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Raymond Watson loses brave fight



There was great sadness around Teesdale following the death on Friday of Mr Raymond Watson at the age of 59.

Raymond, who lived with his wife Eileen in Harmire Road, Barnard Castle, travelled around farms in the area for more than 30 years for Farmway before he became ill with leukaemia in April 1992. He was popular with the whole farming community.

He fought bravely against his illness, always greeting friends with a warm smile. He organised a big dance, with the help of Eileen and friends, and raised a large sum of money for leukaemia research.

He is survived by Eileen and their son Tony. The funeral service will be held at Barnard Castle Methodist Church today.

Seven preachers bound for USA

Seven preachers from Barnard Castle and Teesdale Methodist Circuit are flying to North Carolina on 29th September. The trip is the brainchild of the Rev Ralph Eanes, of Lebanon United Methodist Church, High Point. He exchanged pulpits with the Rev Michael Faulkner of Middleton in 1993 and heard the ministry of local preachers. He believes a lay ministry of this kind could play an important part in the work of the church in the USA.

The seven are Brian Guy, Elizabeth Hall, Sarah Williams, Robert Rennie, Margaret Murray, Pat Pollard and Jean Addison. They will witness to their belief in God's calling to this service and be involved in services in various churches.

Hospitality is being provided by members of the Lebanon Church, and the churches where the British visitors will be preaching. Ralph Eanes says that the emphasis will be on meeting people, rather than seeing places, but there will also be opportunity during the two week visit to see something of this attractive part of the USA.

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Raine family put a notch on new cup

Laurie Raine and Sons put an initial notch on the new main trophy at Bowes Show on Saturday after winning the previous two outright.

They became the first holders of the latest challenge cup donated by Lord Barnard for Swaledale shearing rams.

But the family from Coach and Horses, Bowes, won't have a chance to make the impressive piece of silverware their own. It has been decided that it will remain the show society's property. In future anyone winning it three times in a row or five times overall will receive only a replica.

Laurie, who farms with his sons Albert and Neville, said he was delighted to win again. Their shearing was sired by an Alan Lightburn tup bought for £2,200 at Kirby Stephen.

Second was Gilbert Guy with a shearing sired by a home bred ram. The shearing is a full brother to one sold at Kirkby Stephen last year for £20,000.

Third were John Walton and Sons of Mickleton with a shearing bought as a lamb from John Cooperthwaite for £480. Fourth and fifth places were taken by Clive Dent of Lartington, who also took the small breeders' Swaledale title.

Laurie Raine and Sons took the district and overall Swaledale titles with a four shear ewe, mother of last year's challenge cup winner, which was sold for £25,000. The ewe was also named the best sheep of any breed. The male champion was a ram jointly owned by Gilbert Guy, Raymond Dixon and Laurie Raine and Sons, bought last back end for £23,000 from Mossdale Estates.

John Luck and Sons of Nabb Farm, Bowes, took an armful of prizes with their mule lambs, the best they have ever had. They are to be sold at Middleton.

Jeffrey Teward of Baldersdale took the Blue Faced Leicester title for the first time with a gimmer lamb. He has 10 ewes of the breed at Hillgill Farm.

Bob Coatsworth of Hamsterley had a great day with his fell ponies. He took the title with 10 year old mare Rackwood Velvet, whose three daughters - Dawn, Ruby and Beauty - all took first prizes. Velvet was also judged best pony overall.

Frank Corner of Arlaw Banks, Winston, won the Shetland title with his five year old mare Isobel of Arlaw Bank.

Alison Sayer of Grassholme Farm, Lunedale, proved her skill in the kitchen by taking a cup and other awards for her baking. Joanne Raiter took a cup for a rice cake, while Peggy Addison had most bakery points. Sheila



The new cup is handed over. From the left are Neville Raine, Lord Barnard, Laurie Raine and Albert Raine

Sunshine & showers

There was one of the best attendances in recent years at the show, the 108th, and judges said the standard in most sections was excellent. The weather was also excellent and sunny - at times. But there were some chilly showers which sent most people running for cover.

Bayles and Lynne Todhunter were also among the awards.

Barry Watson of Cotherstone had the best garden exhibit, two leeks, while Bill Nixon from the same village had most garden points. Arthur Thorn put in six garden entries and got five first prizes, including one with a vast cauliflower weighing 10lbs.

Carol Dixon was awarded trophies for the best flower arrangement and most points in that section.

Graham Hunt of Gainford took the Texel sheep title with a shearling. He has retired from leek showing to concentrate on sheep and hopes to get a small farm in the area soon.

The new Charolais sheep section was won by Gordon Forster of Streatlam with a two shear ewe which was reserve champion at the Great Yorkshire. Results & pictures, centre pages

Joanna's wig is absolutely right

An absolutely perfect wig has been handed into The Bowes Museum for Joanna Lumley following an appeal in the Mercury. It has been put on a model dummy along with clothes the actress wore in an episode of Cluedo.

Costumes used by Miss Lumley and many other TV stars will be included in an exhibition which opens at the museum this Saturday. Among them are outfits worn by Bet, Raquel and Audrey in Coronation Street as well as one of Matthew Kelly's fancy waistcoats. There is also a scarlet nightie worn by Jerry Hall.

Eighty items are in the display which helps to mark the 75th anniversary of the Save the Children Fund. Many will be sold at a gala auction night to help the fund when the exhibition ends in November.

The wig for Joanna Lumley was handed in by Mercury reporter Nicola Carter, who realised she had a suitable one after the appeal was printed in the paper.

Tennis club decides not to go ahead with car park after all

Officials of Gainford Tennis Club have decided not to go ahead with their proposal to create a car park beside their courts, even though they have been given planning permission by Teesdale Council.

As we reported last week, a development control committee agreed to give consent for a parking area for three cars, despite opposition from residents of nearby South View.

Club officials later discussed all the objections and made up their minds to drop the scheme.

Brian Blackburn, the secretary, told the Mercury, "We felt it would help the local residents as it would have let three cars be

put out of the way, and reduced the risk of them being parked on the access lane. "But we would rather not go ahead than have people feeling disgruntled."

The club is still going ahead with its plan to lay an all-weather or hard surface in place of the present grass on the courts, and this will enable matches to be played more regularly in future.

Mr Blackburn said they hope to have the work done in October and start playing on the new surface next spring.

Coun Peter Fergus, one of the South View residents, said everyone living there would be delighted with the club's decision about the car park.

Grant for a new hi-tech company

A hi-tech firm which has set up on the Harmire Enterprise Park is to formally receive a business grant from Teesdale Council on Thursday next week.

The company, MHT Technology, provides expertise on control and monitoring equipment for the process industries. The technical director, Malcolm Tennant, said he would like to give the dale an international identity.

Coun Fred Blackwell, vice chairman of the economic development committee, said it is the type of business which will enhance Teesdale's image.

Nine business grants: Page 9

Town council splits from hall group

Members of Barnard Castle Town Council voted on Monday to withdraw their representative from the Witham Hall Community Association after the mayor, Coun John Elginton, suggested it. He stated that during a previous meeting there had been confrontations with members of Teesdale Council and the town council over matters not relating to the hall.

He also reported a good attendance at a seminar held on Thursday about the future of the hall. Representatives from a number of professional bodies turned up to put forward their ideas on what they would like to see done with it.

Among them were Ken Hughes, planning officer for Teesdale Council, Patrick Conway, director of libraries and museums in Durham, and architects George Stastny and Robert Niven.

The town council hopes to attract Euro funding for a scheme of well over £500,000 to modernise the hall and put it to fuller use.

£346 for church

A wine and savoury evening at East Pethrow Farm raised £346 for St Mary's Parish Church at Cockfield.

Trip to see JCBs

Ian Douglas has a few seats left on a trip to the JCB factory next Tuesday. The trip costs £15; to book call him on Teesdale 650638.

Magistrate leaves the Bench after 35 years



Magistrates gathered before the start of cases at Teesdale Court on Wednesday to say farewell to Mr Dominic Rutter, who stepped down after 35 years as a Justice of the Peace.

It was his 70th birthday, the retiring age for magistrates, so he was given congratulations as well as thanks for his work.

He was known as a thoughtful and considerate JP who could make strict remarks when necessary but also said some kind words as he saw fit.

Mr Rutter, who lives in Gainford with his wife Kathleen, was given a warm send off by all who had gathered in the court building. They paid tribute to his length of service, the longest in the county. He was appointed in 1959 and served in Darlington. He moved to Sunderland and then to Gainford.

He served on four committees including the former domestic panel, which is now known as the family court. He also spent 11 years on the divisional licensing committee, five years on the magistrates' committee and four years on the police committee. He was chairman of the bench for five years and deputy chairman for 11 years.

Mrs Isobel Richardson, deputy chairman, said he had been a great mentor and was well known for his courtesy, fairness and faithful administration of justice.

Mr Rutter retired as an accountant some years ago. He is pictured sitting in the centre with his wife Kathleen, right, and other magistrates.

90 at harvest meal

Members of Boldron Methodist Church held their harvest celebration. Services were conducted by Richard Bainbridge of Eggleston, who is shortly leaving the area to train as a Methodist minister.

Following a lively family service in the morning, a lunch for some 90 people was served in the village hall. Proceeds of the day amounting to £331.59 were given to the Tear Fund, a Christian relief fund, for work in Rwanda.

Flags from Arnhem

Though many miles from the commemoration ceremonies taking place next weekend in Arnhem, in which Prince Charles and Queen Beatrix will play leading roles, this area will have its own token of remembrance.

Bookseller Michael Fryer was most impressed by the number of Union Jacks decorating buildings in the Arnhem area on a visit there. Because of the long military tradition at Barnard Castle and Richmond, he brought back two large flags.

They show Arnhem Bridge superimposed over the Union Flag and bear the legend Arnhem 44-94. Mr Fryer has displayed them in his book businesses at Thorngate Mill, Barnard Castle, and Finkle Street, Richmond.

New art course

An eight week art course is starting on Thursday next week 7-9pm at Startforth School. Enrolment will take place then. The tutor is Judy Caplin. She will concentrate on different aspects of drawing and experiment with colour, basic printing and work with clay. It will be suitable for beginners as well as the more experienced.

* Artists can get advice from illustrator Linda Birch at The Bowes Museum tomorrow and Friday. The course will cost £12; ring Teesdale 690606 to book.

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