

MARCH 2025



THE UNITED BENEFICE OF LORTON AND LOWESWATER WITH BUTTERMERE

£7.00 PER ANNUM (LOCAL)

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Link Readers

Is this a record I wonder - 36 pages? I'm sure someone who carefully keeps all their back copies will be able to enlighten me.

I'd like to begin by drawing your attention to the Link Subscription notice on the centre pages - please pay as soon as you can - following the instructions given. I would like to stress that we would prefer payments by bank transfer.

We have a wide range of articles this month - I can't cover them all here but I'll start by mentioning the update about the YTH improvements. This trio of articles begins on page 10 with an impassioned plea from local resident (and poster-creator extraordinaire) Nev Mills to support this vital part of the community. The series concludes with an official appeal for funds, a description of ways you can pay or donate and a Gift Aid form if you are a UK taxpayer.

We've got lots of news from the Melbreak Communities, from their newly instigated Crafternoons to various activities from the Wildlife Group, including the usual Nature Notes. There is a piece showing the overall programme of activities, a request for curlew alerts, a notice about a talk regarding heat pumps and a poster for the Coffee and Cakes hosted by the Melbreak Wildlife Group.

With more catering news - there are posters for 2 Lent Lunches - one in March at Lorton and the other in April at Loweswater. The next community lunch date is also advertised, as well as Mothering Sunday teas at LVH.

Once you've counted the pounds added from all of the above you can exercise some of it off by running the Lorton 10k race, trying some line dancing with the Loweswater Ladies or getting busy in the garden following the advice of the Lorton Vale Gardening Club about what to do in your garden this Spring. Talking about gardening - I've now planted my first batch of seeds in the propagator in the greenhouse - peas, beans, chillis, lettuce, spinach, red onions (a first for me), chives and of course - my favourite - the sweet peas. I'll let you know how they progress - hopefully I'll have more success than last year.



Rosemary

The front cover image was taken by Barbara Thomson - see the article on p26 to find out more



Vicar's Letter

'In like a lion, out like a lamb' goes the well-known March proverb. For those who like to know this kind of thing, the earliest occurrence of this saying is in Thomas Fuller's 18th century 'Gnomologia: Adagies and Proverbs; Wise Sentences and Witty Sayings, Ancient and Modern, Foreign and British.' It also makes a regular appearance in the Farmers' Almanac!

Weather-wise it makes sense as March begins in Winter and ends in Spring, at least according to the astronomical calendar in which the season turns at the Spring Equinox. Not that the weather in these parts is reliably calm and fine by then but at least we'll be cheered by the sight of more and more new lambs in the fields as the month goes on. A similar transition is seen in the heavens with the Sun rising in the constellation of Leo (the Lion) during March but moving into Aries (the Ram) by April. The lion is an iconic symbol of what is powerful and dominant, the lamb or kid of what is trusting and peaceable. World events are forcing us to think hard about these qualities at the moment. Where do we see them exhibited, by whom and in what way?

Lent begins on Wednesday 5th of March and we'll be marking the day with an Ash Wednesday service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes in Lorton Church at 7 pm. Do join us as we set out on our forty-day journey towards the celebration of Easter. And do look out over coming weeks for the appearance of both lion and lamb imagery as we tell the story of Jesus's death and resurrection. He is the sacrificial lamb who willingly lays down his life for us. Then on Easter Day we will sing of his triumph over sin and death in the ancient hymn, 'Ye choirs of New Jerusalem' – 'how Judah's Lion burst his chains and crushed the serpent's head.' 'Out like a lamb, in like a lion' you might say, in a thought-provoking reversal of what the world often seems to believe possible. Perhaps this is a good time to be reminded that in God's world it is not the mighty who will be victorious in the end but those who seek and do God's will.

With blessings for a holy Lent.

Jane Charman

Grasmoor Mission Community Leader

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

As Jane reminds us in her Vicar's Letter, Lent begins this month with a service on Ash Wednesday at St Cuthbert's at 7p.m. On page 32 you will find details of the Lent Study Group for this year. You will also find a poster advertising our Lent Lunch - which this year has moved to a Tuesday - the 11th March. Lent starts quite late this year but the weather still feels very wintry. At least there are lambs to enjoy, plenty of snowdrops to admire and my daffodils are now flowering.

As usual I am joining in the Carbon Fast initiative for Lent - you can sign up here - <https://www.climatestewards.org/carbon-fast/> - which has 7 themes to follow spread over 6 weeks. I'll let you know next month how I'm getting on.



Rosemary
From the Register:
Funeral:
31st January 2025
Robert Fotheringhay

LORTON FILM CLUB

at The Yew Tree Hall

Thursday 27th March

£6

Bar opens 7pm - Film starts 7.30pm

My Favourite Cake

No 2 in the Guardian's top 50 films of 2024

"Charming portrayal of a 70-year-old Iranian's appetite for romance"

★★★★★ "Beguiling" - Financial Times



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Lorton Vale Gardening Club



What to do in the Spring Garden



a talk by Duncan and Lyn Wilder
visitors welcome £4

**Yew Tree Hall
at 7.30pm**

Thursday 13th March

please park responsibly, thank you



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Penny's Piece

Well, things have been a little chaotic since last writing. Mum went on holiday for 3 weeks and all hell broke loose.

It all began with a lady in a foul mood: Storm Eowyn. When I left school on the Thursday, we were going to be open on the Friday- the day the storm hit. However, the Head and Chair of Governors came to their senses and announced we would be shut, like most of West Cumbria. This was a good shout. On the Friday the Head and the site Manager were in school as ceiling tiles came in, sky lights were crashed through the ceilings in places and the water started to pour in upstairs. Outside neighbours were videoing the roof membrane as it undulated in a wave along the length of the building. It's not supposed to do that. When I saw the videos, it brought back memories of trying to keep control of the large black sheeting used to cover the silage pit. By lunchtime on the Friday, we were told to prepare 3 days of home learning as we would not be back in until Wednesday at the earliest. Yeah right. Staff did not get back into the building until the 7th of February to set up in our new locations. We did 2 weeks of Zooms and home learning, and it was actually harder than lockdown because parents weren't off too. I have spoken to more grandparents than ever. Some families realised this was not going to be a quick fix, so went on holiday but still joined Zoom and did some work. One of my children went to Bamburgh and uploaded some beautiful photos. A child in Y1 was on her Zoom meetings in a little sun dress because she was in Tenerife! I wish I'd thought of it. Our current situation is Y2 (my year group) are together in the school hall. Y1, reception and Nursery are in their normal classes. Y4 and 5 are in two halls at Valley School with their furniture we had to transport there, and Y3 and 6 are at St Gregory and St Patrick's School. We are hoping to be back in upstairs by the 3rd of March- for the rest of this term. Then those of us upstairs move out again into cabins on the school field for the summer term while they replace the roof! I'm

hoping someone somewhere is getting their backside kicked firstly for taking the lowest quote and secondly for doing a bad job. My class only had a small leak by the window others had full ceilings come in and water damage means lots needs replacing.

At home I discovered a missing byre window when I went for wood- thought it was draughtier than normal. Luckily (?) I was home learning when the drains blocked too. The proverbial was happening and not where it should have been. I called a company out who were next to useless, did not solve the issue and still haven't sent a call out bill so that's fine. I rang the water diviner- a man who seems to be able to track water by intuition. I knew, and verified with a call to mum on holiday, that my waste pipes go to the same tank as the cottage across the road. What no one could work out was where they joined. Tens of metres of drainage rods proved we were over the road but where? After hours of digging, sending down a wire with current down it (I was worried at one point when he was beeping along the bottom of the garden. Who knows what drain that is?), it was found that the join is under the garden side doorstep of the cottage over the road. The issue was the brick channel under the cottage meeting a round pipe and forming a ridge. The channel would be from when that end of the cottage used to be a byre/barn. When it was first built, the main door was where the post box is. You went in and turned left into the cottage end (now a walk-in cupboard). There would have been large doors where the two windows on the roadside are- look for the wooden lintel. It's all sorted, and I now know where the pipes go.

So, after all that excitement, frustration and lugging furniture round various parts of Whitehaven, I am having a rest this half term holiday. Fingers crossed for a quieter March. Hope to see some of you for Old Baby Mackerel, fresh from the Cavern Club, on the 8th. Penny

Award-Winning Bluegrass Band

OLD BABY MACKEREL

Saturday 8th March 2025

7.00 for 7.30



In Association with Kirkgate Arts Out West

Adults - £12; Family (Up to 4, max 2 adults) - £25; U18 / Students - £6

Sausage baps available at the interval - £4. Please order in advance when you book your ticket

Licensed Bar

Tickets & Info

Loweswater Village Hall
Cockermouth CA13 0RU

loweswaterevents@gmail.com
loweswatervillagehall.co.uk



Lorton School 10K. Fundraising Road Race

Saturday 5th April 2025 at 10.00am
Minimum Age: - 15. All level of runners
welcome

Details and entry forms via Facebook
Lorton 10K



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Nev Mills - "Why I Love the Yew Tree Hall"

Hi, I'm Nev Mills, a "newcomer" resident of Lorton of some 45 years, the guy who does a few posters for the Link. Slightly out of my comfort zone I felt the need to write an open letter explaining why I love the Yew Tree Hall.

I reflect back to our early days in Lorton, and recall the warm welcome Sheila and I received the village community. The Yew Tree Hall quickly became a crucial focal point, facilitating social interaction and providing a valuable space to connect with and get to know fellow villagers. It played a key role in helping us integrate into the vibrant community I've come to cherish.

To this very day the Yew Tree Hall plays a crucial role in village life, acting as its central hub and focal point. Obviously the presence of the church, shop, school, and pub greatly contribute to the community's fabric. I personally feel that the hall serves as a vital interface, fostering connections and enriching village life. It's where club meetings take place, social gatherings are held - coffee mornings and such like - bringing people together. For many of us the hall is the place to meet new friends, have fun, and build a sense of belonging.

The absence of such a vibrant village hall can significantly impact a community, leaving it feeling much poorer, as evidenced by the experiences of other nearby villages without one. The Yew Tree Hall's importance is further underscored by the surprise and admiration of visitors, who are often impressed by the sheer range and depth of activities it supports. These activities, which contribute so much to the village's character, would simply not be possible without the hall.

More recently the proposed improvements to the Yew Tree Hall have been met with enthusiasm. We are fortunate in having a dedicated bunch of residents, making up The Hall Development Group, who are working to bring these ideas to fruition. With fundraising efforts now getting underway, it's critical that the community pulls together. I truly believe that everyone who uses the hall should contribute to the fundraising campaign in whatever way they can.

Ever since moving to Lorton in 1981 I've had a deep appreciation for the unique and vibrant community, feeling privileged to live there. The Yew Tree Hall is a central component of this richness, for without the hall, and its planned improvements, village life would be significantly diminished.

**Surely, we all need to put
our hands in our pockets**

Please support the Yew Tree Hall redevelopment project

Would you like to become a Friend of Yew Tree Hall? All you need to do is help in any way you can to raise money for the redevelopment of the Hall. While the committee will be applying for grant funding, we'll also need to raise significant sums from the community.

You can become a Friend and support the Hall by making a one-off donation or a regular monthly donation, attending or helping with fundraising events, or even leaving money in your will.

If you'd like to donate by standing order or one-off bank transfer, our bank is **HSBC**:
Payee: Yew Tree Hall Committee Sort code 40-18-03 Account 81114794

If you'd like any further information on being a Friend of Yew Tree Hall or about gift aid, which will increase the value of donations by 25% if you are a taxpayer, please

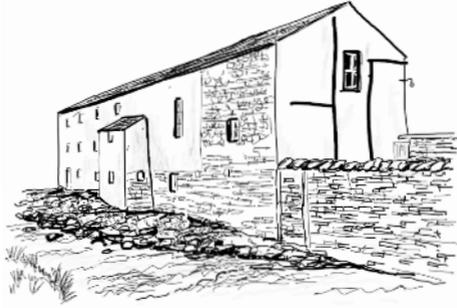
- email ythlorton@gmail.com or,
- ask any of the organisers at a Yew Tree Hall event, or,
- ask one of the organisers of Friends of Yew Tree Hall (see below), or,
- fill in the gift aid form on the back of this page



Any remaining donations after the completion of the redevelopment will be used for future maintenance to the improved Hall.

Friends of Yew Tree Hall organising committee

Adam Baker, Hugh Brayne, Andrew Chamberlain, Aine Kelly, Cathy Lee, Alison Mohr, Clare Round



Yew Tree Hall & Gift Aid

Thank you for your interest in donating to Yew Tree Hall, a registered charity.

If you are a UK taxpayer, Yew Tree Hall can claim 25p for each £1 donated (including cash as well as bank transfers). We will need you to fill in the form below. If you do this at a Yew Tree Hall event, hand the completed form to one of the organisers. Or you can cut out this page and post it to Catherine Armstrong, Treasurer, Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton, Cockermouth CA13 9UJ. You can also email your declaration to ythlorton@gmail.com; please copy the wording below into your email or take a picture of the completed form and email it. There's also a downloadable form on the Melbreak Communities website.

Gift aid declaration

I want to gift aid donations I make from now on, **or have made in the past 4 years**, to Yew Tree Hall. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Full name

Address

Postcode

Date

Please notify Yew Tree Hall Management Committee if you want to cancel this declaration, you change your name or address, or you no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay income tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations.

Melbreak Wildlife Group - Events Programme to September 2025

Date/Time	Event Title	Details	Venue
Mon 24 Feb, 7-9pm	Save our Curlews event	Volunteer recruitment – finger buffet	Yew Tree Hall
Saturday 08 March 10.30-12.00	Coffee & Cakes	Drop in social event, learn all about Melbreak Wildlife Group, over a cuppa!	Yew Tree Hall
Thu 03 April (7:30pm-9:00pm)	Melbreak Wildlife Group Hedgehog Recovery Project - come and get involved!	An introductory talk about the project including details of how people can get involved in different activities that are taking place to help support hedgehog recovery in our local area.	Yew Tree Hall
April TBC	Curlew Survey Day	Help to identify where curlews might soon nest	TBC
Sat 26 April (10.00-12:00)	Melbreak Hedgehog Recovery Project: Making hedgehog feeding stations	Learn to make your very own hedgehog feeding station, to take away with you. With practical advice on how to site boxes and what to feed hedgehogs.	Loweswater Village Hall
May TBC	Dawn Chorus Walk in conjunction with National Trust	An opportunity to hear, and hopefully see, a variety of summer migrants on a guided walk through Holme Wood	Holme Wood, Loweswater
Thu 5 June	Red Squirrels talk by Josh Adams, Cumbria Wildlife Trust Red Squirrels Officer		TBC
Thu 19 June (7:30pm-9:00pm)	Melbreak Hedgehog Recovery Project: Homes and highways	Find out how you can best support hedgehogs in your garden - or on your land.	Yew Tree Hall
Wed 24 September (7.30pm-9.00pm)	Melbreak Hedgehog Recovery Project: Hedgehog fostering and overwintering	Melbreak Hedgehog Rescue Project: Hedgehog fostering and overwintering	Loweswater Village Hall

!!CURLEW ALERT!!

Curlews will be returning to the valley this month. The Curlew Recovery Project would really like to know where they are! So, if you see or hear any curlews, we would be very grateful if you could send an email to:



sightingsatmelbreakcurlews@gmail.com



giving brief details of date, time, location, and what the curlew(s) were doing.

Thank you!!

100 Challenge Club

To all members of our community and friends of Loveswater and Buttermere Churches

Whether or not the Church occupies a special place in your life, or is somewhere that you turn to when in need or on special occasions, St Bartholomew's and St James's are part of the fabric and culture of the beautiful valley where we live. We know that many people are glad that the churches are here, and we hope that you will continue to help us secure their future.

The 100 Club is in its twelfth popular and successful year during which time the total annual profits have been consistently between £700.00 and £1000.00 after deducting administration costs (license fee and prizes). This is a much appreciated contribution to Church funds while also, we hope, being a bit of fun. Thank you for your continued support.

For £12.00 per year, paid in advance, each participant receives a personal number for that year. All the numbers are entered into a monthly draw and cash prizes of £25.00 1st prize, £10.00 2nd prize and £5.00 3rd prize are awarded to the first three numbers drawn. Members can buy more than one number!

The winners receive their prizes as soon as possible after each draw at the start of each month and their names are published in *The Link*.

The next Challenge Club year starts on 1st April 2025

Please complete the form below and return to me, Jan Evans, as early as possible and no later than mid-March so that I have time to send you your new numbers for 2025.

Your personal data will be treated as strictly confidential in accordance with the Privacy Policy of the United Benefice of Lorton and Loveswater with Buttermere (obtainable on request).

Good Luck!!

Loveswater with Buttermere PCC 100 Challenge Club

To Jan Evans, (Promoter) Palace How, Loveswater, Cockermouth, CA13 9UX
(tel 01900 85458)

I wish to join the '100 Challenge Club' at £12.00 for 12 months from April 2025

I wish to haveadditional numbers at £12.00 each for the same period.

I enclose a cheque for £..... payable to;
Loveswater with Buttermere PCC 100 Challenge Club.

Name(+title).....Tel.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Mockerkin Educational Foundation invites applications for financial grants in line with its aims in "promoting the education (including social and physical training) of persons under the age of 25 years who are resident in Loweswater Parishhave been resident for not less than 2 years and are in need of financial assistance."

The Foundation would welcome applications for smaller and larger value grants, up to c. £2,000, for more substantial projects or education skills support which still meets the aims detailed above. Such larger applications would need to demonstrate a significant impact and/or a legacy within the Loweswater Parish.

Applications, with an initial short explanation, can be submitted by email to graeme.sparke@talk21.com or by letter to Graeme Sparke, Mockerkin Educational Foundation, Tarn View, Mockerkin, Cockermouth, CA130ST.

*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**



A Melbreak Communities Initiative



Coffee and Cakes ^{£3}

Saturday 8th March
Yew Tree Hall, 10.30-12.00

Raffle with wildlife-themes prizes.



hosted by

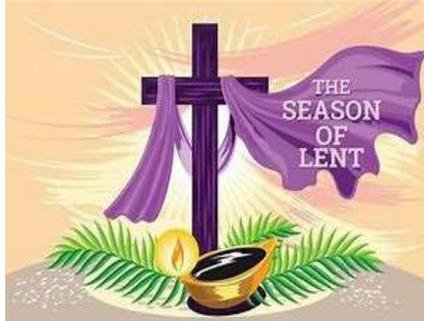
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Helping to support and celebrate
wildlife within the Melbreak Communities.

All welcome
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please park responsibly, thank you





**St Bartholomew's Church at
Loveswater Village Hall
12.00 -2pm Wednesday 9th April**

We Invite you to our Lent Lunch,
a chance to catch up with friends and enjoy
our delicious home-made soups,
followed by assorted cheeses and biscuits,
washed down with Tea or coffee.

All profits to the maintenance and repair of
our beautiful church.

We look forward to seeing you.

Churchwardens

St Bartholomew & St James Churches



**THE LINK NEEDS YOU TO PAY PLEASE
SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2025 – THESE ARE NOW DUE**

As mentioned in an earlier edition of The Link, we have had to increase the subs for 2025. The 10 issues will now cost £7 to be delivered locally and £15 for those posted.

We have introduced a new (and hopefully simpler) system to track the payment of subs this year. We have now allocated everyone a subscription number, which is written on the envelope you will have received with this copy of The Link.

Please can you pay by bank transfer if at all possible to our Cumberland BS account – name The Benefice Link Account, sort code 16-52-21, account no. 54167346 – using the subscription number from your envelope in the reference field of the payment.

If you need to pay by either cheque (payable to 'The Benefice Link Account') or cash, please use the envelope provided and send it to our new Treasurer – Ian Smith. His address is on your envelope.

We appreciate your support - thank you. The Link Committee



Loweswater 77 Club

On February 11 our speaker was Derek Poate. His talk was about the expedition cruise to Antarctica in which he and Chris had participated the previous January. They had been keen to visit this remote part of the world because of its wildlife and also because of an interest in some of the early explorers of the area, especially Ernest Shackleton. They sailed from Ushuaia at the Southern tip of South America, making a large anticlockwise loop. Their principal landfalls were the Antarctic peninsula, Elephant Island and South Georgia. Between Elephant Island and South Georgia they were retracing Shackleton's famous journey after his expedition ship had been crushed in the ice and he and five of the crew sailed all the way in an open boat. Shackleton was then able to arrange for a larger ship to sail from South Georgia to Elephant Island and rescue all 22 crew members left there. Derek's talk was accompanied by superb photographs of the stunning Antarctic scenery and the wildlife they encountered. At the end he tested our memories with a snap quiz on penguin identification – many of us didn't do very well!

Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday 11th March at 7.30pm in Loweswater Village Hall. Our speaker will be Jade Allen of the National Trust, talking about the new Borrowdale Nature Reserve. There will be a bar at this event, selling wine, beer, and fruit juice. We will also be holding a raffle – donations of prizes will be gratefully received. Non-members of the Club are welcome to attend for a fee of £2.50.



Loweswater 77 Club

Borrowdale Nature Reserve

illustrated talk by Jade Allen from the National Trust



The trust says that it is part of "one of England's largest remaining pieces of temperate rainforest".

**Loweswater Village Hall
Tuesday 11th March at 7.30pm**

There will be a bar and a raffle, donations of prizes are welcome
Entry is free for Club Members. £2.50 for non-members



Loveswater Village Hall

We are delighted to welcome Old Baby Mackerel to our next Arts Out West performance, on Saturday March 8th, at 7.00 for 7.30. One of the UK's best-known Bluegrass bands, Old Baby Mackerel play high-energy, foot-stomping American roots music, featuring a fantastic line-up of renowned UK Bluegrass musicians. Ticket sales are going well, so book now to avoid disappointment. Please see the poster in this issue or visit our website, (loweswatervillagehall.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 secure your table. For full details, please see the poster in this issue or visit our website, (loweswatervillagehall.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.

In May the whole country will be commemorating the 80th anniversary of VE Day, and we are proud to participate with a celebratory lunch, followed by an afternoon of 40s singalong music from Cath & Emma, (remember their sell-out Abba Night?), on Bank Holiday Monday May 5th. Please make a diary note. Full details will be in next month's edition of the Link



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COMMUNITY LUNCH

Served promptly at 1.15pm.



MONDAY MARCH 10TH

Held at Lorton School
Everyone is welcomed

£7.00

Booking essential
call Helen on 07790 459064

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Nature Notes – Bird Ringing

An important aspect of two Melbreak Wildlife Group projects – barn owls and curlews – is the ringing of young birds before they fully fledge. We're lucky to have Thalia Sparke living locally. She holds a ringing permit issued by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and enthusiastically gets involved in both projects, as well as carrying out her own work ringing and studying the pied flycatchers which live in the area in the summer, as seen in the photograph.



So, why is ringing important? As set out on the BTO website, "*Ringing generates information on the survival, productivity and movements of birds, helping us to understand why populations are changing*" – in essence, it provides us with information which is essential for bird conservation. It involves placing a lightweight, uniquely numbered, metal ring around a bird's leg. The process takes seconds; wing size and weight are measured at the same time. The information is stored by the ringer themselves, but also on a national database.

A local example information gained as a result of ringing. Last summer Thalia ringed a pair of young barn owlets. We know from the camera in the nest box that they were originally part of a clutch of five, but only two survived to the ringing stage, and then only one fledged. Sadly, it was found near a footpath about three weeks later, after some particularly wet and windy weather. This added to our general understanding that 2024 was poor locally for breeding and survival due to the climate conditions. (With thanks to the individual who reported the discovery, and ring number, to the BTO, so that the information made its way back to Thalia).

And a happier story. In 2023, John and Rosamund Macfarlane were photographing dippers in the central Lake District. They spotted some rings on one of the birds, and with their clever equipment were able to read the number. Having tracked down the original ringer, they learned that the bird had been ringed as a nestling in 2017 in the Howgills, east of the Lake District, making it nearly 7 years old, which is quite an age. It was about 25 miles from its original site, although its journey was probably longer as it is likely to have travelled along watercourses. It is one of only a handful of thousands of Howgill birds to have been reported away from its starting area.

Harriet Fear Davies
Melbreak Wildlife Group / Co-ordinator of Melbreak Barn Owl Group (MBOG)

COCKERMOUTH HARMONIC SINGERS

Hallelujah! on Friday 28 March 2025

Celebrate the arrival of spring with a concert of praise and rejoicing.

On Friday 28 March, at St Joseph's Church, Cockermouth, you will be able to enjoy seven different settings of Hallelujah, including the well-known chorus from Handel's *Messiah*. Beside the whole of part two of *Messiah*, Cockermouth Harmonic Singers will perform Alleluias by Purcell, Buxtehude and Sixten.

Ian Wright will conduct soloists, the Thristle Ensemble and the choir in this joyous event. Suitable for all the family, tickets will cost £15, with accompanied u16s free.

Tickets are available from Billy Bowman's music shop in Cockermouth, 01900 826708, or from choir members

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Chat & Crafternoon

The Melbreak Communities Chat & Crafternoons have gone down well so we've now planned dates for the rest of the year. They will be on the third Thursday each month (except for May when it's the second Thursday), from 2-4pm at Loweswater Village Hall. The dates will be in The Link diary, but the next three are 20 March, 17 April and 15 May. If you don't craft, you're welcome to come and chat (there's tea, coffee and cake too), and you don't have to be an expert in your craft either ... just anything you fancy making or doing.

The picture on the front cover of this month's edition was taken by Barbara Thomson after she attended our February get together. Here are the words she wrote to go with it:

Wool and Root Workings

Seven or eight ladies gathered at Loweswater hall for an afternoon of crafting. We all brought extra clothing as a precaution but the heating was on and fuelled with tea and cake everybody's needles were clicking. It is always fascinating to see what others are making. Jumpers with difficult stitches, a crotchet throw in pastel octagons, a turquoise Kingfisher embroidery, a cross-stitch Valentine's Day card, red welly socks for darning in bright yellow. All that creativity, concentration and gentle conversation built a sort of room within the room, a citadel of strength and positivity, apart and yet connected to the world outside. I took my peg-loom and started a wall hanging/rug for a friend's 70th Birthday in Herdwick fleece. I'm not sure I've left enough time to finish it but at least it got off to a good start.

Afterwards, to stretch and breathe again, I took a path around the lake. Surely, this tree had been doing its own bit of handicraft, weaving its roots so beautifully and so productively .

Glenis Postlethwaite (glenis@borderhydro.co.uk) &

Harriet Fear Davies (hfdwann@gmail.com)

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Loweswater with Buttermere PCC
100 Challenge Club

The prizewinners for the draw held on 1st February 2025

1st prize of £25	No 9	John Hudson
2nd prize of £10	No 103	Edna Vickers, and kindly refunded by her family
3rd prize of £5	No 83	David Walmsley

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all our supporters.

Loweswater Ladies February 2024

Events finally got underway in February with our Annual Dinner at the Kirkstile Inn. The dinner was well attended and the food excellent. Like the food, conversation was plentiful, but our president did manage to call order for a short AGM to review our finances and look at the year ahead. Members who were unable to attend should bring their subscription money (£12) to the next meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 12th March at 7.15pm in LVH. Get ready to shake a leg as we will be Line Dancing. Visitors welcome.



Doreen Robertson

THANKS TO DAVID WALMSLEY

The Link Committee would like to say a huge thank you to David Walmsley for all the work he has put in as the Link Treasurer. I am not sure exactly how many years but nearer 30 than 20.

Thank you very much David and enjoy your retirement!!

Ann Beebe, Chair

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

IWe approach the season of Lent, late this year, a time of discipline and renewal. We have the opportunity of sharing lunches and Lent study. This year the discussion group will be studying Live in Hope, a core message of the Carlisle Diocese. More details of dates, time and venue elsewhere in this issue. Advance notice - our Lent lunch will take place on 9th April at Loweswater Village Hall.

Buttermere remains without a working organ but we await an Electrical Installation Condition Report following which we can make plans going forward. Services continue as usual and as British summer time starts on 30th March the service reverts to 6pm.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Raymond Beard of Rannerdale Farm this week. Raymond was a well respected farmer who had farmed at Rannerdale for many years.

He was active in the community, a member of Buttermere Parish Council for over 40 years and had a passion for birdlife and wildflowers particularly loving and protective of 'his' bluebells. We send our condolences to Elaine, Catherine, Alan and their families.

Reminder - please return completed Electoral roll forms to Lorna at the Grange or either of the wardens to pass on.

Though at the time of writing it is far from spring like the crocuses in the churchyard are emerging, always a beautiful sight, and the occasional daffodil showing; it's all happening.

Eleanor Ella



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Crummock Water

The last update we had about timing for the Crummock Water planning application, in December, was that it would be “submitted within the first month of 2025”. That didn’t happen. The clerk to Buttermere, Loweswater and Lorton parish councils has asked for an update, but at the time of going to press (21 February), his request has been acknowledged but no specific information has been forthcoming. All four parish councils have meetings the week commencing 3 March. Should an application be submitted by then, unfortunately it is unlikely that there will be any detailed discussion at those meetings (or, in the case of Buttermere, the formation of a formal response as official consultees), given the short length of time councillors will have had to consider what is expected to be a detailed application. We will update in The Link, and on the Melbreak Communities website, how each parish intends to consider and address the application in practical terms, once it has been submitted and we are clearer on timescales.

Harriet Davies

Chair, Buttermere Parish Council, with the approval and agreement of the chairs of Loweswater, Blindbothel and Lorton Parish Councils.



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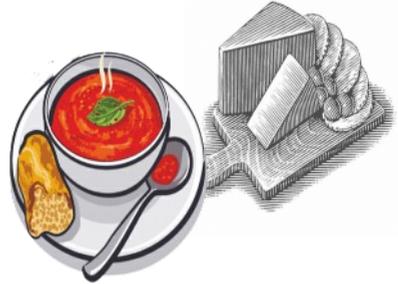
Come and have a look!!

Lorton Lent Lunch

(Money raised is in aid of church funds)

Tuesday 11th March
Yew Tree Hall, Lorton

Enjoy homemade soup
with bread, followed by
cheese and biscuits



Served 12-2.00pm

Please come and enjoy a simple
meal in the company of friends

WHAT DO YOU CALL A HERD
OF SHEEP TUMBLING DOWN
A HILL?

UNKNOWN PUNster @2018

A LAMBSLIDE

LENT STUDY GROUP



The Benefice Lent Study Group starts on Monday, 10th March, meeting 10am – 11.30am, and will run for 5 weeks. We'll meet at The Vicarage, Loweswater for the first session, with details of other venues to follow.

This year we're using the Church of England's "Living Hope" resource, which invites us "to explore the hope God offers us – not wishful thinking, but something real, robust, alive". Each week it considers the idea of hope from a different angle as we journey with Jesus on the road that leads to the cross – and beyond, to the transforming hope of Easter Day. Participants will need a copy of the Living Hope booklet (£2.40 incl. p&p) with its daily Bible readings, short reflections and prayers.

Please let us know if you'd like to come along, so we can order a book for you (contact revandreadward@gmail.com / tel: 07506 789806).

We look forward to journeying together through Lent.

Andrea Ward & Barbara Robinson

Lorton & Derwent Fells Local
History Society

***Presidents, sailors, soldiers and
spies: an American view of
Cumbrian history***

Thurs 20 March, 7.30 pm at YTH



Our speaker, Dr Chris Donaldson, writes as follows:

‘We often view Britain’s special relationship with the United States as a product of the Second World War. However, the links between Cumbria and the US stretch far back into history. Famous Americans have come here since the 1700s, and countless Cumbrians have left their native county in search of new opportunities across the Atlantic.

We will explore the deep-rooted connections between Cumbria and key figures and events in American history. We will also delve into the stories of Cumbrians who pursued their fortunes in the US. Together, these historical narratives highlight a simple but significant truth: the histories of Cumbria and America are closely intertwined.’

We look forward to welcoming Chris Donaldson who is Director of the Regional Heritage Centre at Lancaster University. Born in Pennsylvania, he came to the UK from the US where he gained a BA from Penn State University and a PhD from Stanford University. Since then, he has published widely on the history of Cumbria, the Lake District and the Anglo-Scottish border region.

Everyone welcome, visitors pay £4 incl. refreshments, or they can join our society and pay £12 p.a. for five talks and a subscription to our quarterly publication the *Wanderer*.

HEAT PUMPS MADE SIMPLE

TALK ON MONDAY, 31ST March, YEW TREE HALL, LORTON

Arrive 7:15 for refreshments, with start at 7:30pm, 9pm finish

Whether you are curious about heat pumps, interested in installing one, or already have one, you will find information of interest in this forthcoming talk at the Yew Tree Hall.

Heat pumps are an energy efficient, low carbon way to heat your home but there are many myths about them. This talk will give you THE FACTS. The talk will cover everything from how they work, their benefits, the new generation of heat pumps, insulation requirements, costs and government grants available.

The talk will be by Rich Clarke and Martin Overy from Greenfields, Penrith, specialists in renewable heating systems, who will aim to make heat pumps simple!

A Melbreak Communities Net Zero Project event



DIARY DATES

MAR

- 1 Sat AOW Opera for the People Ullock Village Hall 7.30
- 3 Mon Vale of Lorton First Responders AGM. YTH 7pm. (All welcome)
- 4 Tue Buttermere Parish council meeting 7.30pm Buttermere Old School
- 5 Wed Lorton Parish council meeting & Village annual meeting 7.30pm YTH
- 8 Sat Coffee & Cake organised by Melbreak Wildlife Group. YTH 10.30 - 12.00
- 8 Sat AoW- Old Baby Mackerel at LVH. 7:30PM See poster.
- 10 Mon Lent Study Group starts - see poster
- 10 Mon Community Lunch 1pm, Lorton School. Booking essential.
- 10 Mon Loweswater Farmers Meal, Kirkstile 7 for 7.30 pm (early start - last meet of the season)
- 11 Tue Aspen & Primrose Planting Day. Holme Wood, Loweswater. Currently fully subscribed [jtmacfarlane@gmail.com]
- 11 Tue St Cuthbert's Lent Lunch, YTH, 12 noon - see poster
- 11 Tue 77 Club Talk, Jade Allen, the new NT Borrowdale National Nature Reserve. 7.30pm LVH
- 12 Wed Loweswater Ladies, Line Dancing, 7.15pm LVH
- 13 Thur Lorton Garden Club . YTH 7.30pm "What to do in the Spring Garden"
- 20 Thu Chat & Crafternoon. LVH 2-4pm. All welcome. Suggested donation £3.
- 20 Thu Presidents, Sailors, Soldiers and Spies. An American view of Cumbrian history. L&DFLHS, YTH, 7.30 pm
- 27 Thu Film Night YTH. "My Favourite Cake" . Doors open 7pm, Film starts 7.30pm. Bar. £6
- 30 Sun Mothers Day Afternoon Tea. LVH 2-4pm (see Poster)
- 31 Mon Heat Pumps Made simple, YTH, 7.30pm - see poster

APR

- 3 Thu Melbreak Hedgehog Recovery Project. Introductory talk by Tanya St Pierre YTH 7.30pm-9.00pm All welcome
- 5 Sat Lorton School 10K Race 10am
- 9 Wed St Bartholomew's Lent Lunch, LVH, 12 noon - see poster
- 9 Wed Loweswater Ladies, Seated games ,7.15pm, LVH
- 15 Tue 77 Club April Lunch Meeting plus Speaker 1pm - please reserve the date.
- 17 Thu Chat & Crafternoon. LVH 2-4pm. All welcome. Suggested donation £3.
- 26 Sat Melbreak Hedgehog Recovery Project - Making feeding stations. LVH 10.00am -12.00

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 YEW TREE HALL PLEASE ENSURE YOU PARK RESPONSIBLY

The United Benefice of Lorton and Loweswater with Buttermere

Church Services March 2025

2 nd March	Next Before Lent		
10.30am	Holy Communion		Loweswater
3pm	Evensong		Buttermere
5 th March	Ash Wednesday		
7pm	Imposition of Ashes & Holy Communion		Lorton
9 th March	Lent 1		
10.30am	Holy Communion		Lorton
16 th March	Lent 2		
10.30am	Morning Service of Praise		Loweswater
3pm	Holy Communion		Buttermere
23 rd March	Lent 3		
10.30am	Holy Communion		Lorton
30 th March	Lent 4 & Mothering Sunday		
10.30am	Holy Communion		Loweswater

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