

LONGHIRST LEADER

August / September 2020

JILL ELPHICK 1942 - 2020



It is with enormous sadness that we report that Jill Elphick passed peacefully away at home on 13th July with her family around her. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in October last year.

It is almost impossible to cover all the contributions Jill has made to Longhirst since moving here in 1994. She was one of a small group of people who realised the importance of community and communication and in 2002 converted the Church News to a parish newsletter - the Longhirst Leader.

She has been the leading light for this publication ever since and we are indebted to her for her enthusiasm, efficiency and hard work.

Over the years she has helped to organise a host of social and fundraising events. She was Secretary of the PCC for many years and was often a driving force for many of the various activities in the Village including the Church Fetes, Grand Raffles, Jumble Sales, Coffee Mornings, Supper Evenings etc. In 2005 she was one of the instigators of the Open Gardens and Church Flower Festival to raise money to repair the Church steeple. With her help the Open Gardens Weekend has run bi-annually ever since and in addition to raising many thousands of pounds for the Church and Village Hall it has brought the whole Parish together.

She was a leading member of the Families and Fairtrade Group and a willing helper and participant in the Luncheon Club. She sat on the Garden Association committee (now the Village Show Association) and when there was a danger that there might be no more Village Shows she offered to take over as secretary and was instrumental in discussions about how the organisation could be changed to ensure its survival.

Jill was a remarkable lady and she was so much more than the sum of these achievements. She was always kind, caring and thoughtful. She had an enviable ability to persuade people to get involved in activities, but most of all she devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort to helping and encouraging others.

Our thoughts are with Mike and her family. She will be dreadfully missed by very many people in Longhirst and far beyond.

The family have created a memorial webpage <https://jillelphick.muchloved.com/> to share memories of Jill.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Government regulations permitting, this year's Macmillan Coffee Morning will be a socially-distanced event in Barnacre garden, come rain or shine.

Date - **Saturday 26th September**, 10am to 12noon.

Linda Rudd (i)

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The meeting held on 2nd July was again a video conference because of the Covid-19 restrictions. County Councillor David Towns reported that the County Council was hoping that the **local area planning committees** would shortly be up and running once more and was considering how to **reopen schools in early September** in line with changing government guidance.

Representatives of the three largest residents associations in the Parish (Janet Quinn from Micklewood, Andy Robson from Longhirst Hall and Maureen Carrick from The Colliery) had been invited to attend the meeting for the first time and Janet Quinn confirmed that there was still no progress by Dere Street Homes in providing **pedestrian access to the Village** on the north side of the Longhirst Hall estate for Micklewood residents.

Andy Robson commented on the lack of activity by developers constructing the **two new dwellings on the field to the north of Dairy Lane** even though the access through the Hall wall had been open for quite some time.

Maureen Carrick was unable to attend the meeting but had requested that consideration be given to erecting a **new nameplate sign for The Colliery**.

The Clerk, Helyn Douglas had written to Lawrence Carey thanking him on behalf of the Parish for all the work he and Anne had carried out providing the **superb floral display around the war memorial**.

The Council has submitted an objection to the **planning application for a new house on land east of The Old Vicarage (20/00109/FUL)**.

A number of **fly-tipping incidents** had taken place in recent weeks around the Parish but NCC had dealt with these quite effectively when they had been reported on their website.

Peter Coates gave an update on the progress of **NCC's speed reduction signing scheme** through the Village which was nearing completion and the newly erected Village nameplate signs which were particularly impressive. NCC had also made safe the **uncovered deep manholes** in the verge of the Ashington road and had again been requested to repair the **damaged kerbs** in the centre of the Village and on the bend beside the Colliery.

The Parish Council, with the support of the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC), had successfully requested a deferment of the determination of **North East Grains' planning application for the installation of a large anaerobic digester (18/04533/FUL)**. Local residents and County Councillor David Towns had submitted further objections to the application and the Parish Council would request that a public consultation meeting should be held with NE Grains. NCC are now expected to determine the application at a meeting in August.

Peter Coates

COLLIERY CORNER

Due to Covid-19 and the changes we have all had to make in our lives all planned events for 2020 at Longhirst Recreational Room have unfortunately been cancelled. However, Simply Smallholding (a crafting company from Cumbria) are determined to begin their workshops at Longhirst Colliery again in due course.

We will also be hosting Flower Arranging Classes and our Annual Christmas Wreath Making Events later in the year as well as other social events.

Norah Dryden

BOB AND MYRA JACKSON HAVE MOVED



After 32 years in Longhirst Bob and Myra have recently moved to Otterburn to share a house with their daughter Sara, her husband Guy and six dogs. They have loved living here in Longhirst and were clearly sorry to leave.

Bob moved down from Fife to join the Northumberland Police Force in 1973. He met Myra, also a serving Police Officer, a year later and they married in 1976 living in Monkseaton until 1988 when they moved to Longhirst Colliery. Myra left the Police Force in 1978 when Sara was born and Bob, having worked mainly in CID, retired as Acting Assistant Chief Constable in 2001. He then became a professional dog trainer for a few years before deciding to devote his time to his hobbies.

Bob and Myra have always kept dogs, sometimes up to 9 at a time. Bob has spent many hours training them, worked with them on a number of shoots in the area and entered competitions up and down the country. His other interests include gardening, archaeology and history. He has spent many cold, wet days (and a few pleasant ones) digging locally in locations such as Cresswell Tower and on Holy Island. He has published two booklets, one on the History of Longhirst Colliery and, for the centenary of the end of the First World War in 2018, he researched all the individuals featured on the Longhirst War Memorial. Copies of both are available in the Village Hall and are in the archives at Woodhorn Colliery.

After moving to Longhirst Bob and Myra were soon active in Village life. Bob joined the Garden Association and was later Chairman for over 15 years. He was a major contributor to the Village Show and was noted for his success in the Flower and Vegetable sections. Myra's speciality was photography, winning many classes and organising the section for a number of years.

Bob joined the Parish Council in the early 90's and later served as Chairman before standing down in 2017. During this time he was also Chairman of NALC (Northumberland Association of Local Councils) for 8 years.

Always a good talker, Bob was an after-dinner speaker more than once at the Village Supper Evenings at Longhirst Hall Hotel and entertained Villagers with a dog demonstration and commentary when the Millennium Wood was officially opened.

Bob and Myra have both been regular helpers at the Open Garden Weekends and opened their own garden on two occasions. Myra was a member of the Longhirst Leader Editorial group and was a cook for the Luncheon Club for several years.

Both Bob and Myra have been active members of the communities at the Colliery and in the wider Parish. We thank them for their contributions, wish them all the very best in their new home and hope that they will make many return visits to Longhirst in the future.

Peter and Claire Coates

SMALL GARDEN CENTRE AT PEGSWOOD

There is a small garden centre as part of the allotments at Pegswood which is open to the public every Sunday between 10am and 2pm. It sells items such as compost, fertilisers, bone meal, some donated plants and general basic garden requirements. Do go and have a look, it is well worth a visit. It is in the allotments just over the railway bridge, about 20 yards down on the right.

Linda Mowbray

LONGHIRST VILLAGE SHOW



In light of the crisis relating to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the very sad decision has been made not to go ahead with a Longhirst Village Show this year.

Although the Government has eased many of the lockdown restrictions, measures are still in place to deter mass gatherings and to encourage social distancing.

Our Village Show has been running for over 100 years and so it was with a heavy heart that this decision was made, but I'm sure you will agree that protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our small community is crucially important.

Thank you so much for your support which has been essential to the ongoing success of the Show over the years and we hope that there will be a Village Show in 2021.

Carol Benbow

THE LONGHIRST HUNDRED CLUB

The winners of the last two 'Hundred Club' draws are:

Month	1 st Prize (£60)	2 nd Prize (£40)	3 rd Prize (£20)
June	Ticket No. 133 Roger Buglass	Ticket No. 125 Luke Vale	Ticket No. 4 Jill Elphick
July	Ticket No. 109 Jim Lamont	Ticket No. 56 Claire Coates	Ticket No. 20 Adrienne Dobson

Mike Elphick

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



Sunday morning services of Holy Communion have now resumed at St. John's Church at the usual time of 9.30am alternating with those at St. Andrew's, Bothal. August and September's services are:

Date	Holy Communion
August 2 nd	9.30am at Longhirst
August 9 th	9.30am at Bothal
August 16 th	9.30am at Longhirst
August 23 rd	9.30am at Bothal
August 30 th	9.30am at Longhirst
September 6 th	9.30am at Longhirst
September 13 th	9.30am at Bothal
September 20 th	9.30am at Longhirst
September 27 th	10.15am at Bothal

In line with the guidance from the Church of England, we have done our best to make the buildings as safe as possible, so seating will be organised to maintain social distancing, hand sanitiser will be available on arrival and as you leave the building and a precautionary record of attendance will be kept for track and trace purposes, should the need arise. People from the same household may sit together of course. As always, all are welcome.

John Park

VICAR'S LETTER



"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without God taking notice. Do not be afraid, you are worth far more than many sparrows." (A saying of Jesus).

In my ancient copy of *The Observer's Book of Birds* the House Sparrow is described as, "most common and well known, as it frequents the dwellings of man and even lives in the heart of great cities" and its close association with us, I suppose, is reflected in the sparrow's homely Latin name *Passer domesticus*. The King James Bible goes one step further. In a "Prayer of the afflicted", Psalm 102, the lonely, troubled soul cries out to God and finds in this most ordinary of creatures an image to lament its own helplessness, "I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop". This sense of human kinship with the sparrow's isolation gave it a strange pulling power that marked an unlikely turning point in the establishment of the Christian Faith in our part of the world.

One of my favourite stories from the Venerable Bede's eighth century "History of the English Church and People" shows the frailty of the humble sparrow being called upon to draw attention to the vulnerability of human life. Picture the scene. The King of Northumbria is sitting in counsel with his leading subjects debating with them whether or not to adopt the then "new religion" of Christianity and discussions are deadlocked until this decisive contribution:

"The present life of man, O King, seems to me, may be likened to the swift flight of a sparrow through the hall where you sit at supper in winter, with a good fire in the midst while the storms of rain and snow prevail outside. The sparrow, flying in at one door and then immediately out at the other, whilst it is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, immediately vanishes from sight into the dark winter from which it briefly emerged. So too, our lives appear for a short space, but of what went before or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If therefore this new religion contains something more certain, it surely deserves to be followed."

That intervention won the day, the new religion was followed, took root and in the course of time influenced and shaped not only the lives of individuals but helped shape our culture too. In due course, even William Shakespeare's morbid Hamlet, was mindful of Jesus' words and could perceive, "a special providence in the fall of a sparrow", suggesting that the divine takes a very close interest in human affairs. What then is this special providence, this something more certain, this assurance which can address human vulnerability and the accompanying anxieties?

Someone who clearly was keen on numbers and counting discovered that the most often repeated instruction in the Bible is simply, "do not be afraid" or "fear not." This exhortation, often repeated by Jesus, is rooted in the mind-bending promise that we are loved by God, intimately known and attentively watched over as we go about our lives and as we seek to be faithful to God's purposes. More than anything else, I have found, is that fear and anxiety are strong opponents and especially when it comes to the business of living a faithful life. It is at such times that I bring to mind a simple but wise saying, which my vicar, from back in the day, had framed and displayed on the wall of his sitting room: "We struggle with anxiety and fear, not because we are ignorant of the future, but because we are ignorant of God." A mantra, I dare say, for our own times too.

John Park

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September

Thursday 3 rd	Late garden waste bin collection	
Friday 4 th	Late black bin collection	
Friday 11 th	Deadline for items for the October/November Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com	Editor Group
Saturday 26 th	10am - 12noon. Macmillan Coffee Morning at Barnacre	(i)

Church services every Sunday morning as listed on page 4

CONTACT DETAILS

For more information about the various activities and events mentioned in this Newsletter contact:-

Parish Council Clerk - Helyn Douglas 826803 / e-mail : longhirstpc@gmail.com (a)

Vicar - Rev. John Park 510793 / e-mail : johnp2910@gmx.co.uk (b)

Churchwardens - - Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)

Heather Jackson 07756 690027/ e-mail : siriusa1998@aol.com (d)

Mothers' Union - Angela Mason 517872 / e-mail : angela148@hotmail.co.uk (g)

Longhirst Parish Association - Margaret Lediard 790268/ e-mail : margaret.lediard@tiscali.co.uk (t)

Village Hall Bookings - Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)

Luncheon Club - Linda Rudd 790116 / e-mail : barnacrelmr@aol.co.uk (i)

Longhirst Village Show Association - Carol Benbow 790194 / e-mail : carol_benbow@hotmail.com (p)

Longhirst Hundred Club - Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)

Parish Voluntary Litter Clearance - Chris Lediard 790268 / chris.lediard@tiscali.co.uk (r)

Village Coffee Mornings - Helen McCabe 790494 / e-mail : mccabe_paul1@sky.com (n)

Village Pub Nights - Allison and Richard Tordoff 790364 / e-mail : rtordoffs@gmail.com (h)

Longhirst Colliery Recreation Hall - Maureen Carrick 458674 / e-mail : maureencarrick@talktalk.net (m)

Red/Grey Squirrel Sightings - MADRS 07570 897979 / enquiries@madredsquirrels.com (s)

Village Website - www.longhirstvillage.co.uk - Chris Marr 790196 / e-mail : chrismarr@btinternet.com (u)

Village Facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel (v)

Church Website - www.longhirstchurch.btck.co.uk (b)

Longhirst Leader Editorial Group:

Peter and Claire Coates - The Old Farmhouse, Broomhaugh: 791088, clairecoates32@gmail.com (k)

Carol Robson - Rose Cottage, Ulgham Lane: 07773738442 (f)

Mo Dewar - 7 Stable Close : 791149, dewarms@btinternet.com (w)

Janet Quinn - 38 Micklewood Close : 790630, quinnjanet@sky.com (q)

If you require a copy in large print please let us know.