

Swanning down the Swale

A race involving home-made rafts could have been inspired by Huckleberry Finn but, in this case, it was conceived during the imbibing of a few pints of beer at The Swan. Certainly, the participants were composed of the pub's landlord and regulars while the cheering supporters consisted of friends and relatives and yet more regulars. But, as the playing field is badly in need of sponsorship for new equipment, they had an excellent excuse for boyish adventures on the river.

The race started at Holme-on Swale and finished, depending on levels of tiredness or thirst, at either the Old Mill at Topcliffe or Barningham's field.

Getting the rafts into the river proved quite difficult, as the slope became increasingly muddy and slippery but, much to the disappointment of the heckling crowd, who seemed to be the modern-day equivalent of the rent-a-mob at a public execution, no-one fell in. Alarmingly, HMS OAP, with its funky bright pink chairs, began sinking as soon as the two plucky adventurers climbed on board, and while the one-man crew was forced to hastily disembark, the heroic captain carried on single-handedly, clearly determined not to be put off by a small thing like his vessel taking on water.

Eventually, after much hilarity the race began but not without a flash of inspiration that would have impressed Sir Alan. An outboard motor was mysteriously pulled out of the reeds, hastily attached to one of the rafts and, as everyone else drifted aimlessly for five minutes in circles, trying to decide which way to Topcliffe, the motorised raft chugged off into the distance.

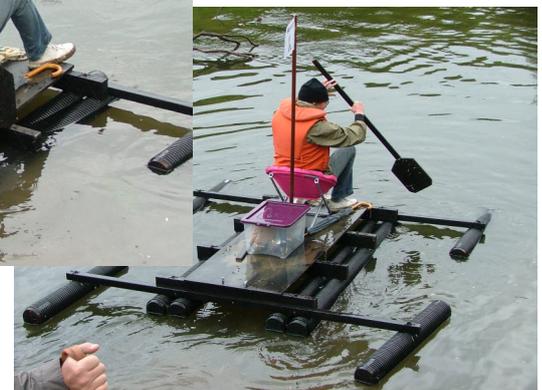
There was lots of support and cheering on along the way, keeping spirits high, but eventually Chris Bumby and John Heidstrom reached the weir at the Old Mill first, using only manpower. Determined to demonstrate their macho levels of stamina and

endurance, they continued courageously to the back of The Angel where, sadly, their bravado took a soaking when they found the river was flowing more rapidly than they'd anticipated. Still, someone had to get wet.

There were free drinks for everyone back at The Swan with a special prize for Cap'n Roy, the hardy pensioner who put the younger lads to shame by completing the course without his crew.

John said, "Everyone had a great day and the support was fantastic. We've raised over £800 so far and hope that it'll come to nearly a thousand pounds. I'd like to thank Wood Hall Hotel at Wetherby and the Crab and Lobster of Asenby for

the fantastic prizes of dinner and a night's stay. With such brilliant prizes, £250 was raised with the raffle alone. We'd also



When your boat's taking on water, it's every man for himself. Chuck the crew overboard and carry on regardless.

like to thank Mr and Mrs Greenfit for the use of their land at Holme-on-Swale where the rafts were launched."

So, it seems that Topcliffe now has a new tradition – the annual raft race. No doubt the playing field will be ready for another swing or two by next year.

St. Columba's Church

by Margaret Gimblett

We hope that by mid-September the church repairs will be finished. Future proposals include: the replacement of the toilets in the church hall by one disabled toilet; the removal of some of the pews at the rear of the church to create more space; the replacement of the heating system; the redecoration of the interior of this Grade 11* listed building.

All this will cost a great deal of money, and we will need to continue fund raising activities to achieve these objectives in a reasonable timescale. We are very grateful for all the wonderful support we have received from the people of Topcliffe and Asenby and hope your support will continue. We would like to thank the Methodist Church for welcoming us into their chapel for three Sundays in May.

Ian Nicholson, the Sunderland organ builder is to carry out work to complete the restoration of this magnificent instrument over the coming weeks. When completed, we hope to welcome back our very talented ex-organist Matthew Atherton to give a concert – hopefully sometime during October.

During the period of building works, it has been almost impossible to maintain the churchyard as we would like. We are planning a whole day get-together on September 19th, when we are looking for volunteers able to spare even a short period of time to help in a clear up exercise. A free barbecue will be provided by Steve Yates to all who take part. If you would like to help, please either let the churchwardens know (Linda on 578014 or Margaret on 577882) or just turn up on the day, 9.30am onwards.

Finally, we apologise for the cancellation of three services during August. This was due to the great difficulty of getting stand-in clergy. From September 6th all regular services will be offered. These are published in the parish magazine and on the church notice board. Perhaps by the time the next edition of the Tattler comes out, there may be some news of the appointment of a new vicar!



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Thanks from John and Carrie Anne

Carrie Anne and I would like to give thanks to all who attended our first anniversary on July 11th and also for the support given to the pub.

Topcliffe and District Indoor Bowls

We are once again looking forward to a new season in the Mowbray Vale Carpet Bowls League. Last season we finished a respectable 6th in the League. This year, under our captain, Peter Simmerson, we are hoping to better that.

Fred Tye, one of our leading members and chairman for the past five years, passed away in July. Most of the members attended the funeral service held at St Columba's Church. Fred will be sadly missed but never forgotten.

At the AGM the following members were elected:

Chairman:	Peter Boothroyd
Vice Chairman:	Jean Pilkington
Captain:	Peter Simmerson
Secretary:	David Winfield
Treasurer:	Rita Simmerson

We are always looking for new members and meet every Thursday evening from 7.30-10pm in the village hall. So why not switch off your tv and join us for an enjoyable evening with excellent company!

Peter Boothroyd

Brian Carver

Brian Carver died recently after a tragic accident at home. He was a familiar figure round Topcliffe, often seen walking a Shetland pony round the village or tending to his numerous other animals from llamas to sheep.

He and his wife, Linda, had fostered many children over the years and his sudden death will have saddened all those whose lives he had touched with his kindness and generosity.

A shepherd before retiring, Brian later gained a reputation as a capable gardener for several of his neighbours. He will be greatly missed by everyone, and his funeral, followed by a wake at The Angel, was attended by most of the village.

Brian is survived by Linda and, his daughter, Dawn.

A message from County and District Councillor Neville Huxtable

On June 4th I was elected as the County Councillor for the Sowerby Division. As always, I will do my best to represent your views at Hambleton District Council and now also at North Yorkshire County Council and will try to obtain the best possible services for the area. Whilst I was campaigning, a number of issues were raised. I intend to continue working closely with Topcliffe Parish Council on such items as the condition of roads and footpaths. Although crime is relatively low in the area, I am of the opinion that a more regular police presence would be welcomed. To this end, I will be meeting the Area Commander of North Yorkshire Police this month to discuss ways of improving police cover, not just in Topcliffe but also the surrounding division. I will let you know the outcome in my regular newsletters.

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Playing Field News - by Garry Key

As 2009 speeds by, I am pleased to report some progress at the playing field. We have disposed of the two unsightly old portacabins and replaced them with a much better second-hand model, which will provide changing rooms for both teams and the referees/linesmen, and act as a base for future village events. We hope, in the near future, to provide some decking for spectators. Thanks to Jimmy Binks for clearing the new site, the Sandersons for the loan of their power forks, to Neil for driving, the Mosleys for providing the skips, and to John Heidstrom for finding the cabin, modifying it and for assisting with the disposal of the old ones.

It was a little disheartening for Lauren and Jen to learn that our bid for funding has been deferred until October. This seemed contrary to the vibrations given out. All credit must go to them and the team for a truly exemplary bid. Whilst they are

Please don't forget, you can always contact me to discuss any problem that you feel I may be able to help with. I now have two email addresses. Both are linked and will find me.

clr.neville.huxtable@hambleton.gov.uk
clr.neville.huxtable@northyorks.gov.uk
or phone 01845 501068

The Good Life

Green-fingered pupils at Topcliffe School are enjoying growing their own vegetables in their new greenhouse which was donated by Topcliffe Parish Council. The greenhouse, worth £500, is full of tomatoes, chillis and carrots, and there will be a rota of young gardeners to look after the plants during the summer holidays.



Emily Cox (facing), Freddie Eastham and Alexandra Ventress.



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now looking elsewhere for funding, we must wait and see the outcome of the October round, which could prove successful this time.

It was great to see so many people at the village "Fun Day" event. Let us look to build upon the experience.

A few words from Simon Mosley

I would like to start by thanking everyone who has taken up a free skip. We have so far saved the village over £2,500 and, as it's done so well, we are definitely continuing it for the foreseeable future.

I am very keen to hear from any residents who have any suggestions or ideas (environmentally related) that we might look at to improve village life, whether it be a facility at our site or something village based.

We are having an open day in October/November and will be inviting all local residents to come along to see our progress. It will be a chance to discuss in depth our future plans. I will update everyone closer to the time.

As a company, we are committed to making our waste business and our entire site an example of outstanding environmental quality. Our aim is to continue creating and maintaining a haven of bio-diverse eco-systems to encourage and to sustain native and rare breeds of wildlife, from the smallest insects to the largest water fowl. In the future, we plan to have more public open days to demonstrate that our plant can co-exist in harmony with wildlife and the local community .

At the moment, we are in the process of creating a new website. If you have Internet access, we hope you will take the time to have a look. It will be quite basic to begin with, but as we move forward, it will develop and expand to cover much more.

As always, please feel free to contact me anytime, by whatever means, to discuss any issues or questions you may have.

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YO7 3SE Web: www.mosleys.eu

[Editor's note: For a description of the waste transfer process involved, either e-mail Simon or tattler@topcliffe.net]

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The Class of 2009

The parents and relatives of twenty eight graduates watched with pride as the students lined up to collect their certificates. Alanbrooke Nursery gave the children who were moving up to big school (ie "little school") a graduation ceremony that was both touching and funny. The children sported mortar boards and listened to glowing speeches from their teachers. Two very special children were given particular mention for their hard-won progress and it wasn't hard to see why they had won the hearts of the professionals who cared for them.

Destinations in the new school year range from Alanbrooke to Australia, but the nursery has nurtured and encouraged every one of the young pupils so they can happily begin the next stage of their education full of confidence and sociability.



The Topcliffe Educational Foundation

The Topcliffe Educational Foundation is a charity which makes small grants for the purchase of books, to students who have recently left school and are in their first degree course at University or the equivalent. To be eligible, the student must live in the parish of Topcliffe, which is broadly the area covered by the parish as now constituted together with Marton le Moor.

The Charity's income is fixed and limited, therefore the value of any single grant will depend not only on the funds available to distribute but also on the number of successful applications.

Applications are sought in September/October and the Trustees meet in December to approve grants. Students who have received grants in previous years will automatically receive an invitation to apply for 2009.

Anyone seeking further information, wishing to apply or questioning their eligibility to apply should ring Geoff Hall on 01845 578324.

Fred Tye, CBE, M.Ed

Fred Tye, who died recently was a much respected man who dedicated his life to education. He had a distinguished career but was also a committed family man who took great pleasure in music and enjoyed the company of his many friends.

Fred was the only child of a Middlesbrough steelworker and grew up in South Bank and Normanby amongst a large extended family. He gained a degree in General Science from Manchester University during the Second World War and was called up immediately.

In 1944, he married Joan Russell, a fellow student, but then was sent to the Middle East as a 2nd Lt in the Royal Signals. On his return in 1946, Fred went back to university to complete a Certificate of Education and began teaching chemistry in 1947 at Cheadle Hulme School.

At the age of thirty-four, he became London's youngest headmaster then, in 1960 became headmaster of the newly opened Wilmslow Grammar School. He also became senior research fellow at Manchester University, looking into management training for head teachers and, from there, became the first director of the North West Educational Management Centre at Padgate. He was thrilled to be awarded a CBE for services to education on his retirement in 1980.

Fred continued his close association with Manchester University as a member of Convocation and Court, and sat on many committees. He was again thrilled when he received an honorary M.Ed from Manchester University in 1993.

Fred Tye loved music and was an accomplished amateur cellist. He also enjoyed fishing and sailing and, in retirement, he and Joan had great fun with their caravan. Sadly, Joan developed Alzheimer's disease and, struggling to cope, the couple moved to Topcliffe to be near their eldest daughter. Devastated by his wife's death in 1998, Fred took great comfort in his many local activities, especially his role as governor of Topcliffe Primary School; being involved in "Music for Life", and Sowerby Music; and as a keen member of Topcliffe Indoors Bowls Club.

Following several strokes, Fred was cared for with great skill and compassion at Lister House in Ripon where he died peacefully on July 15. He is survived by his two daughters, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The Reverend Christine Haddon-Reece returned to St Columba's to conduct the funeral service.

Lindsay Buckell, Fred Tye's daughter



Fred Tye bottom right

Letter received from one of our Asenby readers, who wishes to remain anonymous.

Dear Editors,

Will you please thanks Mr. M. Arkley for his brightening up of the stonework surrounding the bus shelter, and for painting and varnishing the two bench seats. Many comments have been made by bus users and other villagers - all very complimentary.

Also, thanks must be given to Mr. and Mrs. Hall for their lovely flower and shrub hanging basket. It really does add an attraction to our part of the village and, who knows, perhaps will encourage the rest of us to do a bit more, and residents who use the shelter to see that it is kept clean and tidy.



[Editors' note: The hanging basket was bought from the proceeds of Asenby's mince pie evening, which was held last Christmas. Hopefully another will be held this coming Christmas.]

Yorkshire Landgirls

Topcliffe Village Hall, with its sense of rural community, proved to be the ideal venue for the nostalgic, but humorous, production of "The Yorkshire Landgirls" which was performed recently by the Bad Apple Theatre Company. The performance was a sell-out, justifiably so, as the quality of the acting, writing and the creative use of meagre props were admirable.

The play was comprised of loosely threaded scenes, mainly ending with an amusing punchline, often corny and unsophisticated, but typical of wartime humour. There was inevitably an underlying pathos, offering an insight into the hardships suffered by a brave generation who, despite deprivations, fear and the hard slog of daily life became practised at inventive "making do". The two landgirls, played by Natalie Bennett as Buff, and Lois Creasy as Biddy, showed us how it felt to be an essential part of the war effort, despite initially knowing almost nothing themselves about farming, only demonstrating more vividly that these were young lives interrupted.

Inevitably, there was a bit of a singsong at the end and, inevitably, "We'll meet again" was the tear-inducing song of choice.

Kate Bramley wrote the play, using stories gleaned from several members of the Women's Land Army. She cleverly reminded the audience that, despite the troubling and frightening times, young people then had similar hopes and dreams to those of today. With wartime music and songs playing between scenes, the drama brought the image of an unforgettable era to a village which had itself, almost sixty years ago, welcomed some of these brave and dependable women.



Topcliffe Fun Day

Little by little they arrived on foot, wheelchairs, pushchairs and scooters. People had travelled from far and wide, some from even as far away as Asenby, so keen were they to experience Topcliffe's first Fun Day. The day in question was held last Saturday on Topcliffe playing field.

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Marjorie Allenby

Marjorie Allenby, who has died aged ninety-three, had lived in Topcliffe for about seventy years. She had brought up three sons and a daughter in East Lea but after the death of her husband, had moved to SwaleView. She had many grandchildren and great grandchildren, and her family are scattered as far apart as Ripon and Aberdeen.

Mrs Allenby used to be a dinner lady at Topcliffe School and was a member of the Methodist Church. She used to enjoy playing bowls, and was still to be seen out and about the village. Until recently, in fact, she was a distributor for The Tattler.

Mrs Allenby died at home, having suffered a stroke a week or two previously. Sadly, a much-loved granddaughter died the following week whilst still in her forties.

Picnics were soon set up and the barbecue lit. All generations sat and chatted happily in the sun while the first game, an exciting big rounders match, was played. Unfortunately this turned out to be the last game, as no sooner had it finished, than there was a torrential downpour.

Most people hurriedly gathered up their belongings and headed for home. Some determined souls, however, decided to make for the football changing rooms and continue their fun under cover.



Just to prove that a sudden deluge will never shake true British optimism, attendees and organisers of the first Topcliffe Fun Day look to the future and hope this will merely be the first of many Topcliffe gatherings.

An Exceedingly Big Cheque

Topcliffe School recently held a very special cake sale in aid of the Musokotwane Basic School in Zambia. The cakes were made by the children as part of an enterprising initiative encouraged by their teacher, Mrs Kay Pearson. With a generous donation of £45 from The Angel, the children were immediately on their way to a healthy profit.

Last week, the pupils were thrilled to hand over a cheque for £175 to Mrs Margaret Murfitt, representative of Zest-UK, Zambia Educational



Remembering Jemima

The children of Alanbrooke Nursery treated friends and relations to some lively and amusing songs, last week, to celebrate the opening of a new play area. NYCC had awarded almost £10,000 towards some exciting outdoor play equipment which was clearly going to be well used.

The entertainment was just the first part of the event; the second half was much more poignant. Two years ago, one of the children who attended the nursery, Jemima Turton, was killed in a car crash at South Kilvington, along with her 21-year-old nanny, Zuzana Bubenikova. Her older sister, India, sustained critical injuries. On June 18, on what would have been Jemima's fifth birthday, a flagpole cherry tree was planted in the new play area. Georgina Turton, Jemima's mother, placed the last symbolic spadeful of soil at the base of the tree, watched and supported by her parents-in-law, Gerald Turton, a former High Sheriff of Yorkshire, and his wife. Nursery supervisor, Lorna Young, and nursery assistant, Nicky Gray, read a moving poem touching on how memories of lost friends stay with us forever. The children then sang Jemima's favourite song "Twinkle, twinkle little star".

Tears were shed but it was a perfect ceremony. For a little girl who will always be three years old in the thoughts of all those who knew and loved her, there could be no more fitting remembrance than "Jemima's tree," flourishing amongst generations of children to come.



Support Trust. This is a Christian organisation which aims to encourage links between Zambia's rural schools and UK schools, raising funds to improve learning facilities for African children collect the post.

Headteacher, Mrs Shepherd, said that at a time when Ofsted is encouraging children to learn more about the outside world, the initial visit by Mrs Murfitt which sparked off the children's enthusiasm, couldn't have been more opportune.

A Vision in Pink

In case any Topcliffe residents were alarmed to see the landlord of The Swan, hotfooting it down Front Street, followed by a bunch of cheering fans, and, most worryingly, dressed (or undressed) in a pink mankini, they can rest assured that it was all in a good cause, if not in the best possible taste.

Help for Heroes, the charity set up to help wounded soldiers who have been fighting in Afghanistan, benefited from John Heidstrom's spectacular sprint to the tune of £600. John and four of his customers had



been sponsored by other locals to lose a total of five stones between them in five weeks. In fact, they lost 6 and a half stones but, unfortunately for John, the one who lost the least weight was obliged to run all round Topcliffe in a pink mankini and, later, endure a painful waxing.

"I'm really pleased we managed to raise so much money for such a wonderful cause," said John manfully, as he posed with his fellow-contestants for the many enthusiastic photographers following his epic run.

Could this become an annual event like, say, the Great North Run or Comic Relief? Or will this attract more crowds than Topcliffe can cope with? Answers on a postcard please.

Village Hall Workshop

A drawing/painting workshop with Mike Dobson has been arranged for **Wednesday 28th October**. Probably 9.30am to 3.30pm, with a lunch break. Priority given to Craft Class members but also open to others.

If interested, phone Linda on 01845 577315. Cost to be arranged.

Ride And Stride Day

There are two events on September 12 – the Tabletop Sale and Ride and Stride. This will mean some impressive multi-tasking from Topcliffe residents if you're hoping to join in both.

Ride and Stride is a church event where participants are invited to ride bikes or horses, walk, run, even drive cars on a route yet to be decided. If you prefer, you can clean church brasses or provide tea and biscuits and a warm welcome for runners and riders. The idea is to get sponsored so that half the money can be donated to Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust (an organisation which has contributed a great deal to St Columba's restoration) and half to a church of your choice.

This is a worthy cause and one which can easily involve the whole family. For more details or a sponsorship form, ring Margaret Gimblett on 577882. Margaret's address is Charvil House, Rainton, YO7 3PX.

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Mrs Whitaker is pictured with the leavers of year 6 whose shirts are traditionally signed by anyone and everyone in school.

Topcliffe Get Together!

A group of Topcliffe villagers has been meeting over a jar or two of ale to discuss ways of helping to develop community spirit.

We carried out a survey and, according to the results, people would like to see various events ranging from: various events for children, a car boot sale, Topcliffe's Got Talent, a scarecrow day, to a wooden roller coaster. By far the most popular ideas were Bonfire Night events and a gala.

On Saturday 12th September a Table Top day will be taking place in Topcliffe. **All** villagers are invited to set up a table outside their own home to sell whatever they wish (as long as it is legal!). Ideas might include simply having a clear out, plants, home grown veg, homemade cakes, jams, pickles, arts & crafts - whatever takes your fancy.

It is suggested that all those people who want to join in, set up their table ready for 11.00am - 3.00pm on Saturday 12th September. For those who are not so keen on having a table, we hope you enjoy wondering around Topcliffe. You never know what you might find!

It is our aim that a treasure trail for kids/young at heart will be available to help people explore the various Tables of Topcliffe! Parking has kindly been offered both at The Angel Inn & The Swan. If the day is a success, then we would hope that this might become one of a number of annual events.

Thanks to everyone who expressed their views.

Arrivederci Topcliffe

Mrs Margaret Whitaker has retired from her job as school secretary at Topcliffe School after twenty-five very happy years. She says that her job was the best anyone could hope for and that she's already booked a seat on the coach when the school visits the pantomime in York at Christmas. She's worked with four headteachers during her career and will be remembered by many children and their parents for her constant kindness and welcoming smile.

A Murder Mystery Weekend was presented as a gift from staff and parents at a party held at The Angel. On the last day of term, at the school's farewell party, the children gave her a cut-glass vase, a bouquet and a seriously big cake which was shared among everyone.

Mrs Whitaker is looking forward to spending time with her husband, Paul, daughters, Jane and Beth, and her grandchildren, at home in Seaton Carew. And also to the challenges of learning Italian which, she says, is her "retirement project."

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