

FEBRUARY 2025



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

**£7.00 PER ANNUM (LOCAL)
£15.00 PER ANNUM (POSTED)**

Letter from the Editor

Dear Link Readers

By the time you read this it will be approaching Candlemas and my Christmas decorations will be in the process of being put away - along with the Crib in St Cuthbert's. I've thoroughly enjoyed my decorations this year, including a few new ones as well as my old favourites. I do hope some of you have said hello to the Christmas Dachshund as you've driven past.

I'm sure you will all be pleased to see that the Lorton Film Club season starts again in February and that the Winter season of Gardening Club talks continues. The next talk is about dahlias and after a spectacular failure with these plants a few years back I should probably attend but am still feeling somewhat disheartened. Maybe I'll just wait for the start of the Sweet Pea season.

We have a few Melbreak Community events happening over the next couple of months including the AGM, an evening for Curlew volunteers and a couple of craft afternoons. Included in this Link there is an interesting update about the Swifts project.

For fans of cake-based refreshments there is the Young Farmers Coffee morning to look forward to as well as Mother's Day afternoon teas at LVH in March. You will see there is also an update about the pricing policy for the

Coffee and Cake events - still great value though.

The centre-spread this month has been taken by the Yew Tree Hall to update us about plans for the refurbishment of the building and the creation of 'Friends of Yew Tree Hall' - do join - you know it makes sense!

Very aptly, given the weather we have been having, the 77 Club is hosting a talk given by Derek Poate who will give an illustrated presentation about an expedition cruise he and Chris undertook last year to the Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia.

Unusually I found myself with a blank page this month so thanks to Roger Hiley for providing a warming soup recipe at very short notice. Perhaps we will use it for the upcoming Lent Lunch.

Included with this Link you will find the application form for your 100 Club Numbers and keep your eyes peeled next month for details about Link subscriptions - hopefully we will have a new Treasurer by then!

Finally I would like to draw your attention to the Lorton Notes, and from there to the inclusion of the Eulogy given at Mark Elliott's recent funeral.

Happy New Year to you all

Rosemary

The front cover image, of Haystacks and The Buttermere Pines, was taken by Roger Hiley



At the beginning of the year, Bishop Rob, (Bishop of Penrith and Acting Bishop of Carlisle) wrote to all the churches in the Diocese, asking people to join together in prayer. In his letter, Bishop Rob writes about how prayer is the lifeblood of the church and his belief that “God is calling us to pray more and to build a wave of prayer across the diocese each week”.

What does building a wave of prayer look like, and how can we join in? Bishop Rob has asked each of us to set an alarm to pray for just 5 minutes at 12 noon every Monday (or at another regular time each week, if this isn't possible). And he's asking us to pray just two things: that *God would give us a heart to pray* and that *God would strengthen us for service*. For many of us, perhaps serving and “doing” comes more naturally than prayer, and we'll relate to the need to simply begin by asking for a heart (or desire) to pray! There's something deeply encouraging in knowing that we are praying the same prayer at the same time as others, and in Bishop Rob's words, “I do not know what this will result in, but I do know that all of us can be part of this, that it will bring us closer to God and that we will be surprised by the things that happen as a result.”

In his letter, Bishop Rob also gave an update on the process for the appointment of a new Bishop of Carlisle. With interviews taking place on March 13th & 14th, he encourages us to pray regularly in our churches over the coming weeks. Whether at home or in church, please do be praying for this very important appointment. You may like to use the Diocesan prayer below. Every blessing,
Andrea Ward

A Prayer for our new Bishop

Everlasting God, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus
and called us
to be your people in this place;

Send us your Holy Spirit, and fill us with vision, energy, and faithfulness in prayer, that we may be true to our calling to follow daily, care deeply, speak boldly and tread gently.

Guide us as we seek to discern who you are calling to be our new Bishop, that they may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people, ready to serve us with joy, build us up in faith and be a herald of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

For anyone wanting to receive home communion or in need of pastoral support, please contact:

Revd. Barbara Robinson, 01900 85234 or 07961902075. Please leave a message and I will get back to you asap. If your need is urgent please contact Revd. Jane Charman, Mission Community Leader on 01900 828028

LORTON NOTES

I do hope you all enjoyed Christmas and New Year and are entering into 2025 feeling refreshed. Thank you to all who either helped at or attended our Christmas Fair - the Fair itself raised £1400 each for St Cuthbert's and Friends of Lorton School and St Cuthbert's raised additional funds through sales of merchandise and calendars. Well done everyone.

We have plans for more fund-raising events during 2025 - so here are some dates for your diary:

- 28/6/25 - Mad Hatters Tea Party
- 05/09/25 - Supper on the Hoof
- 12/10/25 - Harvest **Lunch**
- 08/11/25 - Pre-Christmas Fair Coffee morning
- 06/12/25 - Christmas Fair

We will also be holding a Lent Lunch in the lead up to Easter - further details will be published in the March Link.

It is now time to renew our Electoral Roll. Charles Lambrick intends to bring forms to our next service on 9th February.

It was with sadness that we learnt of the death of Mark Elliott, a long-standing member of PCC, in January. His uplifting funeral took place on 24th January attended by numerous members of his family along with a large proportion of the population of Lorton. For those who were unable to attend (or would like to read it again) - the moving Eulogy given by his son, Justin, is reproduced on pages 14 and 15. There were a number of poems recited as well - here is one of them:

The End: Mark Strand

(read by Giles Elliott)

Not every man knows what he shall sing at the end,
Watching the pier as the ship sails away, or what it will seem like
When he's held by the sea's roar, motionless, there at the end,
Or what he shall hope for once it is clear that he'll never go back.
When the time has passed to prune the rose or caress the cat,
When the sunset torching the lawn and the full moon icing it down
No longer appear, not every man knows what he'll discover instead.
When the weight of the past leans against nothing, and the sky
Is no more than remembered light, and the stories of cirrus
And cumulus come to a close, and all the birds are suspended in flight,
Not every man knows what is waiting for him, or what he shall sing
When the ship he is on sails into darkness, there at the end.

Rosemary

From the Register:

Funeral:

24th January 2025
Mark Elliott



LORTON FILM CLUB
at The Yew Tree Hall

Thursday 27th February

£6

Bar opens 7pm - Film starts 7.30pm

La Chimera

Italian with subtitles, great reviews.
Part romance, part comedy, part thriller: *La Chimera*
frequently shifts genres to exciting effect.



Cine North in Lorton

Back after a break, our next film is ***La Chimera***, showing on Thursday 27th February at 7.30pm in Yew Tree Hall. Doors open at 7pm, entrance is £6 on the door, and there will be a bar. Come early and have a drink or a coffee before the film starts. For further information call Ian on 07947-748816.

La Chimera (in Italian, with subtitles) is directed by Alice Rohrwacher and stars Josh O'Connor, Isabella Rossellini and Carol Duarte. Given 5-star reviews by the Guardian, the Observer and the Independent, it tells the story of Arthur, a threadbare Englishman, newly released from prison, who develops a superpower for divining the presence of buried Etruscan artefacts. With a motley crew of sidekicks, he excavates these treasures and sells them on the black market to a local crook, Spartaco, who creates the provenance they need to be sold to international buyers.

Arthur (O'Connor) is grieving the loss of his love Beniamina, the daughter of Flora (Rossellini), but may develop a new relationship with Italia (Duarte), a sort of maid of Flora. The Guardian's Peter Bradshaw concludes: "La Chimera is a film that utterly occupies its own fictional space; it expresses its eccentric romance in its own fluent movie dialect. I was utterly captivated by this sad, lovelorn adventure." Come along and be captivated too.

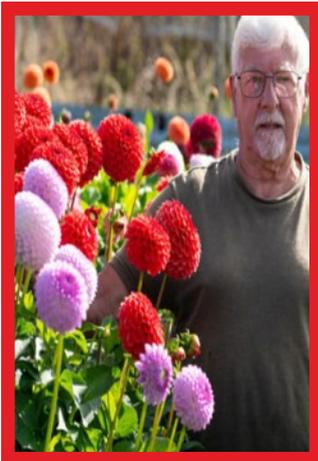


Lorton Vale Gardening Club



A Rainbow of Dahlias

a talk by renowned Dahlia expert JACK GOTT



For more than 50 years Jack Gott, a former electrician has been growing dahlias, and is now a renowned expert with fellow enthusiasts travelling from around the world to see his glorious Milnthorpe garden and nursery.

Jack, has appeared on Gardener's World and as a National Dahlia Society judge

**Yew Tree Hall at 1.30pm
Wednesday 12th February**

Please park with consideration



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Penny's Piece

Here is a question for you; without going outside to look, how many chimney pots are on your house? For those of you with newer houses this might be relatively easy. For those in houses 100 years old or older, it becomes trickier quite quickly. Especially if the fireplaces in most rooms have been removed. This all came about during a quiz over the festive period, written by someone who lives elsewhere. I was pleased I got both dates on the barn correct- the question setter had only spotted the more recent one. The heated debate came when we were asked how many taps there are as we needed to know if it included the barn and sheds, the ones in the water troughs and stop cocks. Everyone got different answers and without collectively marching around and counting, we decided to scrap that one. I can now tell you that there are 58 panes of glass in the windows on the roadside of the cottage across the road. It does start making you think of the oddest things and how when you live somewhere you stop noticing things- they become part of the furniture until they disappear.

Several years ago, I went to do an escape room at the place in Workington and managed to escape. So, we booked to go when family were visiting. The game we selected started with several trials we did as individuals and were like being on the Crystal Maze but with a host from Durham not Richard O'Brian. These games won us clues for the main game. In the diamond mine we had to solve other puzzles to find diamonds. Some were simply hidden in or under things. Others were locked in boxes with combination locks on them. We had to find the numbers in lots of different ways. They are very clever, and it did make me wonder how long it takes to reset it all as we opened boxes within boxes which contained keys or clues to other boxes. Very tricky. The last few times my nephew has been to stay I have written a treasure hunt for him. Once I have around 12 clues, I can put them out in any order to make a different route but I have to be careful to keep track of things. My nephew was aided to make a hunt for me but it did not work because some of the clues were put under the thing being described and not leading me to it. I found some clues later on when I was putting my trail out again.

The icy weather at the start of the year certainly made getting to work interesting. It was as though we were in a different world to Whitehaven. They had snow but it didn't stick around. That did not mean that the car park was safe to park on. Sloped skating rink was closer to the mark. Most people did not seem to understand (or possibly believe) my journey. So, I showed them the video from my dashcam. That shut them up. Just wished I'd hit save on the spectacle I witnessed on my way home one night. I got to the top of Fangs and turned down the hill. I was aware of lights coming up so I pulled in and decided to wait. Then I realised the lights were rear lights so I set off again. I didn't get far until I had to creep to a slippery stop. In front of me was a large truck- imagine the army Bedford trucks. This truck and the two blokes in it were winching someone up the top part of the hill! Yes, you have read that right. Winching someone up the hill. Not sure why they hadn't taken them back to the flat bit. There was a car left on the flat bit for the best part of a week. That seemed the sensible choice. Wonder how much it cost the car driver for that? I gratefully received a bunch of flowers for helping someone restart their camper van and lending them my jump leads. So, I started my year lending a hand. We've just been and done a litter pick along the lake and as ever found underpants? What I couldn't decipher was where the 4 empty wine bottles went that I gathered together to collect on the way back? Vanished. I did check no one had lobbed them back down the banking. It seems there was another good Samaritan out there. Penny.



ULLOCK VILLAGE HALL

Saturday 15th February at 7 30pm
Ceilidh and hot homemade supper
Tickets £12 50

From Helen Finn 07786 016670 or Margaret Trotter 07769 735362
The meal is served at 7 30pm. Please bring your own beer, wine etc

Saturday 1st March
7 30pm at Ullock Village Hall
An Arts out West show
Opera for the People

Tickets £12 includes tea and biscuits but you are welcome to bring your own drinks
from Margaret Trotter 01946 861458 Helen Finn 07786 016670

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Choose the operacrossover songs from her Song Menu. It's like nothing you've seen before.

Unmissable ★★★★★ www.iamnicolamills.com



Loweswater & Lorton Carols 2024 – in aid of NSPCC –



We had very sociable and very successful evenings in both Lorton, organised by Ann Roberts, and by myself in Loweswater. As a result of the collections made, we have been able to donate £504.03p to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, for use in child and family support projects here in the UK.

A big thank you to all those who took part, who donated to the cause and to all who offered hospitality on that cool winter's evening before Christmas.

The Loweswatercam Calendar 2025



After another successful year, I was able to donate £600 to the chosen charities of Mountain Rescue and Air Ambulance.

Full details on my web page www.loweswatercam.co.uk

Many thanks to all who made this possible, by buying the calendars on-line or via Lee and Arwen in the shop in Lorton.

Roger Hiley



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SAVE OUR CURLEWS

Volunteers Needed

You can make a difference



Whether you can give 5 mins or 5 hours!
Outdoors or from home! You can help
Curlews thrive in the Cocker Valley.



Find out how...

YEW TREE HALL
Monday 24th February
at 7-9pm

(Free event and finger buffet)

To help us plan the evening,
please let us know if you're likely
to attend. And if you can't come
along but want to find out more,
contact Karen for further details.

karenbatrick@live.co.uk

An initiative of the Melbreak Communities



Creamy broccoli, ginger and coriander soup **293 cals** per portion

Ingredients

Serves 4, takes 25 min

1 small onion, peeled and roughly chopped

40g fresh root ginger, roughly chopped (no need to peel)

1½ tbsp olive oil

1 head of broccoli, roughly chopped

1 x 400ml tin coconut milk

1 vegetable stock cube

15g fresh coriander

40g flaked almonds, toasted, to garnish

Method

1 Place the onion, ginger

and olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat and sauté for 3-4 min, until softened.

2 Add the broccoli, coconut milk, stock cube and 800ml water (simply refill the empty coconut milk tin twice). Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 10 min.

3 Remove from the heat, add the coriander and blitz with a stick blender until completely smooth. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve, topped with flaked almonds.

Brain of the Benefice 2024, answers! 37 things you'd find in or on a car...

Tanner and Demelza set off on their **charity response** bike ride; the grand tour! Part of the 'Reduce **Carbon network** of country wide initiatives, the village gave them a big **hand, leaping** and cheering, with the man of the cloth 'the **Rev**' **entertaining** the crowd with his comical impression of 'So long, farewell'. Even the local gymnastics team put on a high-wire, **aerial** acrobatics display.

Tan and Dem's bikes had taken them far & wide and were in **fair condition ingrained** with dirt though. In Greater Manchester, in **Bolton**, they wandered into their bank. Should they change their account? No, it wouldn't **alter. Nat or** National, West or Westminster? What to tell people? Buying a jar of spread at a service station, **Nutella**, to **fuel** them for the journey **ahead, lights** were coming on as dusk approached. Tomorrow, towards the **sea** then a ferry.

Time for reflection on the crossing to St. Malo, Tan was top-class **at navel-gazing**. They cycled up to Cancale. They were starving but it was **all oysters** and pomme frites. They wanted proper food like **grilled** chops, **boiled** potatoes and all the **trimmings!** A café advertising 'tortière et pommes aligot', a pie and mash **eaterly!** Crêpes for dessert, made from the finest **batter, yolks** a plenty!

In Switzerland near Geneva, they cycled past the LHC with lots of clocks and **gauges**. Tan stopped for a look. A big guard with black **boots** and a gun approached. Tan didn't want to **die!** **Selecting** a quick gear, he pedalled off. 'That was the particle **accelerator**' said Dem. 'I could do with some of that' panted Tan. He was **exhausted** but Dem was fine. His eyes were heavy in his **head, rest** was what he needed. The weather turned, they struggled in the head **wind. Screening** their view of the lake was a car dealership, **Audi also** a huge flag billow**ing**, before they headed to Germany.

They met another couple, Kiwi, **personable** and chatty; **both ornithologists**. Going for a sandwich at the Kaffe European, Tan embarrassed with his **bad German**. Sitting on a **sofa ciabatta** sandwiches arrived. They discussed the pros and **cons ole!** Said the Spanish waiter, with the Italian bread, in the German café. Tan picked up their bags, 'is this one yours Dem?' Yes, it **was hers**. They took lots of photos and put them in a shared **album per**haps they could meet again?

Back in Newcastle, there was a hill to climb. **'Rake!**' Shouted Tan. Too late, Dem ran over it and got a puncture. 'Howay **pet!**' **Rolling** around laughing was a Geordie. 'How d'ya not see tha' like?!' He helped mend the bike and they headed home. It had been a fantastic adventure in the **main beaming** with pride as the whole village welcomed them back. Happy Christmas!

Out of the correct entries received, **Keith McNeil** was drawn out as the winner! **Jane Cruickshank** was second and **Lee in the shop** was third. The winner of the wooden spoon was **Laura Meier & Barn**. Congratulations to Keith, a cup on its way and many thanks to everyone who took part this year! *Adam Baker*



Yew Tree Hall Table Tennis Club

Dates for 2025



Sessions normally held on Wednesday evenings 7-9pm.
However five sessions will be held on a Thursday evening

January

02 Jan Th
09 Jan Th
15 Jan Wd
22 Jan Wd
29 Jan Wd

February

05 Feb Wd
12 Feb Wd
19 Feb Wd
26 Feb Wd

March

06 Mar Th
12 Mar Wd
19 Mar Wd
26 Mar Wd

April

02 Apr Wd
09 Apr Wd
16 Apr Wd
Easter Party
23 Apr Wd
30 Apr Wd

May

08 May Thu
14 May Wd
21 May Wd
28 May Wd

June

04 Jun Wd
11 Jun Wd
18 Jun Wd
25 Jun Wd

July

03 Jul Thu
09 Jul Wd
16 Jul Wd
23 Jul Wd
30 Jul Wd
Summer Party

August

07 Aug Wd
14 Aug Wd
21 Aug Wd
28 Aug Wd

September

04 Sep Thu
10 Sep Wd
17 Sep Wd
24 Sep Wd

October

01 Oct Wd
08 Oct Wd
15 Oct Wd
22 Oct Wd
29 Oct Wd
Halloween party

November

06 Nov Thu
12 Nov Wd
19 Nov Wd
26 Nov Wd

December

03 Dec Wd
10 Dec Wd
17 Dec Wd
Christmas Party
24 Dec Wd

Reflections on Mark Elliott

Picture, if you will, the study in my parents' home. It's a comfortable warm room, windows on both sides with beautiful fell views. There's a large desk. A few watercolours. It was one of my father Mark's comfortable places.

So when I was asked to share my reflections on him, that's where I went. What would I see? What reactions would it bring out?

There are lots of interesting books – this was a well-read man. There's a well-organised filing cabinet – also very Mark. A cupboard full of maps – he did love a map. In recent years, we had some long conversations over a map of Northern Scotland when I talked about my walking trips there, and he remembered hitchhiking around places like Torridon and Assynt sixty five years earlier, while doing National Service learning Russian in Fife. Not much to do in Fife, is there, so he learned Russian. His vocabulary lists had the words for 'sub-machine gun' and for the different types of wheel nut on tanks. The maps bring back memories.

There's also a collection of clipped out sudokus – this is a man who both loved a sudoku, and could also tell you where that word comes from: *suuji wa dokushin ni kagiru*. Apparently – I had to Google that, but he knew it. Or would have bluffed that he knew it – and given a quiet smile when you noticed he was bluffing.

And on the table in the study there's a photo album called Man at Work. One of the earliest photos is from 1969: there's Emperor Hirohito meeting the Queen in London, and a ridiculously young-looking Mark interpreting, using his preternatural ability with languages. There's a photo from Tokyo in 1979 of Mark in a borrowed kilt, doing Scottish dancing with a beautiful woman, who on closer inspection proves not to be Julian. There's one from 1986, a bunch of anonymous people outside an anonymous concrete office block in Belfast, where he was quietly and steadily working to build bridges in a rather difficult environment. I am especially proud of his role in Northern Ireland. Then lots of photos from Israel with various luminaries, though no photos from the bunker where he spent some of the Gulf War. And finally images from Norway, where he was a positive action man, cutting down Christmas trees, travelling in helicopters and military transport planes with NATO generals, and Scottish dancing with a beautiful woman again – and this time it **was** Julian.

I like flicking through that album. It pleases me. It captures Mark's instinctive internationalism which he passed on, effortlessly, to me and Giles. It shows a successful career in service of his country. There's also a certain glamour to it. But as a picture of the man, it's a trap, tempting but dangerous. The album focuses on big events, but misses quiet conversations. It's full of medals (which Mark had – we found them at the back of a

cupboard the other day), but it misses the quiet quip, the witty aside. His preferred way of dealing with the world was to listen, to think, then to say a few wise words. He was an only child, of two only children: of course he preferred observing a group to broadcasting at it. He was not a party animal – indeed, he was famously uneasy at large family gatherings – but he loved thoughtful interaction. And it pleases me that the many wonderful cards we have received from you since he died talk of his thoughtfulness, of generosity, of support in difficult times, of interesting conversations, of kindness. You knew the best of him.

The study also has a handwritten notebook, in that fine italic script, a journal recording happy times in Lorton. The entries typically read "Julian busy varnishing the shelves, while I re-read War and Peace" or "Julian helped to catch an escaped sheep, while I catalogued my photos". I exaggerate, but you get the flavour: Mark had a rich inner life, but he was not the handyman of the family. But in that book, you see the balance between Mark and Julian. And let there be no mistake, this was a wonderful and deep-rooted marriage. Julian, in her first few weeks at Oxford, went to the French Social Club. She met Mark. That was that. They formed the closest of couples, for over 60 years.

As well as loving Julian, Mark loved Lorton and the Lakes, and he captured some beautiful images of this area. A fine new photo was often the first thing he would show me when I visited. They are carefully composed, bracken and heather, rock and sky. And often they feature reflections: the fell and the sky mirrored in the lake, slightly shoogled by ripples which only make the image more beautiful. The Japanese call it *wabi sabi*. I like to imagine that the water captures those reflections, preserves them even after the clouds come in. And I like to think of Mark having left a reflection in all of us, be it after the big work events, or more likely after the quiet conversations. I give you my father, Mark.



YEW TREE HALL IMPROVEMENT – PROJECT UPDATE

The initial reaction of the local community to the working sketches that were shared with everyone at the Coffee Morning 14 December, as well as a few other events, has been overwhelmingly positive. We have received a great response to the ideas presented, both written and verbal, which is extremely encouraging.

While we are still welcoming feedback at this early stage, the overwhelming view is that people want to see comprehensive improvements made to the building. Top of everyone's list is making the building accessible for all members of the community incorporating many of the sketch ideas, plus greatly improving both the acoustics of the building and existing heating system. Achieving these, and other aspirations, will be looked at in greater detail in the feasibility and design stage.

The Development Group is very excited to report that due to a number of donations from members of the community, as well as funding support both from the Yew Tree Hall Management Committee and Lorton Parish Council, we are now able to start the next stage!

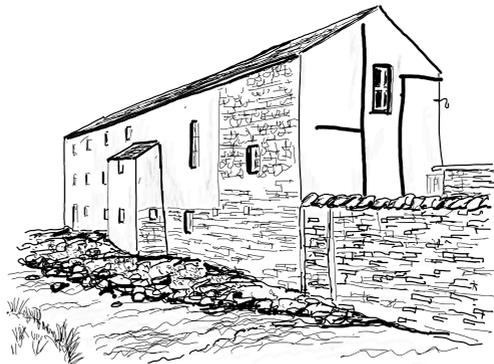
This is a major milestone in the project and means that the feasibility of many ideas presented can be thoroughly explored.

WK Design Architects, have been appointed to start work on a number of schemes for further consideration. These will be produced with technical input from a professional team including, initially, a Mechanical and Electrical Engineer and Quantity surveyor.

In a few months time, we should be in a position to share a number of schemes with the whole community to seek views in a more formal way. There'll be a dedicated event in Yew Tree Hall where members of the Development Group will be on hand to discuss the different schemes and options, so watch this space!

In the meantime, please continue to give your feedback and thoughts on the ideas you have already seen to; Cathy Lee at ythlorton@gmail.com

As the project progresses we will need to secure funding from both the community and grant funders for implementation. The newly formed sub-committee of 'Friends of Yew Tree Hall' (FOYTH) will be exploring funding options.



FRIENDS OF YEW TREE HALL(FOYTH)

You may have seen or be aware of the initial development ideas for the restoration of Yew Tree Hall (YTH). The restoration and ongoing maintenance of YTH is a key project for the community looking primarily to improve accessibility for all while enhancing the internal space and exterior appearance. YTH Management Committee are working with Lorton Parish Council on the project and you can see updates on the Melbreak Communities website: Parishes, Lorton, Yew Tree Hall, Yew Tree Hall Development.

Funding for the project will hopefully come from a number of sources including grants from interested bodies and from donations within the community. As a charity YTH is registered with HMRC for Gift Aid which enables us to claim back the tax on any donations. This is a significant amount, 25%, so for every £100 donated, YTH can claim back £25.

FOYTH is a small group connected to YTH and has been established to lead the fund raising activities on behalf of the YTH Management Committee for the restoration, development and ongoing maintenance of our community facility. The members are Adam Baker, Hugh Brayne, Andrew Chamberlain, Aine Kelly, Cathy Lee, Alison Mohr and Clare Round.

If you'd like to find out more about FOYTH, or would like to support our activities, please come along to the coffee morning Saturday 8th February where members of FOYTH will be available to chat things through with you. Alternatively, email ythlorton@gmail.com or contact Adam Baker on 07771 977482.

In the coming months there will be opportunities to see the progress of the project and hear about FOYTH and the ways in which you can contribute; for example, through regular giving, one-off donations, legacy bequests, and also, through giving your time and support to help with fundraising events.



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Facebook: S McAdam Garden Services



A Melbreak Communities Event



hosted by **Greysouthern Young Farmers Club**
(raising money for Club Funds- raffle)

Coffee and Cakes

£5



Saturday 8th February
at the Yew Tree Hall, 10.00-12noon



please park responsibly, thank you

Nature Notes – The Common Swift *Apus apus*

Around late May I scour the skies seeking out swifts, black silhouettes high in the sky, with their long scimitar shaped wings. Then with a whoosh, suddenly the screaming party arrives, a tightly packed squadron hurtling through the village at great velocity, shouting 'we've arrived!' When I hear it I know the swifts have 'made it again!'

Migrating all the way from Southern Africa, an annual journey of 14,000 miles, it is one of the longest migration distances of any bird. The oldest recorded age for a swift is 18 years, this individual would have travelled four million miles, equivalent to eight trips to the moon and back!

As they travel they gobble up 'aerial plankton' such as flying ants, aphids, midges, and spiderlings, on average 20,000 insects a day. However they can fly for up to four days without food because their aerodynamic design needs little energy to power flight.

Reaching 69mph, swifts are the fastest bird in level flight. Eating, mating and even sleeping on the wing swifts rarely touch the ground. In the early days of radar in the 1950s, air traffic controllers would routinely spot unidentified flying objects, referred to as "angels". It's now thought these blips could have been sleeping swifts!



Swift at Yew Tree Hall, Lorton, July 2024. Photo © TSP

Despite appearances, swifts are not related to swallows or house martins. Their nearest 'relatives' are hummingbirds.

Swifts migrate to the UK around May, to lay eggs and raise chicks, departing for Africa's warmer climes in August. Swift nests need to be high-up as their legs are too weak to launch themselves into the air.

Each morning, swifts will descend from high altitude to feed their young. Each ball of food brought to the young 'swiftlets' contains 300 to 1000 individual insects. As the sun sets swifts will gather and chase each other, screaming as they go, before rising to an altitude of 10,000 feet, where they'll sleep on the wing.

The first three to four years of a swift's life are spent in the air. Only when they've reached adulthood will they touchdown on solid ground to nest and raise their first brood. Around 80,000 pairs of swifts migrate to Britain each summer, however between 1992-2021 numbers declined by 62%, they are now on the Red List of conservation concern.

Swifts mate for life and will return to the same nest site each year. UK populations depend almost entirely on buildings for nest sites. Swifts can be seen in Lorton where they nest in a few locations including the gaps in the mortar at Yew Tree Hall. It's likely returning pairs have nested at this site for over 100 years. The parents eat their chicks' droppings leaving no mess beneath swift nests.

On this snowy January day I look forward to their return, as immortalised in *Swifts* by Ted Hughes.

*They've made it again,
Which means the globe's still working, the Creation's
Still waking refreshed, our summer's
Still all to come*

A local swift project is run by Melbreak Wildlife Group, if you would like more details, please contact tanya.stpierre@outlook.com.

Tanya St. Pierre, Melbreak Wildlife Group



On January 23 we held our Burns Supper, which is now an annual event in the 77 Club calendar. After a welcome from Roger Hiley, Harry Patterson said the Selkirk Grace, and then the first course, Cock-a-Leekie soup, was served. Next we all stood as the Haggis was piped in by Roland Lawson, accompanied by a slow handclap, after which the Haggis was cleaved and toasted by Niall Patterson. Then we all enjoyed a portion of Haggis (warm reeking, rich wi' Tatties and Bashed Neeps). The meal concluded with the traditional desert, Cranachan. After the meal it was time for the speeches and toasts. Jeff Goode read a poem written by his wife Christina, Roger Hiley gave *To the Immortal Memory*, Chris Spencer gave *To the Lassies*, and Barbara Robinson replied with *To the Laddies*. All speakers had us in fits of laughter. The next act was provided by Harry Patterson, who strode up and down the Hall in nightgown and nightcap, carrying a candle and saying his prayers in his broad Scottish accent. Whilst many of us might not have understood all the words, his act was highly amusing. Niall then sang for us, accompanying himself on his guitar. After closing remarks by Roger Hiley we all stood to sing *Auld Lang Syne*, accompanied by Roland Lawson on the bagpipes. Most of us are not Scottish, but we were delighted to participate in this traditional Scottish event, and we all look forward celebrating the memory of Scotland's famous poet again next year.

Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday 11th February at 7.30pm in Loweswater Village Hall. The speaker will be Derek Poate who will give an illustrated presentation about an expedition cruise he and Chris undertook last year to the Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia. Even today this part of the world is little known and infrequently visited, and Derek's talk will dispel some of our ignorance without the danger of anyone getting frostbite. There will be a bar at this event, selling wine, beer, and fruit juice. Non-members of the Club are welcome to attend for a fee of £2.50.



From Lorton to a remote Antarctic Island

SOUTH GEORGIA



welcome to the
Antarctic. An
illustrated talk
by Derek Poate



Non-members welcome
at £2.50

**Loweswater
Village Hall**

Tuesday 11th February at 7.30pm



Loveswater Village Hall

It was great to see so many people enjoying the Christmas Gathering, after the carol singing around the village on December 17th. Cheering mulled wine and festive fayre was enjoyed by all and was followed by hearty renditions of Christmas carols and songs. Donations given in the hall were added to the house to house collections for the NSPCC.

For our next **Arts Out West** performance, on **Saturday March 8th**, at **7.00 for 7.30**, we are delighted to welcome **Old Baby Mackerel**, who are one of the UK's best-known Bluegrass bands, playing high-energy, foot-stomping American roots music, featuring a fantastic line-up of renowned UK Bluegrass musicians.

Tickets: Adults - £12.00; Family (Up to 4, max 2 adults) - £25.00; U18/Students £6.00
Sausage baps will be available in the interval - £4.00 (please order in advance when you book your ticket) and there will be a licensed bar from 7.00 to 7.30 and during the interval. Please see the poster in this issue or visit our website, (loveswatervillagehall.co.uk) and Facebook pages. To find out more about **Old Baby Mackerel**, and to sample their music, Google "Old Baby Mackerel".

The very popular **Mother's Day Afternoon Teas** will return again this year on **Sunday March 30th**. Mums, with families of all ages are invited to enjoy a sumptuous, traditional afternoon tea in stunning surroundings. **Advance bookings only** – book early to avoid disappointment. For full details, please see the poster in this issue or visit our website, (loveswatervillagehall.co.uk) and Facebook pages.

Loveswater Village Hall Committee will be holding its **Annual General Meeting on Tuesday March 18th at 7.30 in the village hall**, to which members of the community are warmly invited. An agenda for the meeting will be posted on the village hall notice board and website no less than 7 days before the meeting. Cheese and wine will be served at the end of the meeting.



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Coffee & Cakes 2025: Pricing Policy

For several years, we have been able to enjoy unlimited cups of coffee and a slice of home-made cake once a month for just £2.50 or £3. The coffee mornings have been popular social events which have also enabled local groups to fund raise to support their activities or give to charity. Recently the Melbreak Communities was asked if the price could be increased and at our last meeting the Steering Group decided it would be reasonable to charge up to £5. Host groups have been asked to advertise their price in advance so you will not be taken by surprise. We hope you will agree that our inclusive 'Coffee and Cakes' still offers a regular opportunity to meet up with friends and great value for money.



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Saturday 8th March 2025



Loweswater Village Hall
Cockermouth CA13 0RU

Tickets & Info

loweswaterevents@gmail.com
loweswatervillagehall.co.uk

OIL IN LOWESWATER CLUB UPDATE

Thank you to all our current members.

I thought it might be helpful to share our current position and past average savings, as we have now reached the halfway point of our first year.

September - 6p per litre, November - 4.5p per litre and January - 4.75p per litre. All of them provided a saving, compared to non-club prices, based on 500litres, even though we are still in the early stages of membership and the larger the order, the greater the discount.

Anyone wishing to join the club will only need to pay £10, for the remaining year, which runs until September and all of this money is donated to Loweswater Village Hall.

All details are available on the Melbreak communities website and local noticeboards or by contacting me.

Lyn Furniss - oilinloweswaterclub@gmail.com

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Blackbird standoff

There's a feast on the ground
Under the feeder thing I've found
Under the white twiggy tree
Ooh look, it's all for me!
Time for brekkie, but just whoa!
Who's that swooping in so low?
Oh no, there's Bill, and Bob
Then Bella, Beryl and all the mob.
Too big for the feeder thing
The little chaps let it fling
I can peck it off the ground
But it's crowded all around
I need the feed, so stay alert
Oh come on, not big Bert
I'll dart in sharp, be real quick
I'll only be there half a tick

Look up, look left, peer right
Run in without a fight
A juicy seed all mine, and peck!
Now the sparrows, what the heck?
He's bigger, watch him close
He lunges, nearly toast!
He's smaller, I'll chase him
She's smarter, I'm so dim
Chase, look, peck, flap, run
Someone tried to peck my bum!
Wait, freeze! It's the big bipede
Take off, fly off, at high speed!

Adiam Pingpongsworth



Loweswater with Buttermere PCC
100 Challenge Club

The prizewinners for the draw held on 1st December 2024

1st prize of £25	No 74	Mark Elliott
2nd prize of £10	No 81	Christine Walmsley
3rd prize of £5	No 90	Sue Ritchie

The prizewinners for the draw held on 1st January 2025

1st prize of £25	No 70	Dorothy Taylor
2nd prize of £10	No 106	Zoe Thomson
3rd prize of £5	No 50	Lucas Wright

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all our supporters.



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Loweswater Ladies December 2024

The December meeting was held on Wednesday Dec 4th at Hundith Hill Hotel. On a wet and windy evening, those attending enjoyed good food and good company to start the Christmas celebrations. Many thanks must go to the staff who were, as always, cheerful and accommodating.

Our first meeting of 2025 was unfortunately cancelled due to the adverse weather, icy roads and freezing temperatures. The next meeting to be held on Wednesday 12th February will be our annual birthday meal at the Kirkstile. Will members please note this starts at 6:30pm for 7:00pm. As subs of £12 couldn't be taken in January, they will be collected at this meeting and there will also be a short AGM. An email will be sent to all members to ascertain if they wish to attend and will include menu details.

Happy New Year to all our members.

Happy
Mother's
Day



Happy
Mother's
Day

Treat Mum to a Mother's Day Afternoon Tea Sunday March 30th - 2.00 to 4.00



Adults - £15, Under 11s - £8
Why not add a glass of Prosecco!



Advance Booking Only

To book your table, please contact Lyn Furniss on 07970 218239

or alloyslyn@btinternet.com

loweswatervillagehall.co.uk

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

I hope everyone enjoyed Christmas and the New Year period and had a chance to join families for the celebrations. Our Christmas services attracted large congregations this year with the church almost full for the popular Informal Carol Service at Buttermere and an interesting mix of readings. John Scadding rose to the occasion with all the requests and also supplied a keyboard, the organ having given out during the Christmas Eve service, the electric to the organ tripping due to the damp. We expect the electrician shortly to remedy the issue. Thanks to all who decorated our churches so beautifully and to Sue and her choir for the high standard of music at the Loweswater Carol Service. At our PCC last week we appointed an experienced waller to repair the churchyard wall. He has previously done some drystone wall repairs for us. The repair will be a drystone wall without concrete and he will of course take great care not to damage the cremation stones beneath the wall.

Our first fundraising event of the year took place in January - the Robinson's wine tasting. As usual it was a much enjoyed evening raising an impressive £345 for church funds. Our thanks to David and Barbara for all the hard work making the occasion so successful. Every 6 years the Electoral Roll requires updating. That time has come around and forms are available to sign from Lorna at The Grange. Easter is late this year so dates for Lent lunches and Lent study group will appear in next month's Link. As I write storm Eowyn rages, though I may be tempting fate, so far we have been spared the worst excesses. Earlier this month we experienced a week of significant snow great fun for children not so much for drivers! Now we have the welcome sight of snowdrops and slightly longer days.

Eleanor Ella



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THE MELBREAK COMMUNITIES

The meeting is open to everyone so please join us to hear what creative, environmental and wildlife projects we've been engaged in during the last 12 months - with lots of community involvement and support.

**crafts-swifts-curlews-apple day-coffee mornings
and many more**



**Thursday 13th February at 7.30pm
YEW TREE HALL, LORTON**

If you have ideas for future projects and activities
do come and share them with us.

Coffee/tea and biscuits will be served.



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DIARY DATES

FEB

- 8 Sat 10-12 noon, Coffee and Cakes YTH (hosted by Greysouthern Farmers).
10 Mon 8pm, Loweswater Farmers Discussion Group at The Kirkstile Inn.
11 Tues 7.30 Loweswater 77 Club Talk by Derek Poate about South Georgia LVH.
12 Wed 1.30pm Lorton Vale Gardening Club afternoon meeting - Dahlias.
12 Wed 6.30 - for 7pm, Loweswater Ladies annual birthday meal at the Kirkstile.
13 Thu Melbreak Chat and Crafternoon LVH 1.30 to 3.30pm
13 Thu The Melbreak Communities AGM 7.30pm YTH All welcome
15 Sat Hot homemade supper and ceilidh. Ullock village hall
24 Mon Curlew Volunteers evening. YTH 7pm. Refreshments served. All welcome
24 Mon 8pm, Loweswater Farmers Discussion Group at The Kirkstile Inn.
27 Thu Film Night, La Chimera, YTH, doors 7pm, film 7.30pm, bar. £6

MAR

- 1 Sat AOW, Opera for the people. Ullock village hall at 7.30
3 Mon 7pm First Responders Group Meeting (New members welcome) YTH.
8 Sat Coffee & Cake organised by Melbreak Wildlife Group. YTH 10.30 - 12.00
8 Sat AoW: Old Baby Mackerel, LVH at 7:30pm. See poster in Link.
10 Mon 8pm Last of the season, Loweswater Farmers Group, The Kirkstile Inn.
11 Tues (To be confirmed) Holme Wood Tree Planting (Pheasant's Eye).
18 Tues 7.30 Loweswater Hall Committee AGM, LVH (open meeting).
13 Thu Melbreak Chat and Crafternoon LVH 1.30 to 3.30pm
19 Wed Loweswater lake water quality management. Melbreak Wildlife Group. LVH
7.30. All welcome
20 Thu Presidents, Sailors, Soldiers and Spies. An American view of Cumbrian
history. L&DFLHS, YTH, 7.30 pm
27 Thu 7.30pm (doors open 7pm), Film Club, *My Favourite Cake*, YTH
30 Sun 2 - 4pm, LVH Mothers Day Afternoon Teas (see poster).



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Please note that Table Tennis takes place in YTH every Wednesday from 7-9p.m. unless otherwise notified. There are Keep Fit sessions in LVH every Monday 9.00-10.00a.m and every Friday 5.30-6.30p.m. These will not be listed every month in Diary Dates but can be found on the Melbreak Communities diary page - www.melbreakcommunities.org.uk

WHEN ATTENDING EVENTS AT THE YEAW TREE HALL PLEASE ENSURE YOU PARK RESPONSIBLY

The United Benefice of Lorton and Loweswater with Buttermere

Church Services February 2025

2 nd February 10.30am	Candlemas Holy Communion	Loweswater
9 th February 10.30am 3p.m	4 before Lent Morning Service Holy Communion	Lorton Buttermere
16 th February 10.30am	3 before Lent Holy Communion	Loweswater
23 rd February 10.30am 3p.m	2 before Lent Holy Communion Evensong	Lorton Buttermere



Service information for the Grasmoor Mission Community and news of other events is published weekly on a Friday in our Staying Connected news sheet. The sheet is available on the GMC website or if you would like it sent directly to your inbox please email Sue Lake on gmcoffice@grasmoormc.church with your request.

Deadline for March is Friday 21st February- all articles, photos(especially for the front cover), funny stories, letters to lortonvalelink@gmail.com by this date. Thank you