

## 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

Friendly Village Bar      Regular Events

Live Sports                Room Hire

Regular quiz nights and Music events.

Membership Benefits      Non-members Welcome

Well-behaved dogs allowed.

**Post Office Services – see elsewhere.**

**For further information follow:**

Facebook: **SwarlandVillageClubNEW**

Instagram: **@SwarlandVillageClub**

### Felton and West Thirston WI

We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month apart from August in Felton Village Hall at 7.30pm. The programme for the next few months is:

**February 10<sup>th</sup>: Karen Park from Seabanks**, will be bringing along some of her oils, vinegars and crisps for us to try and will have products for sale.

**March 10<sup>th</sup>: The Gansey Project. Authentic Fishermen's Garments by Astrid Adams.**

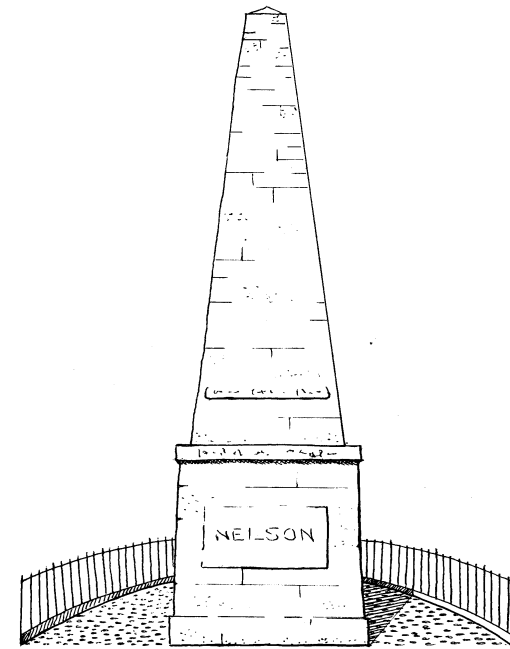
**April 14<sup>th</sup>: Gemma Gee. The Cramlington Forager.**

It would be lovely to see some ladies from the Swarland, Newton on the Moor and Hazon come along. Visitors £4 which includes refreshments except for the April meeting which is free.

For further information contact [feltonandthirstonwi@gmail.com](mailto:feltonandthirstonwi@gmail.com) .

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# The Column



**February 2025**

**Produced by**

**Swarland Village Action**

**Newsletter 135**

**The mobile Post Office is now on  
The Avenue near The Square,  
Thursdays 8.15 – 9am.**

Welcome to this issue of The Column in 2025, 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 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to: The Editor, Bryan Stanley, on 01670 787 916 or by email at maxitoby1@gmail.com .**

### **Swarland Village Hall**

The Hall is run as a community facility and is available for Hire: bookings can now be made online via our Hallmaster Booking System. Please visit [www.swarlandvillagehall.com](http://www.swarlandvillagehall.com) to get further information on activities and facilities available and to make a booking enquiry, or contact Anne, SVH Booking Secretary at [anne.raine.svh@gmail.com](mailto:anne.raine.svh@gmail.com).

#### **SVH Regular User Groups**

##### **Monday:**

**Swarland Carpet Bowls – 1.30 - 3.30pm.** If you would like to give it a try, please contact Harold on 07713 097250.

**Archery Practice – 7pm - 9pm.** The Club can supply all equipment. Contact Steve on 01670 787883 for more information.

##### **Tuesday:**

**Yogalates: 5.30 -o 6.15pm.** For details contact Alix on 07940 009150 or [alixwestgarhtaylor@hotmail.com](mailto:alixwestgarhtaylor@hotmail.com) .

**Adult Ballet: 7pm - 8.15pm.** Interested in giving it a go? Then contact Alison Allen at [alison@allensunlimited.net](mailto:alison@allensunlimited.net) or **07703 154777**.

##### **Wednesday:**

**Qigong for Health** (Chinese Energy Exercise): **10am - 11am** (Class full) and **11.15am - 12.15pm** (waiting list for this class). For details contact Anne Raine on 07934 425844.

**Swarland Craft Group: 1.30 - 3.30pm.** New members welcome.

All enquiries to Kathryn at [Kathryn.marsden@hotmail.com](mailto:Kathryn.marsden@hotmail.com) or 07718 201859.

**Swarland Voices: 5pm - 6.30pm.** Our local choir; for more details, contact Donna on 07506 036255.

**Coquet Concert Band: 7.30pm - 9.30pm.** Band practice night, and extra sessions for rehearsal. For more details contact Andy Taylor (Conductor) 07832 249699 or Derek Belshaw (Band Secretary) 07891 245201 or email [coquetconcertband@gmail.com](mailto:coquetconcertband@gmail.com) .

##### **Thursday:**

**Sound Healing Sessions: 10am - 11am.** Starts 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025; for further information please contact Mary Mooney on 07572 693010 or email [marysoundhealing5@gmail.com](mailto:marysoundhealing5@gmail.com).

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

##### **Saturday:**

**Crafty Friends: meets on 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month – 1.30pm - 3.30pm.** For more information, please contact Linda on 07789 887424.

### **Neighbourhood Watch Update – January 2025**

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

Since my last report for The Column, I met with P.C. Peter Johnson. He was able to answer the question relating to the reporting of incidents in our area. He was extremely helpful in explaining the following: - the break-in at Nelsons was a business related incident, and was therefore not reported to NWA.

Due to the need to protect the anonymity of the complainant of the incident involving the damaged car, this was also not reported.

At the moment, we appear not to be registered as a NW area with the appropriate authorities. This, I hope to address with the help of Peter. I hope to be able to give you more information in the next version of The Column.

**Just a reminder of who to contact if you are suspicious about an incident or person. First of all, ring the police. By all means if you wish to do so let me know, but only after contacting the police.**

#### **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 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.

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](mailto:janandersonpc@gmail.com) or telephone 07775 060430 preferably during office hours.

*Best wishes, Jan Anderson (Parish Clerk)*

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

### **Bus Service:**

SNAC is delighted to announce that NCC has commissioned Arriva to run the Saturday bus service for a further year, taking us up to March 2026. There will be no change to the current timetable and single fares are capped at £2.50. Thank you to everyone who has used the bus over the past year and made this possible!

Carolyn Letts for SNAC

### **Help Me Create a Swarland Tree Walk**

Do you have a special tree? This might seem like a weird request, but I am working on producing a guided walk around Swarland linking trees of special note as one of the projects this year for SNAC (Swarland and Newton Action on Climate).

I've already got several trees in mind including the Oaks planted in the Nile Park commemorating the Battle of the Nile, and more recently there is Arthur's Tree, a Sweet Chestnut planted to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2023. We also have trees planted in Vyner Park to mark Royal events, the latest of which, the Coronation of King Charles III was also in 2023.

Do you know of any trees – of historical or personal significance - which could be included in the Walk? It would be nice to have a mix of (clean!) stories.

Don't think the rest of the Parish has been forgotten! Once the Swarland Tree Walk is complete, I will be looking to compile a similar walk or walks in other parts of the Parish.

Many thanks, Jan Anderson, [Janandersonpc@gmail.com](mailto:Janandersonpc@gmail.com) .

### **Post Office Mobile Van in Swarland**

**The Post Office Outreach van can now be found on The Avenue, near to The Square every Thursday, from 8.15 – 9am. Christine reminds us that this service is for ALL residents in the parish. Use it or lose it. Look out for updates on the venue.**

**Deadline for items for the April issue of The Column: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

## **NotM & Swarland Parish Council - January 2025**

### **Swarland back-lanes**

We have heard from the County Council that its investigations over the legal status and condition of the various back-lanes in Swarland have now reached a conclusion, and we are expecting to meet some key officers on-site to plan the next steps. Complications had arisen due to discrepancies in various documents (one of which placed numerous back-gardens into NCC's ownership), together with poor workmanship by some local builders, and residents encroaching on to highway land. This saga has been unresolved since 1994, so we can only hope that a satisfactory end is in sight.

### **Finance**

We have now agreed our budget and our Council Tax precept for next year (starting April 2025). In the previous edition of The Column, we indicated a possible rise of £10k, but we have now settled on a rise of only £5k, taking the precept to £27k. There will be inflationary increases in our support for Vyner Park Charity, and we are continuing our obligations to SNAC and to the shared cemetery and war memorial provision in Felton. We are also earmarking a possible £10k contribution to the windows replacement at Swarland Village Hall, together with a possible war memorial garden area project in Swarland.

### **Projects**

We have now acquired and installed a further defibrillator, in Studley Drive. This is in addition to similar equipment already at the Jubilee Hall, Vyner Park, Swarland WM Club, and Hazon.

We will shortly be acquiring and installing interactive speed reduction signage in NotM, and we are enquiring of NCC Cllr Trevor Thorne whether additional funding might be available for similar provision in Swarland.

### **Council membership**

At our January meeting, we welcomed onto the Council Julie Peacock, a long-term resident of Low Wood. We had been advertising the vacancy for well over a year, and Julie meets our previously stated preference for a female, and from Swarland.

Please note that the next round of four years' election for both the Parish and the County Council will take place this May. All 'seats' will be available, and formal notices inviting nominations will be posted in March.

### **Parish boundary**

We were disappointed to hear that NCC's review of part of our boundary had been postponed due to the loss of a key staff member. The area under review had been the area to the west of the A1 dual carriageway, including Rasherap, the Grain Dryer, Chesters Farm, lower Leamington Lane, and the 'bottom end' of Old Park Road, all of which are currently in Felton parish.

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### **Community litter-pick**

This year's litter-pick will be taking place on the morning of Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Further details will be posted on the notice boards and Swarland Residents Facebook, nearer the time.

**PC Clerk, Jan Anderson Clerk@newtonswarlandpc.org.uk or 07775 060 430. PC website: www.newtonswarlandpc.org.uk .**

### **SWARLAND VILLAGE HALL 200 CLUB**

Although Swarland Village Hall's 200 group is doing well, it would like to do even better. There are still a few Numbers which haven't been taken.

Why not join us to raise funds to maintain **YOUR** Hall. To join please complete the form on the Hall's Facebook page or contact [lindaoldroyd57@gmail.com](mailto:lindaoldroyd57@gmail.com) .

To all who have joined the 200 Club. The money raised for the hall will be put to good use, so a big 'Thank You' to you all.

The December draw took place before Christmas. Numbers were drawn by 3 randomly selected customers / staff and the 3 lucky winners were:  
No.32 – Shelley Dalglish, No. 120 – Richard Styring and No. 104 – Philip & Amanda McTaggart.

The January draw was on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January. Numbers were drawn by 3 randomly selected customers / staff and the 3 lucky winners were:

1<sup>st</sup> prize – No 134, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize – No. 164, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize – No. 53.

Congratulations to you all. Come and join us.  
You never know - it could be your number next!!!

### **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. can make a similar donation.

**If there's anyone out there who has used Jiffy bags that they don't need, I'm happy to have some. All sizes welcome. Suzanne Stanly on 07484 347181.**

All you green-fingered gardeners out there may be interested in our **April coffee** morning when we will be holding a plant stall. Should you have any cuttings or seedlings that you would like to donate they will be gratefully received.

We are looking at the feasibility of starting a **Book Club** in the original Reading Room of the Hall in the evenings, maybe once a month. Please email us at [notmjubileehall@yahoo.com](mailto:notmjubileehall@yahoo.com) if this is something that would interest you so we can gauge numbers.

Lastly, is there any interest in the locality of become a 'friend' of the Jubilee Hall, which would entail a monthly donation of as little as £1. Again, please email us at [notmjubileehall@yahoo.com](mailto:notmjubileehall@yahoo.com) if this is something that would interest you so we can gauge numbers.

To keep up to date with our events, don't forget our very own website. <https://northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk> where you can also view other village halls across Northumberland and compare prices and facilities.

### **Neighbourhood Plan Update**

Following our report in the December issue of The Column, the Steering Group is still working with AECOM on the Design Code and consulting with Northumberland County Council on the Design Code and the consequent redrafting of the Neighbourhood Plan. We hope that this process will be completed by the end of February.

As mentioned in previous editions of The Column, once a final draft has been prepared, the Steering Group, on behalf of the Parish Council, is then required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012) (as amended) to conduct a formal consultation with residents, businesses and statutory and other bodies, that will last 6 weeks. The Plan and its supporting documents will be made available for this purpose on the Parish Council website and printed copies of the Plan will be made available to view at: The Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor; Swarland Village Hall and Nelson's at the Park. Following this stage of consultation, all comments received will be taken into consideration and the Plan may then be revised to take account of these.

The Steering Group is proposing to hold at least 2 drop-in events during the consultation period to enable people to ask questions of them about the draft Plan.

**If you have any questions that you would like to ask the Steering Group, please contact Liz Simpson (Secretary) either by email: [SNSG23@outlook.com](mailto:SNSG23@outlook.com) marked for the attention of Liz or by phone: 07817135932.**

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

*Donna Corbin for the Neighbourhood Plan Group*

## Jubilee Hall, NotM January 2025 Update

The Trustees of the Newton on the Moor Jubilee Hall wish all our supporters and user groups a very Happy New Year. Thank you all for your support over the last twelve months. We recently took a decision to publish the minutes from our regular meetings. Should you wish to see how we manage the hall, use the following link to take you to the relevant page: <https://northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk/newton-on-the-moor-jubilee-hall/documents> .

In October we finally had broadband installed, thanks to Alcom. This has opened up a whole new world of possibilities for us. To take advantage of our access to the internet and broadband, at our next coffee morning, which takes place on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2025** from 10am to 12 noon, we will have a 'Digital Champion' joining us. If you're looking to learn how to use a device, navigate the internet or stay connected with family and friends on-line, this could be just what you need. There's no need to book, just turn up. Our 'Digital Champion' will be on hand at most of our coffee mornings and if there is the demand we will run afternoon sessions. We are open to ideas.

With 2025 being the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day it has got us thinking. Does anyone have any memories or pictures they would be willing to share with the Trustees, to put on a display in May to commemorate the event? We know of two descendants of Shalcross Widdrington (the benefactor of the Hall as we know it today), who played significant roles in key events during the Second World War. It would be great if we could find out more about how the village celebrated the end of hostilities and what it looked like at the time.

As you all know, the Hall was chosen to film scenes in the latest Danny Boyle production '**Twenty-Eight Years Later**' earlier this year. The trailer, which is only 2½ minutes long, was released last week and the Jubilee Hall can be clearly identified in three scenes. It's not for the faint hearted, being full of zombies and gore, but should you wish to view it, search You Tube or use this link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcvLKIdPM08> The film is to be released in cinemas on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

If you weren't able to get to County Hall in Morpeth earlier this year to look at the exhibition on the Heritage of Village Halls in Northumberland, you will be pleased to hear it's coming to the Jubilee Hall during February. The exact dates are unknown, but they will be in place for the coffee morning on **8<sup>th</sup> February** and at other times during the month.

Our March coffee morning will take place on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>** with bacon and sausage sandwiches for sale.

From **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** village halls up and down the country will be celebrating and promoting themselves and their user groups. Does anyone want to promote their group or activity? If so, please get in touch.

## Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group

We hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Now is the time to start remembering to write 2025 instead of 2024. In December we had our Christmas lunch at Nelson's. A huge thank you to the Nelson's team for an excellent lunch and for giving up their day off to look after us. It was appreciated by all who attended. Thank you.

Our programme starts again after our mid-winter break. **From February to June, we have talks on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. at the Village Club.** So, add these talks to your new calendars of stunning Northumbrian scenes or cute ginger kittens.

We have one title change to keep everyone on their toes:

**February: Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> 2025** Juliette Phipps: "The History of Brinkburn Priory".

**March Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> 2025** Alistair Anderson: "My Life in Music".

**April 8<sup>th</sup> 2025** David Jones: "The Deserted Medieval Settlement at Limbrig".

**May 14<sup>th</sup> 2025** Embleton Quarry Volunteer: "The Restoration of Embleton Quarry".

**June 10<sup>th</sup> 2025** AGM followed by: Elizabeth Finch: "The Families of Wallington".

We look forward to seeing you all at our forthcoming talks.

Lesley Selfe

### NotM & Swarland Show

**Our Show needs YOU.**

On Saturday **30<sup>th</sup> August 2025**  
our **Small but Mighty Show**  
will be held in Vyner Park.

Can you spare an hour or more?

We're looking for volunteers for a variety of roles.  
Full training will be given.

Having a spring clean? We're after small toys for the children's tombola (new or unwanted gifts only please) or unwanted bottles of alcohol for the tipsy tombola.

The show team can be contacted at  
[swarlandvillageshow@gmail.com](mailto:swarlandvillageshow@gmail.com) .

**Deadline for items for the April issue of The Column: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

## **News from Swarland Primary School**

Prior to the holidays, the HSA worked tirelessly to raise money for the school. The Christmas Fair was a roaring success, raising £1036 which was used to pay for a pantomime enjoyed by the whole school. A Christmas Jumper exchange trial was held which was another success and will be continuing every year to try and reduce waste, by circulating items used only a few times.

The children have returned refreshed after their Christmas break and are looking forward to a busy few weeks! There are lots of trips and activities organised, including for the Reception class which will be going to Alnwick Fire Station, Year 1/2 will be going to Beamish, Years 4/5/6 girls will be participating in a football tournament, the whole school will be visiting a mosque in Newcastle and our cook will be making a Chinese feast to celebrate Chinese New Year.

We are delighted finally to be able to share a copy of our latest Ofsted report; the inspection took place in October 2024. Please use the link to access the full report: <https://reports.gov.uk/provider/21/122240> . It highlights many areas of strength including the outstanding performance in early years provision. Pupils enjoy attending this happy, friendly school and feel safe. Provision for pupils with SEND is of high quality and the school's approach to behaviour is effective. The curriculum is impressively well-planned and continuously adapted to the children's needs. Children show remarkable resilience and independence in their learning, which is because activities are expertly chosen to allow pupils to build on their existing knowledge.

The staff and governors are very proud of our school, our pupils and the outcomes. The inspector fed back that there was evidence of exceptionality and outstanding practice in every area of the inspection framework.

Another accolade we were delighted to receive was being named one of Northumberland's top performing schools. Northumberland County Council has recently released a table of top performing schools in the county based on last year's Year 6 SATS results and Swarland came in 10th out of 161 schools. You can see the article using this link: <https://www.northumberlandgazette.co.uk/education/northumberland-15-top-state-primary-schools-latest-official-performance-data-4931390?page=1> .

Thank you for your continuing support.

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## **Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrels**

### **Red Squirrels in Swarland Wood**

The Red Squirrels of Swarland Wood continue to survive. One in particular turns up every day at one of our trapping locations. Our traps are red-friendly, they have an escape hole so that the much smaller Red Squirrels can climb out, but the bigger Grey Squirrels can't.

Ten traps have been set throughout the wood for months. They are checked, reset and refilled with food twice daily by dedicated LCRS members. The current trap layout is going to be changed shortly. We would like to see if there are any Reds in other areas of the wood. We could set up feeders monitored by trail cameras, but if a grey turns up at a feeder, this presents a greater risk of transmitting the squirrel pox virus compared to a trap. We are desperately hoping we see more Reds in the wood.

### **Grey Squirrel Fertility Control**

It is important to get the message out to people that this has failed. The planned development programme, started in 2017, was to see "landscape scale" trials of the contraceptive, via species-specific hoppers, by 2024. In January 2024, the UK Squirrel Accord quietly announced it had not worked and they predicted a further 7 - 10 ten years of development was needed. The development and planned arrival of the contraceptive got a lot of publicity via TV, newspapers and online media. Unfortunately, the fact that it did not happen did not make the news. This means that many people think that the contraceptive is now being administered to Grey Squirrels so there is no need to trap or shoot them.

For the first time, we've started to get people questioning why we still trap and shoot Greys when a non-lethal alternative is available. We have even received an email from someone asking us to send them some contraceptive so that they could feed it to the greys in their garden! Unfortunately, no contraceptive or any other non-lethal methods are available to control Grey Squirrels and won't be for a very long time. UK Squirrel Accord have amended their revised timeline to delivery of a contraceptive bait from 2034 to 2030, but there are no guarantees that they can achieve this. One million pounds was raised to fund the first seven-year project, and it is unclear as to whether there is any new money available yet to start again. So far, the fertility treatment has only succeeded in making our efforts to conserve Red Squirrels more difficult because the illusion that a contraceptive is available is making some people question lethal grey control. The only way to keep our native Red Squirrels alive is to remove the Grey Squirrels.

*Ian Lakey, Chair LCREDS*

## **Swarland Village Hall -Update**

Swarland Village Hall will be hosting a coffee morning on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Further details will be posted on Facebook, in Nelson's and on the Hall notice board. Come and join us, do.

**Deadline for items for the April issue of The  
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