

Young couple see their baby christened as school goes to chapel for a lesson

There was a large turnout at Cockfield Methodist Chapel to see the christening of baby Elizabeth, the daughter of Adam Cansfield and Sarah Thompson. The baby was very good during her baptism - probably due to the fact that she was a doll and her parents, Adam and Sarah, were pupils from the nursery class at Cockfield School. The rest of the congregation was made up of pupils and their parents.

Teacher Mrs Judith Cowley told the Mercury, "The children have been doing a project involving various aspects of family life. Our mock christening is a part of that."

The Rev Graham Morgan took charge of the service, going through each stage of the ceremony and asking the

godparents, Jevany Thompson, Laura Stirk, Niall Cronin and Michael Fletcher, to pledge to guide the baby through life.

The children were happy to pose for a picture for the family album when the Mercury called, before returning to school for a christening party in the baby's honour.

The boys and girls agreed it was all great fun, but at the same time they learned about the important meaning behind the simple ceremony.



All lined up for a photograph with lots of smiles after the interesting ceremony



Proud parents Sarah Thompson and Adam Cansfield with baby Elizabeth and the Rev Graham Morgan



Mr Morgan with the dependable godparents Niall Cronin, Jevany Thompson, Laura Stirk and Michael Fletcher

Robin and his comical men give everyone a merry time

Robin Hood and his merry men caused a lot of laughter when they got up to all sorts of comical antics in Hamsterley Village Hall in a pantomime that was up to the usual excellent standard.

John Stephenson was in fine form in the title role, with joyful support from Angela Watson as Little John, Malcolm Kay as Allen-a-Dale, Ted Bloor as Will Scarlett and Robert Wilkinson as Friar Tuck.

Mark Bradley earned plenty of boos as the nasty sheriff, while Steve Carroll had a regal appearance as Prince John and Fran Thirling was a busy Gribble.

Stage managers who ensured everything went smoothly for three evenings with packed audiences were Mary Armstrong, Peter Monk, Zena Dymott and Margaret Henderson.

The show took £1,100 - £650 of which went to the village hall and the rest to the Hamsterley Players towards the cost of the next production, Alice in Wonderland, in Hamsterley Forest in June.

Jacquie Holloway gave thanks to everyone who helped in various ways to make the production such a success.

Later meeting

The annual meeting of Stainton Grove Community Association has been postponed until Thursday next week, 6.30pm in the community centre. Anyone wishing to nominate an officer for the committee should contact Sue Chapman, 9 The Crescent Stainton Grove, by next Monday.

New farm office

Capt and Mrs John McBean have been given planning consent by Teesdale Council to convert an agricultural store into an office at Westholme Farm, Winston.

News from the Women's Institutes

Ladies report on all the action at their meetings

STAINTON AND STREATLAM

Our president welcomed members to the January meeting. Minutes for November and December were read, approved and signed.

The president announced that £42.35 had been collected at the December meeting in aid of cancer research and the money has been forwarded. Our winter dinner has been arranged for early March. It will be held at Beavers restaurant.

Our speaker for the evening was Mrs Docherty who demonstrated the art of Indian cooking. She managed to cook and talk us through five dishes. The hall was filled with tantalising aromas. At the end we were able to sample the food while Mrs Docherty explained about the different spices she had used.

Our competition for an oriental ornament was won by Mrs Betty Beadle; 2, Mrs Gill Gibson; 3, Mrs Elizabeth Simpson. Social time, organised by Mrs Kathleen Johnson and Mrs Elizabeth Simpson, was a cryptic quiz involving car names.

Our next meeting is in the village hall on 27th February.

Chris Johnson was a jaunty Jester and Emma Stephenson an energetic acrobat.

The Hamsterley Players' show was directed with flair by Jacquie Holloway, assisted by Johanna Whitfield. The clever script was by Mark Bradley, Steve and Heather Carroll and Fran Thirling.

Colourful sets were erected by Anne Johnson, Steve Carroll and Fran Thirling. They were ably assisted by Norman Ainsley and Toby Thirling.

Val Bartlett made the impressive costumes with help from Mavis Brown-Humes, Judy Pamplin, Pauline Trotter and Anne Walshaw. Props were dealt with by Steve Carroll, Fran Thirling, Johanna Whitfield, Norman Ainsley, Ted Bloor and Michael Laing.

Sound effects were by Heather Carroll, with lighting in the care of Gordon Latham-Durrant. Makeup was by Pat Howe and publicity by Luke Holloway.

Our latest meeting was our annual one. Three encouraging and upbeat reports - from the president, secretary and treasurer - painted a picture of a vibrant, healthy and expanding WI when they were presented to the meeting.

Apologising for the absence through illness of VCO Dorothy Proud, president Vera Hughes said Startforth had enjoyed an excellent year. It was hoped we could build on it this year. She also thanked the committee and members for their input. She extended a warm welcome to Penny Watson and Norma Bove who had agreed to serve on the committee.

Introducing the financial statement treasurer Tish Fawcett emphasised a healthy year end balance, at the same time indicating that tight budgetary control would be maintained, enabling Startforth to maintain its aim of widening its scope of activities and presenting members with an interesting and varied programme.

A resumé of the year was presented by secretary Margaret Hall who mentioned various items, in particular the successful fund raising open meetings which were very well attended.

Various items of business were dealt with. Members were reminded about the Durham County meeting at Bishop Auckland on 12th March. We were also reminded of a coffee evening at the home of president Vera Hughes on 10th March to raise money for meningitis and osteoporosis research charities.

Officers elected were: President, Vera Hughes; vice president, Penny Watson; secretary,

Tish Fawcett; treasurer, Margaret Hall; press officer, Iris Barker; sick visitor, Norma Bove; catering manager, Rita Liverseed; speakers' hostesses, Ann Briggs and Christine Thistlethwaite; craft organisers, Emily Swinbank and Melvie Spencer.

Our competition for a tea loaf was won by Marjorie Ward; 2, Mabel Tipton; 3, joint, Phyllis Etherington, Muriel Gilson, Jill Gray and Emily Brown. Best bloom: 1, Rita Liverseed; 2, Norma Bove; 3, Dorothy Jopling. Our annual competition winner was myself; 2, Penny Watson; 3, Rita Liverseed. Best bloom section: 1, Vera Hughes; 2, Penny Watson; 3, Rita Liverseed.

Our next meeting is our birthday party on 3rd March at Startforth School. Entertainment will be provided by Blackwell Ladies' Choir.

MIDDLETON

by Mildred Kidd

After the holidays we were all ready to begin the year when Jean our president welcomed members and visitors to our latest meeting. We were reminded of watercolour classes at Romaldirk on 8th March and the spring group meeting at Bowes on 21st May.

Names were taken for an ice show in Newcastle later in the year. Members were asked to think about Eggleston Show WI display. We need suggestions and ideas.

The winner of our competition for a remedy for flatulence was Evelyn Hart; 2, Doris Turner. We had our usual pie and peas supper which was enjoyed by all. To end the evening we played dominoes with prizes going to Jenny Finn and Molly Pearson.

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Full programme for guild ladies

Chairman Mrs A. Hunton welcomed members to the latest meeting of Darlington and District Federation of Townswomen's Guilds at Darlington Arts Centre.

A financial statement was given by treasurer Miss E. Robinson. Correspondence included letters of appreciation for a carol service by the guild. The collection was donated to St Teresa's Hospice.

Completed entry forms for a national arts and crafts competition are to be handed in at the March meeting. A revue entitled Spring Fever will be held in St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Darlington, on 30th April. The hall will also feature a celebrity auction on 13th May. Arrangements for a fund raising fete in the grounds of Polam Hall in July are well in hand. Other guild reports were received from Mowden Park, Northallerton and Salutation.

The chairman will host an AGM Home on 28th May. A summer fete will be held on 12th July.

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Case adjourned

Cherone Angela Lynch, 22, of Bridgegate, Barnard Castle, appeared at Teesdale Court on Wednesday charged with failing to meet fine repayments.

She was ordered to pay £100 compensation by magistrates last June following a conviction for assault but has not kept up the instalments.

She failed to attend court on 22nd January. Magistrates adjourned her case for a second time to allow her to seek legal representation but warned her it will go ahead next Wednesday.

Licence granted

Mr David Kirtley of Cockfield was granted a drinks licence by Teesdale magistrates on Wednesday for a fund raising night at Ovington Village Hall this Saturday.

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Peop P

Teesdale C of planning a Mr K. Wi Hall, Cothe use and alte provide holidi Mr J. Whi House, Bowb ing consent PVCu replacem ry to rear of pr Mr and M Willow Court, Toft Hill, exte ed bay window to ground level Mr A. Todh View, Bowes, r ing stone slat replacement of rear with gable ing pitched roof. Mr and Mrs Lilac Way, Sou Toft Hill, next bedroom over ex Teesdale Co ource, County C Birch Road, Ba alterations to ex ance of office/stor Barnard Castle iation, Guide HQ renewal of conset ion of timber pav Mr B. Stevens Care Ltd, Whorlt ension to form tv offices, ground fl kitchen, wc and la Mr and Mrs K. I to east of Foul S land, outline app ertion of one hou Mr I.R. Hough Farm, Newbiggin, private store/wo/ Addison and Sons, 1 Keld, Bowes, erecti al purpose farm bui Miss S. Shields, 3 Shipley Terracu stone, loft conversi additional bedroom room, including cove dormer window at re Mr J. Wigham, lar Diamond Terrace, Bt le, erection of privat Mr T. Noble, Box tage, Hutton Magna of vehicle access and ing space. Otter Ty House Farm, Bowes, use of barn to model enclosure for Asian o resting of bird hides. Mr R.W. Williams View, Ovington, tw erection at rear to kitchen and utility r bedroom and bathroom

Public la are in li

Plans are being mad nine public lavato Teesdale a facelit s with redecoration all r the near future. It is hoped to refurbi in Barnard Castle c; and Middleton in the year. It will be the Cockfield, Staindro Hamsterley the next y lowed by Woodland, knowle, Toft Hill and ton in the third year. Mr Alf Wilkinson, te manager, told mem Teesdale Council at a meeting that he hoped lavatomes would be rec ed this year rather tha ing for their turn to be bished.

He stated, "We have lot of stick from the pub the state of these fac and it is time we had gramme for improverme It was agreed that £ should be set aside for on in the coming year. Coun Maurice Abr; put forward the idea of ing for use of the lavator But Coun Ken Coate the public had enough for already without hav pay to go to the toilet. A scheme for improvi cemeteries has also bee posed. Mr Wilkinson s: wants to tackle Etherle; nard Castle and Evenw the first year. The burial groun Cockfield, Woodland and sterley will come next Lynesack, Romaldirk, ford and Staindrop in t lowing round. There are that the Groundwork