

APRIL 2021



**THE UNITED BENEFICE OF LORTON AND
LOWESWATER WITH BUTTERMERE**

Letter from the Editor

Dear Link readers,

The Link Committee has asked me to remind you that subscriptions for this year are now overdue. If you wish to continue with the Link this year (10 issues), please note that the rate for postal subscribers is still £12 pa. and £5 for the copies the distributors deliver.

Please send your subs. (using the envelope provided (if you still have it)) to the treasurer: David Walmsley, The Old Police House, High Lorton, Cockermouth. CA13 9UL; or give them to your distributor. Please write your name on the envelope.

For cheque or electronic payments to our Cumberland BS account then the account name is The Benefice Link Account, sort code 16-52-21, account no. 54167346, please identify the payment with your surname.

As well as the old favourites we have more interesting articles this month. Mark Elliott has written the second instalment of his time in the Diplomatic Service and other Lorton residents - Chris & Derke Poate have written a fascinating

piece about a stint working in Malawi. We have the annual report from the North Lakes Squirrel Initiative, a song from Ann Peck and notices for various Zoom meetings including the Melbreak Communities AGM, a talk about Swifts, and the Derwent Fells History Society. We also have a 'live' but socially distanced Easter Bonnet walk on Easter Sunday. There is also the opportunity to join the W.I at a reduced rate. If, like me, you enjoy a pint of Loweswater Gold then the other good news is that The Kirkstile Inn re-opens for outside socialising on 12th April. See page 26 for further details.

Having started my letter with a reminder I am going to close with another one - can I ask all you to re-start entering events in the Diary Dates document on the Google drive. Most of the events happening this month were not on there and I've had to add them all manually. Please email me if you require me to resend the link to the document.

Happy Easter and enjoy your al fresco socialising as allowed.

Rosemary
07885 360353

We are continuing the cute animal theme this month with our cover photo of a Kerry Hill lamb and an orphaned friend taken near Fangs Brow by John Macfarlane. Kerry Hill originated in Wales, are polled (no horns), and have a distinctive and attractive colouring with white wool and black markings around the mouth, ears, eyes, and legs. They can be found in more than one place in the valley.



'Your face, Lord, I will seek'

What are you most looking forward to when the last of the covid restrictions are lifted? A family party? A foreign holiday? A pampering session at the beauty spa? For me, the thing I am most looking forward to is being able to meet people again without masks covering two thirds of our faces. Masks are an important way of keeping one another safe and we should certainly wear them for as long as necessary. The simple act of wearing a mask has saved many lives. But something precious is lost when we cover our faces. We cannot know one another in the same way.

Have you ever noticed how often the bible talks about the face of God? We human beings have always longed to know God better. *'My heart says of you, 'Seek his face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek.'* When God seems far away, we become anxious and afraid. *'Hear my prayer, Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress.'* In choosing to become a human being himself in the person of Jesus Christ, God shows that he too understands the importance of meeting face to face. *'For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness' made his light to shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Jesus Christ.'*

When Jesus is crucified on Good Friday his followers were plunged into despair. They must have thought that they would never

see his face again. Probably have felt like that at some time or another during our lives. Sometimes it seems as though the sunshine has gone for ever. The past twelve months have been a time of hardship, sorrow, loss and uncertainty for many of us. Where do we look for that consoling glimpse of God's face?

Although it is not yet 'business as usual' in our three churches we are certainly in a better place than we were this time last year and on Palm Sunday we will be meeting for worship again at 10.30 am at Lorton, while continuing to follow social distancing guidelines. On Maundy Thursday at 7 pm at Lorton we will give thanks for our Lord's institution of the eucharist. On Good Friday at 2 pm we will gather at Buttermere for a service of reflection. Then on Easter Sunday at 10.30 am we will come together in Loweswater church to rejoice at our Lord's resurrection with prayers for everyone in the Valley. Do join us if you can.

So, as we keep the Easter feast this year, whether we do so together or apart, in sorrow or in joy, please accept a blessing from all of us at Lorton, Loweswater and Buttermere churches for you and your family. *The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace'.*

Jane Charman
Grasmoor Mission Community Leader

LORTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
MARCH 2021



Happy Birthday Lorton W.I.! Last year's party was at an Italian restaurant, just before we locked down. As we dispersed that evening, we had no idea what the year might hold for us. Maybe it is just as well. Now, we hope, we are near the other side. Our 99th Birthday was marked (as have been so many events this year, even a dear friend's funeral this week) on Zoom. 12 of us met, and it was good just to be together. The first item was a discussion about subs, which were due in April and would normally be £44 per member for 2021. However we decided to forgo the £21.60 which members would normally pay direct to Lorton W.I., as we had not had to pay for rent and speakers, and just charge the £22.40 due to National and Federation. We will advertise this price cut in order to attract new members. We also discussed ideas for our 100th birthday next year, maybe constructing a collage for the Hall. Kris was the MC for our entertainment. Carolyn provided a picture quiz of Famous Women (it was also National Women's Day) which gave rise to some hilarity and red faces when we realised we couldn't put names to familiar faces. Gill read an extract from "Spring Nature Notes" by Ted Hughes and Liz read the poem "It takes a while" by RH Grenville. Ann then sang a song she had written especially for the day on pertinent themes, to 3 tunes we had to identify. Pam read a poem by Ada Limon

called "Instructions on not giving up", Ann R read "Warning" by Jenny Joseph, Elly read the poem "This crazy time of year" from "The Art of Gardening" by Mary Robinson and Judith read "A Smile" By Dennis W Turner. All these poems and Ann's song had themes we all found most relateable and affecting. We finished with a picture quiz provided by Kris identifying dogs and their origins, which engendered more laughter. We agreed we'd had a most enjoyable afternoon, meeting, chatting, sharing and laughing. Our next meeting will be a Zoom meeting at 2.30 on the 13th April. Pam will give us a talk called "Peaks and Troughs" about her sailing adventure to the Antarctic. If you would like to join us, email Kris on kris.longshaw@gmail.com so that she can invite you in. And don't forget, if you would like to become a member once we are meeting "in the flesh" you can do so at a one-year-only half price discount. Once we are back in the hall properly there will also be cake! So, there are good times ahead – stay Linked!

NOTES FROM ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S AND ST JAMES'S

All the usual signs heralding spring surround us daffodils and crocuses, lambs and even some sunny days.

Holy Week will see the start of some church services with the same restrictions as before and no congregational singing. Buttermere will hold a Good Friday Devotional service at 2pm. Loweswater will celebrate Holy Communion on Easter Day at the usual time of 10.30. Archdeacon Richard has kindly offered to take all the services during Holy Week. We may resume the normal pattern of services thereafter depending on government guidelines.

We lost a long standing member of our community Richard Nicholson in February. Richard, Carol and family lived in Gillerthwaite for many years only latterly moving to Cockermouth. Richard had been a keen sportsman in his early years, a very dedicated Rangers supporter and he and Carol competed their trail hounds. We send our love and condolences to Carol, Andrew, Rachel and their families.

Decoration of Loweswater church will take place on Saturday morning on Easter Eve.

Wishing everyone a joyous Easter.

Eleanor Ella



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holiday retreat or workplace.
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West Lakes Squirrel Initiative



51 Seaton Road
Seaton, Workington
Cumbria, CA14 1DZ
WLSI@hotmail.co.uk

February 2021

Please find attached the annual squirrel sightings and cull reports for Lorton Vale 2020 (including Lorton, Thackthwaite, Loweswater, Crummock and Buttermere). I must apologise for the non-submittal of Quarterly Reports during the year but personal issues and the difficulties associated with the Covid-19 pandemic had focussed my attention elsewhere.

Last year was an exceptionally good one for the red squirrels in west Cumbria with the majority of our resident reds raising at least one litter of kittens successfully during the spring and many of them having second litters later in the year. The spread of the youngsters as they grew to be independent and found their own territory became apparent in the autumn and winter when sightings of reds were reported in areas from which they had formerly been absent for a long time.

During 2020 the West Lakes Squirrel Initiative was, effectively, split into two separate entities with Copeland Red Squirrel Group (CRSG) being set up as a group in it's own right but with significant resource and data sharing between the two groups and a collaborative working arrangement. From this point in time, CRSG will be performing the Red Squirrel monitoring and Grey Control work for private landowners between Whitehaven and Bootle while WLSI continue to undertake the work for all Corporate Landowners and private landowners north of Whitehaven.

The total combined sightings and cull data for the two groups in 2020 are as follows (with 2019 totals in brackets for comparison):

Red Squirrel Sightings	= 12279	(5805)
Grey Squirrels Culled	= 1009	(829)

Specific to the Lorton Vale; we have observed a pretty stable population of red squirrels in most areas but with quite persistent incursion by greys which have been dealt with fairly quickly once they had been observed.

It has been especially pleasing to have observed red squirrels in every NT woodland in the Lorton Vale during the year and, as part of a single monitoring visit, to see 7 individual reds in Holme Wood simultaneously - after being almost wiped out by greys only a couple of years ago.

Lorton Vale 2020 Totals:

Red Sightings – 1480

Grey Culls – 133

In closing, we would like to express our gratitude to the residents and visitors who have supported our work, especially to the people who very kindly and generously responded to our appeal for funding assistance during the summer of 2020. Your support enabled us to continue with our work despite the serious restrictions placed on our usual fundraising activities by the Covid-19 lockdowns and closure of retail and hospitality venues.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Armstrong & Steve Tyson

West Lakes Squirrel Initiative

West Lakes Squirrel Initiative



51 Seaton Road
Seaton, Workington
Cumbria. CA14 1DZ
WLSI@hotmail.co.uk



Location of WLSI & CRSG Red Squirrel Sightings (above) and Grey Squirrel Culls (below) during 2020.



Penny's Piece

Most people don't like adverts. There are however, some uses for them. I find in a half hour program, the ad breaks are long enough to get the tea dishes washed up, washer or drier emptied and re-filled, nip out to shove something in the car for work while I've remembered, hunt for, write and post the birthday card that is going to be late etc. I use them to get all kinds of little tedious jobs done.

During holidays, I have found that early tea time (4-6pm) is when advertisers pull your heartstrings with sick kids and/or animals. Then up until about 8pm they tell you, you look rubbish and need shampoo, a better razor, toothbrush, toothpaste, face cream and denture adhesive. These go alongside contrasting ads for bunging you up or clearing you out and the ads for male and female specific medical issues. Is the idea to make everyone feel so rubbish they think the ads for gambling later on are a good idea as clearly, they have nothing to lose?

It is apparently coming up to the end of the business year and Cumbria County Council are doing their sudden road-fix extravaganza. This is all very well, but I am not sure the different crews are aware of what is happening close by. I was diverted on my way to work only to find the diversion was part of another set of works. Got given the 'silly cow' look from one of the workers and another came over to point out 'the roads.' I pointed out the diversion clash as more cars appeared behind me. We turned round and found yet another route while a 'heated' phone call ensued in the rear-view mirror. All we need

is for something to be done from Fangs to the other end of the lake. At one point there was a hole so wide in the road near Loweswater Hall a proper, original mini could have fitted in it and possibly been unable to get out over the cliff edge! When it is dry the extent of the damage can be seen. When it is wet. . . just an innocent puddle, honest. If you haven't been this way in a while and value your wheels/ axles, take the section between the phone-box and the next layby carefully. The council also had another go at the fountain (drainage) system on Fangs. They shut the road for the day and if anything, the amount of water running out of the drains has increased and spreads across the road even further. Nice.

It is 'comedy for charity' season at the moment and I have to say that I am enjoying seeing celebrities (some of them are at least C list) making fools of themselves. Bake-off being a great example. It is good to see there are people who cannot bake, paint, sew or do stand up when it is not their profession. I love the cake combination where it looks awful but tastes ok. Much better than looks great but tastes like cardboard. We all know the moderately rubbish and weird acts are why everyone watches Britain's Got Talent (though not this year- sorry if that is news to you.). Other people willing to show themselves as being moderate to rubbish really does make you feel better. Which is the pick-me-up you need after watching adverts between 6 and 8pm!

Stay safe all. Penny



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LORTON NOTES

We are back! I thought this a more joyful way of starting these Notes rather than "Here we go again," so resisted the temptation to start in the same way for the fourth consecutive time. Our services are restarting on Palm Sunday, 28 March and hopefully this will be a future rather than a past event when you become aware of it. Strict covid regulations will be in force and we shan't be singing "All glory, Lord and honour," but we shall be celebrating Holy Communion led by our archdeacon, Richard Pratt, in a said service. It is a matter for rejoicing that we are back in time for Easter and indeed for Holy Week, the week preceding Easter. On Maundy Thursday at 7.00pm. we shall be commemorating the first Holy Communion service, which was the Last Supper, followed by the Stripping of the Altar. This is my most poignant and favourite service of the year and I hope many of you will be sharing it.

The service on Easter Day will be at Loweswater, but we shall be decorating St. Cuthbert's on Easter Saturday at 10.00. It is appropriate that the church will be bright for the most important day in the Church's year and ready for our service on the Second Sunday of Easter.

The mood is surely more buoyant. As I write this, my favourite flowers, the snowdrops, are becoming more ragged, but daffodils are coming into bloom and spring is on its way. We are at the time when the "leaves on the trees are no bigger than mouses' ears", when the days are longer than the nights and April is starting. As Robert Browning wrote, "Oh to be in England now that April's there".

Roger Peck.



Loweswater Ladies

Dear Loweswater Ladies,

Welcome to Springtime. Cautiously testing the waters of freedom, of hopefully being able to get out and meet a few people, to being able to see family and friends. That is all to come.

I have found this lockdown more difficult this winter. Not having the sunshine and warm weather of last Spring has made it hard to remain motivated. It has become the norm to step aside from people, to avoid any contact. But on solitary walks, a smile or a wave makes such a difference. No physical contact but a shared empathy.

However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. The vaccination programme is such a positive. It is like being allowed to hope that life could get back to some form of normality. It is wonderful but scary too. Will we feel ok mixing in public, going to events, eating out?

The schools re-opening for all children is a start. The roll-out of dates when the barriers are lifted gives us a framework,

so that plans can be made. I should think it will be September before we could think to re-start Loweswater Ladies but that would be an aim, like starting a new term. I don't know how we are going to re-formulate our group. Maybe we might want to make some changes in the way we organize things. I should really appreciate any ideas that you have about this. Please let me know.

We have lost people during the past year from our group. Maud Vickers who joined us after finishing many years at Lorton W.I. Mary Ball, who was president of Loweswater W.I. for many years also died recently. Ann Hiley, who died in December, was such a positive force in the Valley and an invaluable number of Loweswater Ladies. Ann was our Press secretary and latterly Vice President. We will miss her.

So, as I started. Welcome to Spring and to meeting together soon. Happy Easter.

Regards from Alison Greer.



This cheery spring photo of a hanging basket was taken by Roger Hiley

Show us your
**EASTER
BONNETS
AND HATS**

on your daily permitted walk,
[practicing Social Distancing].



*Strut your stuff along the
highways and byways of Lorton.*

THIS EASTER BRING SOME COLOUR AND CHEER TO LORTON



**HAPPY
EASTER**

"According to that nice lady
at the Met. Office its going to
be dry, perhaps with sunshine,
on **Easter Sunday 4th April**.
Apparently best weather is
expected in the **afternoon**."

..seems a good time to strut my stuff,
hope to see a few familiar faces!

Some Legal Stuff: Covid guide to walking after 29th March

**From 29th March walks with a
larger group of friends of up to
six people are allowed, with
social distancing maintained.**

You can exercise/walk in a public
outdoor place, which includes village
greens or parks, public playgrounds
and public highways/ footpaths.

Easter Sunday in Lorton

If you are taking exercise on Easter Sunday (4th April) afternoon in Lorton, please brighten up your day and wear a fancy bonnet. All constructions are welcome: seasonal, festive, outrageous. Look out for the advert in this issue and on notice boards. There will be an opportunity to stroll down the Lady Walk at Lorton Park by kind permission of Kate and John Golby.

We had hoped to host a simple village trail and quiz but have decided to hold that over until later in the summer when restrictions are more relaxed.

Yew Tree Hall Committee

Song for Lorton Women's Institute

99th birthday zoom party March 2021

This song to be sung to tune 'Brother come and dance with me' from Hansel and Gretel.

1. Lorton WI is here

Party with spirit , maybe even beer
Ninety nine (in) one more year
Then the century, have no fear.

2. A hundred candles it will be
We'll keep going for the year you see
E-mails here, zooming there
Then face-to-face
Best clothes to wear.

3. But for now we meet today
Good to *see* you all we say
“Bring (your) own drink”, “Make (your) own cake”
Well...it's lockdown for heaven's sake!

4. Some have coffee, some have tea
Some have alcohol on their knee
Lemon or lime, neat or fizz
Here's a toast -that's the bizz!

5. Tanya's buzzing all the way
Linking Lives talked so they say
“Wake up, Ann!” “ Where've you been?”
Thankful to be muted... but still seen!

6. May 17th is the date
Got to be ready, can't be late
Book a trip, sail or fly
Wow! The limit will be the sky.

But...(last verse)
Lockdown has seen the best in us
Care and giving with no fuss
Found some joy, shared the pain
Here comes the sun, no!...more!.... rain!

Link:tinyurl.com/wi99song



My last offering in the *Link* was a bit heavy on facts and abstractions. Here is a selection of more specific memories, relating in particular to travel.

Inevitably much of it was by air – the heady days of sea journeys to New York and Tokyo didn't last long. But it wasn't always straightforward. A journey to the Far East, my patch at the time in the London office, in 1983 sticks in the memory. I wanted to travel via Moscow, to have a day or two talking to the Russian foreign ministry about China (this was still the Soviet period), but direct flights weren't acceptable at the time – a little problem with a Korean passenger aircraft, I think – and my colleague and I had to fly to Helsinki and take a train. No great problem, and much of that train journey not very scenic, but the talks went well, and we were able to fly out of Moscow by Aeroflot to our next stop at Ulan Bator in Mongolia. Omsk, Tomsk, Irkutsk, every meal *boeuf stroganoff*. The rather small embassy in Ulan Bator looks well after its very occasional visitors, and we were told some good stories – I enjoyed the account of the inauguration of the Royal and Imperial Golf Club with the Japanese Embassy, when their joint preparations involving the excavation of 18 holes in an unoccupied area of desert aroused deep suspicion locally. But we were looking forward to the next train journey across part of the Gobi Desert down to Peking, as we called it then. Lots of yaks. More *boeuf stroganoff*, and a samovar of Russian tea at the end of every carriage. Crossing the Chinese border involved a change of gauge, so that all the train's carriages had to be hoisted off their wheels and lowered onto different ones, with the passengers still inside tucking thankfully into delicious Chinese food.

Most international travel was more predictable, though flying from Damascus to Beirut in 1993 as part of a European mission (top people from each of three EU governments, that time Belgium/Britain/Denmark) was a bit different. Our special plane couldn't fly the obvious route due west, but had to go north, west, south, and east so as to avoid our looking down on the Syria/Lebanon border, and we were taken into Beirut from the airport through a visibly bombed part of the city with armed guards riding on the outside of the vehicle brandishing weapons. One land journey in Ireland in 1986 had something of the same flavour. My opposite number from the Irish Foreign Ministry – we were working together in Belfast to operate the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement – invited Julian and me to a small but select dinner at his home near Dublin. Driving down proved to be the best way, but that involved mobilising the police forces of the two jurisdictions to protect us *en route*. The handover from the RUC to the Garda at the border in South Armagh, at dusk (this was midwinter) and in an area of known terrorist activity, was tense – especially for the police; and once on the Irish Republic side, the Gardai pulled out all the stops, motor-cycle outriders and sirens, and at times we were driving on the pavement of built-up areas at something close to 70 mph. Unforgettable.

Other surface journeys were more relaxed. Not always comfortable – the official car in Israel was an armour-plated Jaguar, and Jaguar insists that the extra three inches of armour-plating should not increase the external dimensions of their vehicle. Sitting in the rear seats with Douglas Hurd as visiting Foreign Secretary on a drive up to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv was crippling for us both (Hurd is a large man). Bucketing along the Green Line which separates the Turkish and Greek zones of Cyprus in a UN Land-Rover wasn't ideal either, though undeniably interesting. The all-terrain vehicles of the Israeli Nature Reserves Authority were comparatively luxurious, and we recall with pleasure the moment in the Negev when our professional guide, retaining the wheel in one hand, craned most of his body out of the open door while driving to point out some hyena tracks in the sand. Our driver in Norway, a Geordie and a good friend, told us some good stories of his experience in rather a different climate, including one uncharacteristic mistake (not with us) when he took the official car part-way up rather a steep snowy incline in a white-out, before having to extricate himself and admit that he had missed the road and started up a ski-slope.



Helicopter journeys, though noisy, were fun too. With the Political Adviser in Hong Kong over the New Territories, looking down through the transparent floor; in Cyprus, over the Troodos mountains from Nicosia to attend meetings in the Episkopi Sovereign Base Area; from Longyearbyen in Arctic Svalbard to land on the deck of the Norwegian coastguard vessel which was taking us southwards back to North Cape. Even they could be a bit tense, though. Flying out to the Troll oil rig in the North Sea in a near-gale was interesting, and we were grateful for the support of the apparently diminutive but powerful Norwegian girl who assisted us from helicopter to arrival office. And the helicopter pilot taking us to see UK forces doing winter training in Norway on one occasion, needing to pause during a white-out until he could be certain of the location of high-level wires crossing a narrow valley, had to descend cautiously before landing and throw out a smoke-bomb to determine where exactly the ground was.

All this is a bit remote, writing in peaceful Lorton with no immediate prospect of flying anywhere. And the impression it gives is a bit restless. But one did occasionally sit down in one place and do some actual work – honestly.

Loweswater with Buttermere PCC
100 Challenge Club

The prizewinners for the draw held on 1st March 2021

1st prize of £25 No 76 Kathryn Mitchell
2nd prize of £10 No 11 Mary Baker
3rd prize of £5 No 87 Derwent Thompson

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THE MELBREAK COMMUNITIES **ZOOM MEETING**



You are all invited to our 2021 AGM which will be on Zoom so you don't even have to leave home.

Topics under discussion will include:

How to boost our declining Swift populations
Life during lockdown - our 'COVID chronicles'
Community Hydro Project
Dark Skies
The future of 'Coffee and Cakes'
Our Emergency Plan
How we communicate (our website, Nextdoor, Facebook?, What's App? etc)

Monday 10th May at 7.30pm

To request the Zoom Link please contact Carolyn Davis
carolynmarydavis@gmail.com



A Bicycle's Accident - Chris & Derek Poate

Dear Sir,

Our morning duties were uprightly performed but, on our way home after going over some puny bumps, we found that the bicycle had broken. The bicycle was neither overloaded nor on a terrific speed as it used to be, although we carried each other on the same bicycle.

So wrote Mr Kings Kawonga, Enumerator for the Evaluation Unit of the Karonga Chitipa Rural Development Project and one of Derek's team. This was a typical letter; delightfully formal, and innocently honest. A reflection of the country as a whole, Malawi in 1978.

We had arrived in August 1976, escaping drought and brown fields in Sussex to discover the heat and colour of one of Southern Africa's most scenic countries. Recruited by UK's Overseas Development Institute on a two-year fellowship, unlike most candidates who joined central government in Lilongwe we were headed far north, hours beyond the last of the tarred highways to the border town of Karonga, on Lake Malawi.

At that time, only 10 years since independence changed its name from Nyasaland, there were still many expatriates working for government and we joined a small team of five families supporting farming and local infrastructure in that remote region. Remote in every sense. Electricity from small generators, short stretches of tarred roads only in the centre of town, limited telephone connections during office hours mostly using old lines installed for morse code. And reliant on a weekly visit by the MV Ilala, a lake steamer, or twice weekly flights from the south. But Karonga was fun and felt like the frontier.

It had a lively history. Livingstone crossed the lake on his journeys and his accounts stimulated the arrival of missionaries and traders. A notorious East African slaver Mlozi, operated from a base just outside Karonga and skirmishes with his forces led to a slave war lasting eight years to 1895. The first naval engagement of the First World War in August 1914 was claimed to be an exchange of gunfire on Lake Nyasa between HMS Gwendolen a small gunboat and the Hermann von Wissman, which was disabled (actually while hauled on a slipway for repairs). And soon after, troops defended Karonga from a German column marching down from the Tanganyikan border. Commonwealth War Graves record the losses still.

Our life was calmer and simple. We had a modern house and large garden. The local market did a great trade in onions and tomatoes, but fruit was harder to find. The town butcher's trusty implement was his axe and it was best to shop early before the flies colonised the meat. Better than meat, we could occasionally buy Chambo, a tilapia fish from the Lake.

Derek's job involved surveying subsistence farmers across the two northern districts, so we travelled frequently, spending nights away at local rest houses and lodges. Days started early to beat the heat. Drive to a village, search for a farmer in our survey sample and then visit each field to record what was being grown, how it was managed and make arrangements to measure what was produced. Sometimes we checked what our teams of enumerators had recorded. A thankless task to match the figures that would leave me wondering if some enumerators imagined it all from their beds.

A treat was to climb into the cool Misuku Hills bordering Tanzania, where French Canadian White Fathers had a mission high in the rain forest tops and where we could buy sacks of coffee to roast at home. Mission-based support was quite extensive and a group of American Marist brothers started and sustained Chaminade Boys Secondary School not far from our housing. After nearly a year waiting for a work permit Christine taught English following very traditional structured schemes. The highlight of the school year was to accompany these boys south by bus to Lilongwe to take part in the national Secondary School Drama Competition. A very traditional rendering of 'A midsummer night's dream'.

President Banda's former life included practising as a doctor in Scotland. He promoted conservative, traditional values including bans on women's short skirts, long hair by men and flares. At the border, immigration staff would check that the width of the trouser leg at the ankle did not exceed six-fifths of the width at the knee!

Social life was limited so it was hardly surprising that three of the families all fell pregnant in the same year. We were third in turn and having watched two other seemingly easy births decided to stay in Karonga only to experience a long drawn out labour ending with a last minute transfer from the mission clinic to the government hospital for a caesarean section. Touch and go at the time but the bouncing boy is now 42.

Chris and the bouncing boy are in the middle in the picture below



Lorton &
Derwent Fells Local History Society

Brackenthwaite Buttermere Embleton Loweswater Mockerkin Pardshaw Wythop
www.derwentfells.com

The Border Reivers: romance or reality?

by Maks Loth-Hill

by Zoom on Thursday 15 April 2021, at 7.30pm

Maks has worked at Carlisle Castle, Lanercost Priory, and Tullie House, which fuelled his interest in local history. He developed a keen interest in the Dacre family, whose story led him to study the Border Reivers. He is currently studying full-time for a PhD at Durham University.

Society Members are invited to 'attend' the above Talk from the comfort of their own homes, delivered using 'Zoom'.

There is no need to register for this talk, because a link will be emailed to all members for whom we have an email address, a day or two before the talk. New members are welcome, see www.derwentfells.com

The talk Border reivers were raiders along the Anglo-Scottish border from the late 13th century to the beginning of the 17th century. Their ranks consisted of both Scottish and English people, and they raided the entire Border country without regard to their victims' nationality. Their heyday was in the last hundred years of their existence, during the time of the House of Stuart in the Kingdom of Scotland and the House of Tudor in the Kingdom of England.

Long after they were gone, the reivers were romanticised by writers such as Sir Walter Scott, who wrote down histories which had been passed on in folk tradition or ballad. Consequently there is a mix of fact and fiction in what is written and understood about the reivers, which Maks will address.



the Caldbeck parish armour

Delhi to Kathmandu by bicycle with a sketchpad

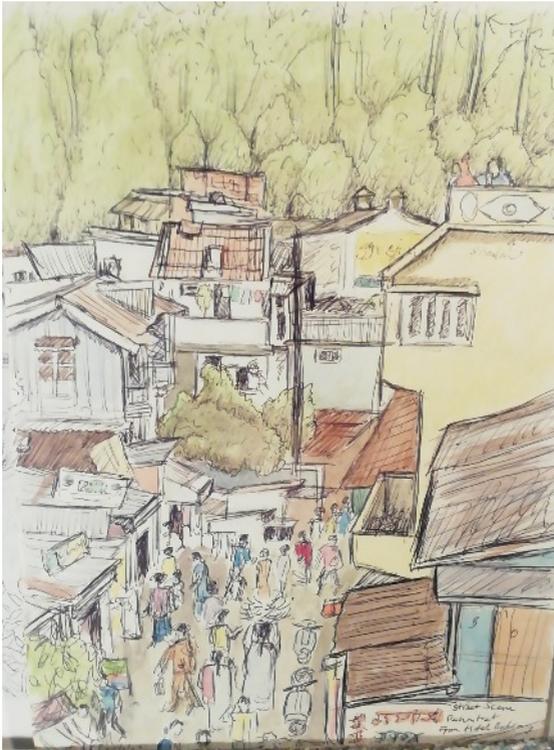
From Nainital we headed to Ranikhet; we dropped down a sweeping road with many twists and turns through beautiful scented pine forest in the cool of the morning with clear blue sky and views of the snowy Himalaya to the north.

When we reached the bottom of a valley we saw the road to Ranikhet climbed very steeply up through an exposed area with no shade from the sun, which was now very hot!

It was a gruelling four hour climb to Ranikhet and we were quite done in when we arrived. It was worth all the hard graft as Ranikhet sat on a ridge surrounded by beautiful cool forest; whilst walking in the forest we encountered a Mongoose. Ranikhet was a bustling, interesting place, home to an Indian Army garrison.

Paul Cowling, Littlethwaite

Ranikhet study



ECO CHURCH/ECO COMMUNITY UPDATE

DATE CHANGE FOR CLIMATE SUNDAY SERVICE

Although World Environment Day is on the 5th June, our Climate Sunday Service will of course be held on Sunday **June 6th**.

In addition to encouraging as many churches as possible to hold a Climate Sunday Service during 2021 in the lead up to the COP26 Conference in November the Climate Sunday organisation is highlighting another initiative. This initiative is headlined as

THE 'TIME IS NOW' DECLARATION

Speak up - Use your voice to tell politicians that you want a cleaner, greener, fairer future at the heart of plans to rebuild a strong economy. To achieve this they ask that we read and sign the The Climate Coalition's 'The Time Is Now' declaration both as a church (St Cuthbert's has already signed) and an individual. The wording of the declaration has a simple message, as follows:

"Dear Prime Minister,

The time is now to lead the UK towards a healthier, greener, fairer future. Ahead of hosting the United Nations climate summit in Glasgow in 2021, we can build back better together if we:

Unleash a clean energy revolution that boosts jobs across the UK, making our transport, power and housing fit for the future

Protect, restore and expand our green and wild spaces; allowing nature to thrive, taking carbon from the air and boosting the nation's health

Leave no one behind by increasing support to those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change at home and abroad

The UK must lead the world by ensuring our recovery gets us on track to net-zero emissions and limits the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees C. Our best chance of building a resilient economy goes hand in hand with tackling climate change.

We are ready to play our part, and we call on you to join us."

And you can find out more here - <https://www.climatesunday.org/speak-up>



DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CHURCHYARD

Plans for the nettle area and the bog garden have progressed over the last few weeks. The tubs that will contain and control the nettles have been put in place (look for the blue tubs) and the site for the bog garden has been dug. The plants for the bog garden have been ordered and we would very much welcome donations to contribute to the cost of these. We are planting 4 of each of the following and the cost of each plant is £3.00:

Devils-bit Scabious, Lady's smock, Purple loosestrife, Ragged robin, Teasel & water avens

Please let Rosemary know if you would like to make a donation - 07885 360353 or riley@rileysolutions.co.uk



Rosemary and Tanya were recently interviewed about Eco Church/Eco Community by the Publicity Office for the Diocese of Carlisle and the article has just been published in the electronic magazine *The Way* - which can be found here

https://cofecarlisle.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/03/The_Way_Spring_2021-min.pdf

Walkers Way No 206

For weeks now we have been blessed with the nodding heads of snowdrops, heralding the approaching end of a long winter, with warmer, brighter days to come. Not that winter is all over just yet, still plenty of time for some rough weather, but at least the first signs are there, which surely serve to gladden every human heart. Place on one side the many woes with which we seem to be surrounded and welcome now with open arms the joys which Nature's bounty brings. The sunny banks with primroses bedecked, the Ladies of the Spring indeed, the Prime Rose of days gone by, known in Donegal and Shetland as the May flower, the harbinger of spring. There will soon be wood sorrel and wood anemone beneath our feet in woodland glades, wood sorrel which has so captured the imagination and lifted spirits over the centuries that it has some 50 different, ancient, names around the country. Small wonder that in Somerset, Dorset and Wales one of its local names is "Alleluia" – God be praised, spring at last!

There are, of course, many other signs too. One happy occurrence witnessed recently was the rising of the skylark, one of nature's glorious happenings. That excited fluttering ascendance into the bright blue yonder, accompanied by the sweetest song, and eventually followed by the rapid descent and disappearance among the tufted grass beneath. And then, an event which never fails to stir the heart, the sight and sound of two skeins of geese in the distance, a mere line of little more than specks – but their musical call wafting landwards. But, most importantly, they now fly North, a sure sign of the season's favourable turn. Let's hope we have a good summer to look forward to and that winter is not as described by Byron – "ending in July and recommencing in August". Let's hope rather as Swinburne put it "the hounds of spring are on winter's traces".

Frogspawn first appeared in our pond in the third week of February, the gelatinous envelopes rapidly swelling and the usual process of the

segmentation of the yolks proceeded apace. Another sure sign that spring is on the way is that the peregrines returned once more to their nest site on the cliffs near Parton. At the same time or thereabouts, badger cubs will have been born, but will not appear from their setts for a couple of months, to pursue the race to develop and put on as much weight as possible before the great challenge of their first winter. The view across the rocks to the sea at Parton is one to which we are well accustomed, but there was an element of surprise recently, when it appeared that, quite suddenly, one particular rock moved! In fact, it was a common seal, which had hauled itself up among the boulders, very similar in size, shape and colour and unnoticed until it moved. In fact, it had decided to return to the water and painstakingly lumbered its way across the intervening ten yards or so, only to disappear among the waves.

Sadly however, the plethora of bad news continues. The small remaining population of Mountain Gorillas has fallen by 78% in a single generation. As if that were not bad enough, some 200 rangers working alongside the Gorilla Organisation which strives to protect the species, have been killed by poachers, six just recently. But to end on a more cheerful note, when walking on the "Wagontrack" recently the track that runs along the coast from Parton to Whitehaven, some chap actually strode past me, (Cheek!) and was soon way ahead, which suggested to me for some totally unknown reason(!) that I am perhaps walking a little slower than I once did. This in turn reminded me that years ago, when leading the Mockerkin Mob, I was often harangued – in the nicest possible way – for walking too fast. But then, my name is Gane. The Anglo-Saxon word gane or gain meant fast or direct. In addition, my Mother's maiden name was Walker – so "fast walker" was really only to be expected! Alan Gane.



THE WI ISN'T ALL ABOUT MAKING JAM

Why not join today

We are a friendly group, enjoying monthly meetings, who would welcome new members.

For one year only, a half price subscription to a monthly feast of speakers, parties, quizzes, friendship and the chance to be part of a national lobbying group for social change -

Membership from April 2021 to March 2022 reduced from £44.00 to **£22.40**

what's not to like?

**COME ALONG AND
SEE WHAT WE'RE
ALL ABOUT!**

*...although we do
make darn good
jam!*



or email Carolyn Davis
for further details.

carolynmarydavis@gmail.com

Kirkstile Inn

We are pleased to announce that we will be re-opening from the 12th April, for outside garden table service. We will be offering a reduce food menu, which will include our famous steak pie! Tables are available on a first come first serve basis, based on the rule of six guidelines. Due to being weather dependant we will not be reserving tables.

Our click and collect beer service will also be available from the 12th April.



Kirkstile Inn

We are looking for seasonal waiting on staff to cover our very busy summer months.

If you are interested please send your C.V. to admin@kirkstile.com

DIARY DATES

APRIL

- 4 Sun Easter Bonnet show case
13 Tue W.I zoom meeting 2.30p.m
15 Thur The Border Reivers - Romance and Reality. LDFLHS online lecture, 7.30 pm
27 Tue Swift Talk via Zoom - see below

MAY

- 10 Mon The Melbreak Communities AGM 7.30pm via Zoom. Everyone is welcome.
Email carolymarydavis@gmail.com for a link

OUR DISAPPEARING SWIFTS: WHAT CAN WE DO?

You are invited to hear Tanya and Edmund Hoare, of Sedbergh Community Swifts, talk about these iconic and much-loved acrobats of the summer sky, with clips from the nest sites of a colony of swifts. You will find out more about their remarkable migration, the threats they face, why they are in such serious decline and what we can do about it here in our own communities.

This Community Zoom event, organised by The Melbreak Communities, will take place at 7.30pm on Tuesday 27th April. Email carolynmarydavis@gmail.com for a Link to join.



<https://melbreakcommunities.wordpress.com/>



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CHURCH SERVICES

1st April	Maundy Thursday Service, 7p.m	St Cuthbert's Lorton
2nd April	Good Friday Service, 2p.m	St James's Buttermere
4th April	Easter Day Service, 10.30a.m	St Bartholomew's, Lowswater
11th April	Holy Communion, 10.30a.m	St Cuthbert's Lorton
18th April	Holy Communion, 10.30a.m	St Bartholomew's, Lowswater
25th April	Holy Communion, 10.30a.m	St Cuthbert's Lorton

Please note that services will be conducted with the same restrictions as before, so face masks must be worn, social distancing must be observed and you must leave church straight after the service has ended with no socialising until you are outside. There will be no congregational singing.

For those of you who not receive the Grasmoor Mission Community Information Sheet by email - it can now be found here -
<https://grasmoormissioncommunity.org.uk/staying-connected>

Deadline for May is Fri 23rd April, all articles, photos, funny stories to lortonvalelink@gmail.com by this date.