is over, fellow residents would be very grateful if some hedge trimming could take place to increase pavement width, thus preventing the need to step into the road. To those that have already undertaken some hedge management, thank you very much.

Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council Meetings are open to the public. The next meeting will be held on 11th September at 7:30 pm in Slaley Commemoration Hall. All members of the Parish are welcome.

Your Parish Council are still looking for a sixth Councillor. If you would like to show your support for our community, you may care to consider filling it. To find out more, please email slaleyipc@gmail.com.

Who to contact?

Should you have any concerns or issues relating to our Parish, please contact the Parish Council at slaleyipc@gmail.com, or get in touch with Ian Stevens, the Chairman on 07395 566 997.

Could you be a Parish Clerk?

Slaley Parish Council are looking to recruit a Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer. This is a part time (approximately six to eight hours a week), paid role which is mainly administrative in nature. The successful applicant will work predominantly from home but will need to attend one evening meeting a month in Slaley.

The role of Clerk is a key to any Parish Council, it ensures that its business is conducted properly, and provides independent, objective and professional advice and support.

If this role interests you, please drop us a line at slaleyipc@gmail.com and we'll be in touch to talk the role over with you. Alternatively feel

free to call Ian Stevens, the Chairman on 07395 566 997 for more details.

Slaley Community Shop

The Slaley Community Shop AGM will be held in the Commemoration Hall on Wednesday 27th September at 7.30 pm. We would welcome new members so please come along if you want to hear more about the shop. Papers relating to the AGM will be sent out to all existing members this week.

The shop is now open each day at 8.30 am so please pop in and take advantage of this earlier opening. We now stock a range of children's stationery ideal for entertaining our younger customers and, should you have visiting youngsters, ideal for rainy days!

By the time you read this, the scaffolding will be up to enable to new rendering to get underway. We hope that this won't take too long and we will be open as usual throughout this time. We look forward to seeing the shiny new frontage before too long!

September Gardening Notes Karen Melvin

What a gardening year of extremes this has been. The cold spring extended bulb flowering for ages but set back the veg seedlings. Then in the lead-up to our Open Garden, we had weeks of sun, drought and blistering heat. My large Ceonothus flowered profusely then promptly died. I had to resort to watering the far edges of the garden to stop shrubs drying up, whereas I usually only water seedlings and new plantings. Luckily it was perfect weather for the Open Garden, bright, but not too bright. Iced cakes didn't melt; many were consumed. There were still late flowers of bearded iris in the borders and azaleas in the wild garden. The large Cornus kousa did its spectacular thing with large flat drooping pinkish white four pointed bracts covering the tree.

My favourite walk in high summer is down the path from the front door, turning onto the lawn and finding oneself surrounded by flower beds on all sides with swathes of colour, contrasting and exuberant. The main high summer deep border is in the full tradition of tall plants at the back with flowers flopping and supporting each other. I only stake things like Delphiniums and Veronicastrum. The early oriental poppies drape themselves over other plants and are later cut back with their spaces taken by Echinops, Eryngiums and Lysimachia. Geums die down and are followed by Veronicas and Geraniums. Delphiniums in glorious iridescent blue are followed by Veronicastrums, both of them very stately. I love to watch all the insects that are attracted to these tall flowers, tall enough to be observed at head height.

It has taken me a quite a few years to get the seasonal mixes aligned so each area has form and colour with late hot contrasts. I make a list as the year



Helianthus 'Moerheim Beauty'

passes of things I need to move. The flowers of Hostas (striking, but which we tend to forget about) have been lovely following the rain and I need to move some of them more to the front to appreciate the soft pale violets. I don't like the rosey pink of verbascum next to the lime green flowers of tobacco plants. Why didn't I plant the quirky Nicotiana in front of the red leaved smoke bush which puts on masses

of growth in summer. As July has been rainy, I have risked moving small things but don't want to make watering work for myself. I like to let the August and September flower garden go a bit, keeping my energies to crop the veg, freeze things, and make ice cream with the soft fruit. For Slaley Show I try and guess what will still be good. The cauliflowers wouldn't be held back; the slugs had a field day.

Slaley Show!



The 12th of August really was "glorious" for this year's Slaley Show! After a month of poor weather, Show week was dry for setting up and, as the lovely aerial photograph taken by Dale Holden shows, the sun shone on Show Saturday. The result was a record number of visitors who were treated to a day packed with something to interest everyone. There was a strong showing of animals in the sheep classes, dog show and horse section as well as acrobatic BMX riders and a chance to try laser clay pigeon shooting. The famous marquees bulged with exhibits and craft displays and offered refreshments for all. The field had children's bouncy castles and interesting trade stands.

None of this would have been possible without the many volunteers who answered the "call to arms" and turned up to set up the field, run the new parking arrangements, help with exhibits – and also to dismantle it all on the Sunday. The Show Committee wants to thank everyone who helped, exhibited and attended. Thank you!

And the committee would like to thank Dale Holden of Holden Creative for this magnificent drone shot of the showfield taken approx 2.30pm, and wish him luck with the new 'arm' of his business focussing on rural property portraits: www.holdencreative.co.uk.



Fungus Foray at Ladycross

Just to let you know that we are having our fungus foray on Saturday 2nd September, meeting at the quarry gates at 2pm.

Please book with me - Joan Jewitt - on this email: jjewitt245@btinternet.com or call me on 01434 673 245.

Slaley First School News

We hope you have enjoyed the summer break. It has been lovely to see so many families enjoying the school grounds over the holidays. Staff have commented that whilst in school, preparing for our new academic year, they have had the opportunity to see past and present pupils using the facilities. The children look rested and ready for their new class in September. This is good news, as we are all preparing our classrooms and planning lots of exciting learning opportunities for our children.

Slaley Show reported that the school entries into the show were a super reflection of the skills and talents of our pupils at Slaley, which was lovely to

hear. The children's work was also admired by all those who attended Blanchland Show. We had lots of fun writing about the Lambton Worm and spent a lot of time interpreting the language used. It was great fun!

We look forward to welcoming all children, new and old, back to school on September 5th. We are looking forward to members of the community and parents joining us at our Macmillan Coffee Morning on 29th September. After school clubs will be running again, giving the children lots of opportunities to keep active and fit. We will be offering a range of clubs throughout the year to give children experience of art, writing, gardening and many other fun activities. These clubs are always well supported and received positively by our school community. We look forward to preparing for Harvest and celebrating with the community.

On behalf of all the children and staff at Slaley First School I would like to send warm wishes and a big thank you to Reverend Helen for her huge input into school and enthusiasm regarding all the times we have used the church to perform and share celebrations with the community. All the children have enjoyed listening to her stories in assemblies and are always surprised by her prompts and imaginative delivery of stories from the Bible.

Many of you may have noticed our new 'tall' fence. We are following guidance regarding safeguarding to ensure all our children are safe in school and who knows it may act as windbreak! Windy days are definitely a characteristic of our school. We hope to have our customary good weather on returning to school so we can use our beautiful grounds as much as possible to enhance the children's learning, finger crossed we have a week or two of sunshine.

So...a busy start to the year! However, we are all looking forward to another successful year at Slaley First School and welcome you all to join us in as many events as possible.

Exercise to Music sessions in Slaley Commemoration Hall

We will start again on Monday September 4th 2023. We look forward to welcoming new members to the 2 groups. The first weekly session runs from 9.30 am-10.30 am. This is for those with good mobility.

The second session, which is mainly seated, begins at 10.45 am and finishes at 11.45 am. We hope you will find the sessions fun and sociable.

For more information, please phone Carol Ferguson on 01434 673 585.