

MATFEN COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

No. 10 - June - July 2021



Welcome to Newsletter number 10. We're well into June, and the gardens and hedgerows are catching up after their slow start due to the recent cold weather. At last the trees are in full leaf, the May blossom and cow parsley are lining the road verges like frilly petticoats and it's a race to keep up with all the jobs to do in the garden.

We very much appreciate the support of Rev Rachel and the churches over the past 18 months for emailing the letter out, and this will continue as the covid restrictions are eventually lifted. A few paper copies will be available in the shop and the Book Swap box, and if you know of anyone who doesn't do email and would like to receive a paper copy, please let me know. As ever, any feedback on what you have read would be most welcome, as would any suggestions or contributions for future editions of the newsletter.

Thank you! ... contehjean@gmail.com

Matfen village hall

There's lots going on in the hall these days. Our website, which is part of Community Action Northumberland, is a good place to go to find out about what's happening: <https://northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk>. The new AV system and the wifi connection are opening out opportunities for music, films and all kinds of other activities, and you can read below about some of the great events coming up. Our three regular sports activities are all going strong, and always ready to welcome new participants:

Yoga with Clare Burns on most **Tuesdays, from 6.45-7.45 pm**, and Clare can be contacted on **07956 407905**

Zumba with Clifton Thompson on **Thursdays from 6.30-7.30 pm**, and you can book with Clifton on thompson.clifton@aol.com or **07472 381268**.

Karate with Andrew and Harry of the Seikenryu Karate Association on **Fridays from 6.00-7.00 pm**, and you can contact **Harry on 07775 726240 or Andrew on 07747 024844**.

Susan the Barber is still coming to Matfen once a month, usually on the first Monday, from 9.30 to around 12.30, or the week after, when it's a Bank Holiday. She's still following covid rules very carefully, sterilising all equipment after each customer. You can make an appointment on **07712 609057**, and - of course - don't forget your mask.



If you'd like to book the hall for your event, or discuss setting up an activity, get in touch on: matfenvillage@gmail.com.

After the recent local elections, **Matfen Parish Council** have welcomed new members. Our local councillors are now:

Frank Robson - Ryal; Justin Dempsey, Kevin George and Keith Mavin - Matfen; James Barber - Fenwick; Sarah Greaves - Ingoe.

It is particularly pleasing that we have councillors representing all the villages in the parish, so all parishioners have a local voice able to represent their views and needs. Also, we are delighted that Mandy Senior continues her excellent work as clerk to the council, as she adds so much to its smooth working. The Parish Council recently revamped their website, so please feel free to log on and check it out; it is still very much a "work in progress". If you feel you can add anything, or have suggestions as to what you would like to see, then please contact Mandy with your ideas/suggestions. The web address is <https://matfenparish.org>

And some exciting news from the new owners of the Black Bull

Natalie Richardson is delighted to confirm her new ownership of the The Black Bull and is planning to open for business from June 21. The pub will be open 7 days a week, serving drinks only - no food will be available until after refurbishments are done later in the year. The renovations are still in the planning stages and the pub will be open until works commence.



Natalie and her family are delighted to be the owners of the Black Bull and will strive to restore this public house to its former glory and to become a cornerstone of the village social scene.

Matfen and Great Whittington WI is getting together again with two events over the summer, a lunch at

Bradley Gardens on July 13, and an outing to Seaton Delaval Hall on August 3. We've put together a varied programme of meetings from September - a couple of talks, a couple of craft sessions, an introduction to Pilates and more. We start with a session on Kusadama on Tuesday September 7th at 7.30 in Matfen - if you want to know what that is, then come along. For more information, get in touch: contehjean@gmail.com.



Matfen Cricket Club 2021



Our Saturday team plays in the West Tyne League which is up and running again this year. Practice sessions on Thursdays are from 6-7.30pm. Two of our players, Ellie and Lizzie, have made it into the first ever squad for the Northern Diamonds Academy, made up from players in Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland.

The women's and girls' softball has proved very popular. Everyone is welcome to come along to the sessions on Fridays 6-7pm - no experience needed!

We are also running junior cricket (primary age) sessions on Sundays until the end of the summer term, from 1030-1200. The sessions are focused on batting, bowling and matchplay, and are free of charge.

Please get in touch via our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MatfenCricketClub/>

Music on the Green in Matfen is almost here! It's all set to start on Sunday June 27th at 2 pm. It should be quite an afternoon. There'll be two local bands, the **Tenth Avenue Band** and **Stratosphonic**. The bands are performing free, and the Village Hall committee are supporting the event by providing free use of the hall for power and toilets. There'll also be local companies serving refreshments - drinks from **Coolbox NE**, pizza from **Clarabell's** and ice cream from **Tony's**. All we need now is fair weather - and care, to stay safe as the covid restrictions continue for another few weeks.

Here's a question from GO Local:

What do laundry liquid, lettuces, Weardale Cheese and Spoon Carving have in common?



The answer ... **GO Local Food**. The list demonstrates the range of our activity in a month.

Our focus is supplying locally grown, seasonal veg to the Tynedale community, whilst looking after the environment and supporting other local producers. And so in addition to making sure we grow responsibly, we offer members more ways to practise being environmentally aware, such as refilling

household and body care containers, enjoying produce from our fields and elsewhere, taking part in workshops and sharing TerraCycle collecting.

We are pleased to report that our expansion with 2.5 acres in Matfen has got off to a good start, and this year is seeing us on a new learning curve. This means we can also expand our membership. We have a few spare spaces, so if you are thinking about how you can improve your environmental footprint, we could be your answer! You can find out more at our **Plastic Free Pop Up, in the Village Hall, 19 June, 10.30-12.30**. Bring your own containers to be filled with household and personal cleaning products. More information also on our website: www.golocalfood.org.

This edition's History Notes are from Keith Atkinson as usual, and are about someone related to him, who was born in Great Whittington in 1890.



Jacob and Isabella Atkinson, who kept the shop and post office at Matfen in the early part of the 20th century, had three children. Amelia Ann (1890-1955) was the eldest. She married Christopher (Kit) Bell at Holy Trinity Church, Matfen in 1918. Amelia and Kit had two children, the elder being Clive Bell (1919-1995). The Bell family lived in Hexham.

Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Clive Bell had become an outstanding Northumbrian piper. At Bellingham Show in September 1938, he won the Spencer Cup, still awarded today to the "Champion of Champions". In May 1939, at the North of England Musical Tournament in Newcastle City Hall, he won the Open Class, receiving a silver medal and the John Cocks Memorial Trophy. No one had previously held both

Spencer Cup and Cocks Trophy simultaneously. They are shown in the photograph along with medals won on other occasions. Clive looks a thoughtful young man and he certainly took his music seriously.

Photograph of Clive Bell printed on a post card by John E. Hedley, Commercial Photographer, 14 Market Street, Hexham.