

THE POINT



A Newsletter produced by Spittal Improvement Trust

Issue 59

February 2014

EDITORIAL

Deadline for next issue 26 March 2014

Sue and I would like to thank all the contributors and readers of The Point for their support throughout our four years as editors. We wish SIT all the very best for the future, also many thanks to Michael at Shiel and Morrison for his patience and kind help in making our task as easy as possible.

SPITTAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST NOTICE OF AGM

To be held at 7.30pm on
WEDNESDAY 26TH MARCH
ST. AIDANS ROOM

BURC (ST. PAULS) CHURCH

Anyone wishing to become a committee member please contact the Secretary by 12th March.

NEWS FROM THE TRUST

We are already well into 2014 and we have a busy schedule of events and projects for the year ahead. Last year was perhaps one of our busiest years and we felt at times that we had taken too much on. Our outdoor events were well supported but our indoor events, particularly the performances in St Paul's, seemed to be less well received. We have cut back on these for this year but will still persevere with them in the hope that we can build them up steadily again. The first of our organised **Beach Cleans** will take place in March but there are some people doing it on virtually a daily basis, our thanks go to them. We often get asked why we do this. Well, we know the quarterly clean ups are just a token gesture, especially as the next tide brings in more of the same. For those that come out on these days get the satisfaction that they have at least done something. When you see what gets collected, it is mainly rubbish that comes down the Tweed and obviously from the sea. On the whole, most visitors to the beach

do clean up their own litter and take it off the beach. I am always staggered at the number of tyres that keep emerging from the sand, the odd shopping trolley (minus the pound coin of course), one of the old televisions that managed to float down the river and ended up on the Point sand bar and I can practically start a business with the number of golf balls that have been collected off of the beach! With the advent of Spring just around the corner our Silver Gardeners will be hard at work once again weeding the beds and planting. To help them in their task, the proceeds from the **Spring Fair** on 22nd March will be used by them for plants and all things to make them grow. They would also be delighted to receive any help offered so please get in touch, green fingers not essential!

Our **AGM** will be on 26th March. Anyone wishing to stand for the committee then please let me know by Friday 12th March. As I have said before, we appreciate that not everyone wants to attend committee meetings but we do some fresh blood. The younger the better to bring in some fresh ideas.

We have our first live band '**ALAW**' performing on 24th April and they come through the Highlights Rural Touring Scheme. 'Alaw' is Welsh for melody, and it is a love of melody that is at the heart of this group. Drawing on a great wealth of musical experiences Alaw take their audiences on a musical journey – a tune brought back from a tour in Bulgaria or collaboration in India – but at the heart of their set is a passion for the old tunes of Wales. If you want to know more about them go to www.alaw-band.com.

Car Boot Sales will resume again from Easter Sunday until the end of September. Alastair Brown has agreed yet again to supervise these for us and his regulars are keen to get selling again. By the time we pay for the newspaper adverts for these we do not make do not make a huge amount out of them but they still play a vital part in keeping us running. The **Photo Competition** will be ending soon so if you have a picture that you want to enter then please see the details in the advert.

I know we are constantly asking you for donations for our raffles and tombolas but these are much appreciated so please keep them

coming and we have no objections to you trying to win them back again! My final words for this issue are to thank our retiring editors Sue & Chris Timmins for doing such a sterling job in editing this newsletter over the past four years. They have been very patient with all the contributors, me included, gently cajoling us to get our items in on time and I'm afraid this, their last issue, has been no different! We wish them well.

Mike Greener – Secretary SIT



A VIEW FROM THE PROM

We must thank our lucky stars that we have not been enduring the weather conditions that others, less fortunate than us, having been putting up with in other

parts of the country. It must be soul destroying to see your house and land disappearing below several feet of water and watch your prized possessions floating around your living room. In fact over recent weeks people have been commenting on the fact that we have not had a proper winter and how balmy the weather has been. Indeed, positively Spring like. However, we should not get too complacent. During recent heavy rainfalls the drains in Main Street were not able to cope with the volume of water and parts of the street became flooded. In fact between The Red Lion and The Albion corner it was over half the width of the road. Thankfully the water receded but only because the rain had stopped. We should also remember back to 1998 when the ground water in the old mine working managed to break through and overwhelmed the drainage and sewage systems in Lower Spittal. This in fact was a recurrence of a similar incident in 1927. Eric Lomax, he of The Railway Man fame, once put forward a suggestion that if a certain set of conditions happened at the same time, then Lower Spittal would be under water. These were that the Tweed is in full flood, we have an exceptionally high tide and strong easterly winds. Since that statement was made we have a new sea wall but let's hope we never see this predicament ever coming true!

Beachcomber

Family or friends visiting and not enough space?

We have comfortable cottages available. For details telephone **Brenda** on **01289 304175** or see our **website**

www.berwickcottageholidays.co.uk

**SPITTAL
SPRING FAIR**
(in aid of Gardening Funds)
BURC CHURCH
(formerly St Paul's)
**SATURDAY
22nd MARCH**
10am to 3pm
*Demonstrations,
Stalls, Plants, Tombola,
Raffle, Teas, Coffees
& Home Baking*

SOS – SAVE OUR SWIFTS!

Swifts need our help! Swifts are amazing, beautiful birds and supreme aerialists. They are with us for about three months each summer and while they are with us they fill our Summer evenings - aerobatic, amazingly fast flight filled with elfin screams, daring and drama.

Swifts predominately nest in pre-1944 buildings and virtually no post 2000 buildings. This is due to the change in building techniques, which afford them little prospect of adequate nest sites. The birds are already on the amber-list of conservation concern after declining by 33 per cent between 1995 and 2011.

What can we do locally? There is a wealth of advice out there on helping swifts by maintaining existing nest sites, or creating new ones by introducing nest boxes. The information would take up two issues of this newsletter so if you want to take up the SOS challenge then visit our website at www.spittalisgreat.co.uk and we will post further information there to help you, and the swifts of course.

We would like to thank members of Berwick Wildlife Group for their help and advice on this important subject.

SPITTAL SCOUT GROUP

We have two events planned for March that will help us to raise the much needed funds that are essential for us to provide materials and activities for all our scouting groups. We are holding another Race Night in the Black & Gold on 15th March. Sponsorship of the horses is still available for this. We then follow this on 19th March by the Easter Bingo evening in the Church Hall at 6pm. All are welcome to both

these events. For further details, please contact one of the leaders.

Brenda Rollo Group Scout Leader

BEACH CLEAN

The first one of the year will be on

Saturday 15th March

Meet outside the Amusement Arcade at 10am, weather permitting.

All welcome but come prepared for the bracing (but hopefully not too cold!) weather.

BERWICK WILDLIFE GROUP

Wednesday March 19th at 7:30pm in the Berwick United Reformed Church (formerly St Paul's). by Catherine Hall and Stephen Block, "Ord Country Park's award-winning Wildlife Pond". Catherine has worked extremely hard in creating and (assisted by Stephen) documenting the life of this pond, which is tucked away at the end of the Park. Skilfully planted and separated from the nutrient-rich agricultural land behind by a tall hedge and bank, an astonishing number of plant and animal species thrive in this miniature wetland. Members and non-members alike are welcome at all our talks and outings.



SPITTAL WELL FOR SRI LANKA

On November 11th last year Scott Weightman visited the partly completed well at Theluula Janapadaya in the Wellawaya District of Sri Lanka. He was presented with a bouquet of wild flowers by the villagers at the beginning of his visit.

It is hoped the well will be completed by February this year and will be in operation soon after. It will mean that the community will no longer have to walk two miles to access fresh water.

On May 11th last year Scott held an organathon/coffee morning at St Paul's URC in Spittal and over £2,700 was realised. The well

will cost £2,300 and the remainder of the money will be used to purchase equipment for a "tsunami" school in Ahangama. Scott intends to visit the completed well later this year. Once again he would like to thank the residents of Spittal for their fantastic support for the well project, the fifth organised by Project Sri Lanka. Readers of The Point will be able to find out more information on the www.projectsri Lanka.org.uk website.

Highlights Rural Touring Scheme presents:

'ALAW'

**Thursday 24th April
at 7:30pm**

BURC (St Pauls) Church

Tickets: Adult £7.50/u17's £4
(includes refreshments)

On sale in Spittal Food Store,
call 07752403409 or from

www.ticketsource.co.uk/highlightsww
w.borderevents.com/boxoffice

CHIMNEY FIRES

A few simple tips to reduce the risk of fire...

- Sweep the chimney before use
- Ensure a fireguard is in front of the fire at all times
- Spark guards can prevent a serious property fire
- Extinguish the fire before going to bed or leaving the house
- Never use petrol or paraffin to light your fire
- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm and check it works regularly!

How often should I clean my chimney?

We recommend the following simple maintenance routines:

Solid Fuel Fires - Once a year for smokeless fuel; twice a year for coal

Wood Burning Fires - 4 times a year when in use

Gas Fires - Once a year if designed for sweeping

Oil Fires - Once a year

In the event of a chimney fire...

- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire Service. It will help if someone can wait outside to meet them.
- If you have a conventional open fire,

extinguish the fire by gently splashing water onto the open fire.

- If you have a solid fuel appliance, close down the ventilation as much as possible.
- Move furniture and rugs away from the fireplace and remove any nearby ornaments.
- Place a spark guard in front of the fire.
- Feel the chimney breast in other rooms for signs of heat.
- If a wall is becoming hot, move furniture away.
- Ensure that access to your attic or roof space is available for the Fire Service as they will want to thoroughly check this area for signs of possible fire spread.
- Always call the Fire and Rescue Service for a chimney fire - it has the ability to destroy your home.

Remember!

Without proper maintenance, any flue from a fire or stove can cause a dangerous build up of carbon monoxide gas. A carbon monoxide detector will help protect you from this risk. Visit our safety page on [Carbon Monoxide](#) for more information.

NEWS FROM ST JOHN'S

Now that we have turned the year, the nights are getting shorter and there are hints of spring in the garden – snowdrops and bulbs of all kinds popping out of the frozen and soggy flowerbeds – it is time for a little optimism! We hope that the worst of the winter is behind us and that the weather will finally improve.

The season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday 5th March, running through to Easter in mid-April. At St. John's Church we are making plans for a number of events and services. There will be three Saints Day services in March; Saturday 1st March; St. David, Monday 17th March; St. Patrick and Tuesday 25th March; The Annunciation, all at 10am in Church. The next Creative Church event for families will be on Sunday 23rd February at 3pm and will involve all the usual activities, including crafts for the youngsters, a short time of reflection and then a shared meal. Our Junior Youth Group for youngsters of Middle School age meets on a Sunday afternoon every fortnight in the Vicarage in Spittal, and the Senior Youth Group every fortnight after school at the Tweedmouth Vicarage. Our regular Sunday service takes place at 9am, with baptisms and weddings by arrangement with the clergy.

So there is much to look forward to and much to feel optimistic about. We would like to invite

everyone to join us at any of these occasions, both the thoughtful times and the celebrations. We would love to see you! Please check our website for the details www.potss.co.uk and make contact for further information and details. Revd. Ann Peters.

SPITTAL AT WAR CONT.....

At this time Spittal had two Builders. Storar's builders yard was in Princess Street. There was a great deal of government work for builders at airfields, school air raid shelters and repairing air raid damage etc.

In Middle Street Briggs builders was a smaller firm. Good tradesmen whose work was mainly local, plastering and repairing air raid damage.

Also in Middle Street was W Robson, Painter and Decorator. He was an elderly man, an excellent tradesman. He kept his business going to pass it to his son who was a prisoner of war in Europe.

In West Street the Dixon family carried on their business as General Dealers. Scrap, logs and paraffin oil, (many people still used oil lamps, at this time).

The Johnston family farmed Spittal Hall Farm, arable and dairy, on land now occupied by Berwick Academy.

The family also had a dairy in West Street where the milk was pasteurised and delivered locally.

During the war, civilians, even those in reserved occupations contributed to the war effort.

The Home Guard did sentry duties and also trained for any invasion should it happen.

Air raid precaution wardens supervised the blackout, their main job was to get people to safety during air raids.

The Women's Voluntary Service, acted as a support unit for the A R P.

At home, many women knitted gloves, scarves and socks for servicemen and women.

To be continued....Jim Cromarty Bsc

And finally.... Two aerials meet on a roof - fall in love - get married. The ceremony was rubbish - but the reception was brilliant.

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