

**Swarland Village Action Group Committee:**

Chairman: Neil Mansfield, Secretary / Editor: Bryan Stanley.

Treasurer: Susan Richardson.

Committee Members: Robert & Sue Brotherton, Carmen Hubbard,  
John Richardson and Suzanne Stanley.

The cost of production of this issue of

The Column has been met by

**Newton on the Moor  
& Swarland Parish Council  
and  
Swarland Village Action**

**SWARLAND VILLAGE CLUB**

Sadly, The Club is no longer hosting the sale of newspapers,  
milk and eggs for the area.

**The Post Office is still available in  
the Club building  
on Mondays and Thursdays  
from 8 - 10am.**

Swarland Choir is actively looking for 2  
sopranos and 1 tenor. It is a group of  
approximately 20 people who sing for  
pleasure every Wednesday from 5pm  
until 6.30pm in Swarland Village Hall.

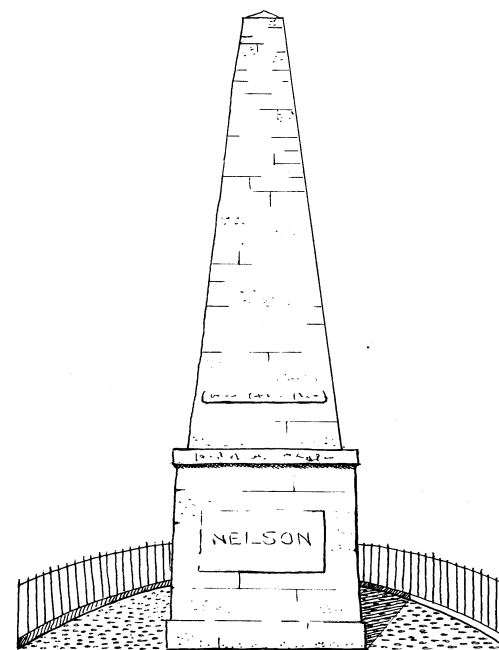
You do not have to read music.

You just have to enjoy singing.

If you would like to join us then  
please call Julie on 07920770076.

This issue of The Column is printed by NCC Printing Services.

# The Column



**February 2024**

Produced by

**Swarland Village Action**

**Newsletter 129**

**Swarland Village Hall  
first 200 Club draw.  
See inside for details.**

Welcome to this issue of The Column, and if you're new to the area, a special welcome to you.

**To include something, however small, in the April issue, please supply it by Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Send it to: The Editor, Bryan Stanley, on 01670 787 916 or by email at maxitoby1@gmail.com .**

### **Swarland Village Hall**

The Hall, which is run as a community facility, is available for hire. **Please support this local amenity.** If you wish to check on whether you can book the Hall for a future event, please contact Bryan Stanley (contact details above or Steve Woolfrey (on **01670 787 883** or **Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com**).

**Archery Practice: Mondays (indoors) at 7pm.** For information on extra outdoor sessions held throughout the summer contact **Steve Woolfrey as above.** The Club can supply all equipment.

**Coquet Concert Band: Wednesday evenings** for band practices, and extra sessions for rehearsal. For more details, please contact Andy Taylor (Conductor) 07832 249699, or Derek Belshaw (Band Secretary) 07891 245201 or email **coquetconcertband@gmail.com** .

**Crafty Friends: meet on 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday morning of each month.** For more information contact Linda on 07789 887424.

**Conversational French: Thursdays 7 – 8pm.** Contact David Murray on 07775 934847 for more details.

**Pilates: Tuesdays 6.30 – 7.30pm.** For details contact Alix on 07940 009150 or **alixwestgarth@hotmail.com**.

**Qi Gong (Chinese Energy Exercise) Class: Wednesdays, 10 – 11 and 11.15 – 12.15.** For details contact Anne Raine on **07934 425 844**.

**Swarland Choir: Wednesdays 5–6.30pm:** Details from 07506 036255.

**Swarland Craft Group: Wednesdays, 1.30 – 3.30pm.** New members are welcome. All enquiries to: **Margaret on 01670 787 705.**

**Swarland Carpet Bowls: Mondays 1.45 – 3.45.** Looking for new members. If you would like to give it a try, contact **Harold Hinchliffe on 07713 097 250.**



### **Neighbourhood Watch Update – February 2024**

#### **Swarland / Newton on the Moor:**

At the present time 18/01/2024, I have not received any information from the police regarding any criminal activity in our parish. This is not a guaranteed situation for the future.

Residents need to maintain the excellent vigilance we have come to expect from one another.

A happy 2024 to you all.

#### **Of General Interest**

**If residents have information on any crime, please report this via the following numbers: Emergency issues 999, non-emergency issues Tel. 101. To contact Rothbury Police, phone 101 ext 61353, e-mail [alnwick.npt.northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:alnwick.npt.northumbria.pnn.police.uk) , or call in at the office in the Coquetdale Centre, Church Street, Rothbury. If the office is unattended, please use the yellow phone on the wall and an officer will be able to assist with your enquiry.**

*NW Co-ordinator, Harold Hinchliffe, 2 Nile Drive, Swarland. Tel. 07713 097 250*

### **Support for Newton on the Moor & Swarland Residents**

This is just your monthly reminder that support is always there from the 45 residents in the Parish who first volunteered to help out their neighbours during the Coronavirus Emergency.

**A Swarland resident has offered to walk the dogs of anyone needing help, although this is limited to dogs living in Swarland due to transport issues. If you are interested in taking up this kind offer, give me a call.**

The sort of support the volunteers can provide is as follows;

- Phone calls to check you are well and not needing help.
- Phone calls for a chat.
- Collection of prescriptions.
- Collection / delivery of food.

If you need help, email (if possible) **janandersonpc@gmail.com** or telephone 07775 060430 preferably during office hours.

*Best wishes, Jan Anderson (Parish Clerk)*

**Deadline for the April issue of  
The Column: Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

## **Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor**

A belated Happy and healthy New Year to you all.

Our Next coffee morning will be held on **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February**. Along with our usual fayre of scones and cakes we shall also be providing sausage and bacon butties - these always go down a treat in the winter months!

On **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March** there will be an illustrated talk at 7pm, by Rob Simpson, on Morocco, a place he has visited many times and is familiar with. Following this, we shall be providing some Moroccan-inspired food. A bar will also be available. As this event has just been planned the price is not set yet but likely to be in the range of £6 - £8 per head. In order to plan for catering people need to register their interest and pay in advance. The final arrangements will be published in our newsletter and on our Facebook page shortly. Please email [notmjubileehall@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:notmjubileehall@yahoo.co.uk).

To keep up to date with events and what's happening we have our own Facebook page, 'Newton on the Moor Village Hall'. We also have information available on our website. You can also use it to research other village halls across the county and see what they have going on. Use the address below and click on the icon for the Jubilee Hall  
<https://northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk/> . *Diane Williams*

## **Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group (SMLHG)**

In December the Swarland Moor Local Heritage group celebrated Christmas with a superb lunch at Nelson's. The Christmas dinner was excellent, Nelson's surpassed all expectations; our thanks go to them and all the staff who came in on their day off. It provided a great opportunity for members to socialise outside of the normal meeting environment.

The second part of our programme will begin on **13<sup>th</sup> February**, though due to unforeseen circumstances, there has been a change to the speaker. Eleanor George will be attending to talk about the Pumphrey Family, who many of you will know as the Newcastle tea and coffee merchants.

On the **12<sup>th</sup> March**, George Ellames will talk about the Canongate Gasworks in Alnwick. In the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the concept of creating gas from coal, and using this gas as a source of light, was demonstrated and Alnwick was at the forefront of this revolution with gas street lighting being introduced in 1817.

The Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30 in Swarland Village Club. Everyone is welcome, members, new members and visitors please come and join us.

Further information and updates can be found on our Facebook site or by emailing: [swarlandmlhg@gmail.com](mailto:swarlandmlhg@gmail.com) . *Lesley Selfe*

## **NotM & Swarland Parish Council - February 2024**

### **Finance**

At our January meeting, we agreed our budget and Council Tax precept for the year, 2024-25. As we indicated previously, we have been able to 'freeze' the precept at £22,000 for a further year, which equates to a Band D-equivalent of £40 per year per household. The budget should enable us not only to meet our own operational costs, but also to continue our annual support for two village halls and Vyner Park facilities. In addition, we will continue to hold a fund to contribute to any new improvement projects within the parish.

### **Litter pick**

The annual parish litter pick will take place on the morning of Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March. As usual, we intend to make available basic equipment including black bin bags, protective gloves and litter-picking tools. For the Swarland area, volunteers are asked to assemble at The Square for a 10am start. Separate arrangements will be made for those covering the NotM and Hazon areas. Further details will be publicised nearer the time. Meanwhile, can we extend our thanks to Val Allport, for her sterling work in collecting litter, in all weathers and at all times of the year.

### **Tree felling**

Residents in and around Swarland will be aware of two tree-felling operations which have been going on. The much-publicised post-Storm Arwen felling and thinning work at Forestry England's Swarland Wood is now well advanced, re-opening vistas and leaving stumps and brash; a scene which was last experienced here over 30 years ago, at the previous plantation harvesting. At the same time, work commenced within Percy Wood Country Retreat, clearing trees to make way for more permanent pitches, in its south-east area. This was a surprise to many residents. However, we understand that it is the completion of a development permitted via a planning permission of some 20 years ago.

### **Bits and pieces from our last meeting**

Work to restore the stone seat and planter outside the school is substantially complete. Elsewhere, opposite Swarland Square, we plan to replace the seat by the bus shelter, which was installed some years ago by Swarland Village Action. At the lower part of Swarland, we are still trying to find a satisfactory location to site a new defibrillator. We are continuing to chase NCC over the improvement to the back lanes which they own, but which are not formally 'adopted' (2024 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their promise to adopt some of these sections). In NotM, we're still pursuing the quest for effective speed-monitoring on the main street, in order to inform the positioning of an interactive speed warning sign, which is to be funded by NCC's members small schemes budget.

**PC Clerk, Jan Anderson - [janandersonpc@gmail.com](mailto:janandersonpc@gmail.com) or 07775 060 430. PC website: [newtonswarlandpc@org.uk](mailto:newtonswarlandpc@org.uk).**

## Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrels - January 2024

Forestry England's felling plans continue in Swarland Wood. The clear felling is extensive, encompassing the area of the wood where the Red Squirrels were to be found. We are not able to monitor, or observe, what is happening in the main part of the wood while the felling is going on. However, a number of Red Squirrels are being fed and monitored in a small section of the wood away from the felling, which has been a joy to see. LCREDS funded the purchase of several bags of hazelnuts, which we have used to feed Red Squirrels over the winter, enabling them to cache nuts nearby. It has been rewarding to watch them on our monitoring cameras, leaving the feeder with a hazelnut, and quickly returning to collect another.

The loss of habitat from the felling does mean that Reds and Greys are now competing for food in a smaller area of woodland than before. This is a great concern, as we know that Greys have everything in their favour as regards competition for food etc. We are hoping that the felling operations will finish shortly and we will be able to put up feeders and cameras in a wider area to have a fuller picture of the situation.

Away from Swarland, there is still felling at Fram Gate, Thrunton Wood at Coe Burn and felling has started in the Callaly section (Northern Thrunton) now as well.

We continue to work hard controlling Grey Squirrels in as many areas as we can. The only way to give Red Squirrels a chance of survival is to keep the Grey population as low as possible otherwise, the Reds are driven to starvation. We are a small group of wildlife enthusiasts, dedicated to saving the Red Squirrels in our area. We are always looking for more volunteers to join us. If you think you are in a position to get involved and help save our Red Squirrels, we would very much like to hear from you.

You can contact us via our website [www.lcreds.org.uk](http://www.lcreds.org.uk) to find out more.

*Wendy Fergie for LCRS*

**Deadline for items for the April issue of  
The Column: Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024**



## News from Swarland and Newton Action on Climate (SNAC)

It's the start of a new year and at SNAC we've been thinking about our plans for the coming months. As well as continuing to push for the bus service (see the article elsewhere in this edition of The Column for the latest news), we'll be getting involved in a range of projects, including -

- Water quality testing as part of the Coquet River Action Group citizen science project
- Working with Vyner Park and the Northumberland Wildlife Trust to survey the wildflower meadow in the park
- Exploring ways to improve and increase our 'green infrastructure' and create wildlife corridors
- Promoting our footpaths and publicising local walks
- Supporting local opportunities to grow trees and hedging plants from seed
- Promoting recycling and re-use
- Hosting a number of talks during the year
- Being an active member of the Northumberland Green Hub

We're always keen to welcome new members and there are lots of ways to get involved - whether that's coming along to meetings, getting involved in specific projects or receiving our monthly updates.

Visit either [www.snac.online](http://www.snac.online), follow us on Facebook or email [talktosnac@gmail.com](mailto:talktosnac@gmail.com) for more details.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday February 20th at 7pm** in Swarland Village Club.

Everyone welcome.

*Liz Clark (on behalf of SNAC)*

## Mobile Library Dates

The NCC mobile library comes to our parish on some Wednesdays. It stops in **Swarland opposite The Square from 10.00 - 11.00am** and **Newton on the Moor from 11.10 - 11.30am**. If you miss either of these it's also in **Guyzance from 11.40am - 12.00** and **Old Felton from 12.15 - 12.35pm**. The next visits in our area will be on **14<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March and 10<sup>th</sup> April**.

You can check NCC's website for further library information at [northumberland.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/msgtrn/wpac/home](http://northumberland.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/msgtrn/wpac/home).

# **Swarland Village Hall Charity**

## **The 200 Club**

had its first draw in Nelsons in the Park on  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

This month's winners were:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Dawn Minto  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize Raymond Wright  
3<sup>rd</sup> Prize Elaine Fallais

The next draw will be on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February.  
Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to everyone who has  
contributed to this fundraising initiative so far.

Come and join us  
You never know it could be your number next!!!

It is still not too late to join us, and if you sign up before 19<sup>th</sup> February  
it will cost you £22 for the rest of the year.

Contact Linda Oldroyd at [lin88.svh@gmail.com](mailto:lin88.svh@gmail.com) .

Swarland Village Hall Charity - Registered Charity No. 1058471

## **Update on Proposed Bus Service – Your Input Needed!**

NCC is continuing to work with bus companies to try to put the  
service in place. They have asked for feedback on a couple of  
potential changes to the timetable circulated earlier:

1. Instead of operating twice a week on Tuesdays and  
Thursdays, the bus would operate on a **Saturday** and one weekday  
(probably Tuesday or Thursday, but in any case, not Wednesday, so  
as to avoid competition with the NEED bus). Please let us know  
what you think about a Saturday service. Connection to and from  
Newcastle would still be available for this service.
2. The weekday service would operate in reverse to the earlier  
proposed timetable, resulting in a longer time in Alnwick (around 4  
hours), and less time in Morpeth (around 2 hours, no connection to  
Newcastle). Please let us know what you think about this as well.

Deadline for feedback is **12 noon, Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February**. Please  
email SNAC at [talktosnac@gmail.com](mailto:talktosnac@gmail.com) (or through the SNAC  
website), or phone Jan Anderson, SNAC secretary, on 07775  
060430.

## **Recycling, Wants & For Sale Corner**

Why not recycle your unwanted items through The Column?  
Recipients of free items can make a donation towards this  
newsletter's running costs. Items for sale? – If successful, the  
seller can make a similar donation.

## **NotM and Swarland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Every home in the Parish had a Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire  
delivered in January. Thank you to Bryan Stanley and his team for  
undertaking this. The questionnaire gave you all another opportunity to  
tell us what is important to you about this Parish that we all enjoy living  
in. Thank you to everyone who has taken time to complete and return a  
questionnaire. Your opinion will count.

### **Your Contribution**

The comments that we have received from everyone who has attended  
any of our events or completed a questionnaire will assist the Steering  
Group to finalise the consultation draft Neighbourhood Plan.

### **What Next?**

As part of finalising the draft plan, we shall be speaking to a number of  
people and organisations over the coming weeks to discuss any policy  
proposals that may affect them and make sure that they have been  
engaged in the process.

### **Important**

Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan policies will sit alongside the  
Northumberland Local Plan policies and have to be considered when  
planning decisions are made.

**If you have any questions that you would like to ask the  
Steering Group, please contact Liz Simpson (Secretary to  
the Group) either by email: [SNSG23@outlook.com](mailto:SNSG23@outlook.com), marked  
'for the attention of Liz' or by phone on 07817 135932.**

**Further updates from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will  
appear in future copies of The Column.**

**Deadline for items for the April issue of  
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## The Barnes Family – end of an era

With the departure of Davey Barnes to a farming future in Scotland, comes the end of the Barnes family in Swarland - and the loss of a highly efficient and reasonably-priced car repair service!

When we moved here in 1992, we were fascinated by the military vehicles parked at the end of Home Farm Cottages. Davey's parents, Peggy and Tommy Barnes (and the boys), used to display them at various events. They owned 'the tank turns' too of course (at the junction of Park Road and Old Park Road, now a building site), where they housed their collection of various happy ducks, geese, and chickens, for a time guinea fowl, and later of course the rheas, Davey's particular interest.

[below] Tommy Barnes and his birds on the tank turn



Susan Richardson suggests that Peggy's father was probably a miner; they came to Swarland in the 1930s after the first settlers, and initially lived in the buildings up at Swarland Hall. She isn't sure when Tommy came, but believes that he and Peggy lived in Home Farm Cottages all their

married life, producing eight children (one of whom died young). Tommy's mother was Steward at the Club, then her sister Bunty took over. He worked for Capstaff Haulage, probably as a mechanic, and at some point started Swarland Garage, which, after Tommy retired, Davey continued to run, initially with his brother Nick.

The family has been part of the history of what was a very rural Swarland Settlement, and then of the growing village.

*Suzanne Stanley*

## From the Archive: February 2004!

### YOUR VILLAGE SHOP – USE IT OR LOSE IT!

*[and sadly in 2013 we did lose it]*

Along with local post offices, they play a vital rôle in the life of villages across the District – but they are under increasing threat as more and more of us travel to supermarkets for our weekly shopping.

Local shops are especially valuable to the elderly, those with young children or without transport. They provide an excellent service, yet very few of these shops can enlarge their customer base from passing trade and only with your support can the service be retained and improved.

Alnwick District Council represents the district and contributes financially to the Vital Villages Initiatives which extends advice and financial support to shops and other rural businesses such as pubs and garages. The Council also operates a Village Shop Grant Scheme through which eligible retailers are helped to improve their premises to comply with current health and safety requirements.

#### How You Can Help

Buy more than the occasional or forgotten item there.

If the shop doesn't stock what you want – ask them to get it in for you.

Use services that employ others e.g. newspapers, dry cleaning, shoe repairs.

Buy local produce where possible e.g. fruit, vegetables, bakery products.

#### Did You Know You Can Use The Post Office to:

Pay your Council Tax.

Order flowers.

Obtain commission-free foreign currency & buy travel insurance.

Open a Girobank account.

Pay bills for British Telecom, Electricity, Gas, Water, TV licence and catalogue home shopping.

Collect your pension and other benefits.

Obtain TV and Motor licence savings stamps.

Carry out personal banking – if you have an account with Barclays, Lloyds TSB, Co-op or Alliance & Leicester, you can use the Post Office free of charge for all of your personal banking.

Open National Savings accounts and bonds.

***[Renewed thanks to Avril and David Plumpton for the excellent service which they did provide for so many years, and to the Sandersons for attempting to keep it going. ]***

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