

THE POINT



A Newsletter produced by Spittal Improvement Trust

Issue 31

June 2009

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Gala issue of The Point.

After the cold weather earlier in the year the sunshine has been a welcome change but, if you read on, our problem now is lack of water!!! I am beginning to think that I should have planted desert cactus rather than spuds in my garden this year. Anyway, let's hope that the weather holds for all the summer events that folk have planned. I can promise you that in this issue we shall not mention the matter of dog poo – oops! The members of the Trust look forward to seeing you at this year's Spittal Gala on June 21st. If you can help out in any way do please contact either Willie Young or Mike Greener. In the meantime we'd be grateful if you would display the enclosed poster in your window.



Deadline for the next issue: July 27th

NEWS FROM THE TRUST

Spittal Gala is nearly upon us. At the **Gala Disco** last month Cara Rimmer was chosen by Joan from the Red Lion as the new Gala Queen, and her attendants this year will be Zoe Jordan and Lila Grieve, with Jack Patterson as the Page Boy. We hope they all enjoy their year and we would like to thank the outgoing queen, Katie Bell. The **Gala 5-a-sides** take place on Saturday 20th June and just a reminder that the **Gala Day Car Boot** will run from 10am, so Main Street will be blocked off from about 9.30am until 4pm.

As you will see in this issue, George Martin has donated the proceeds from his new book, to the **Fishing Shiel** fund. This is very generous but it means we should get on with the task of acquiring the building! The process has stalled for the moment due mainly to a

lack of time to look for the required funding. We have been asked to help with opening the Shiel in September as part of the Slow Food event. This may help to spur us on!

The **Paddling Pool** will not be filled again this year due to continuing concerns about the quality of the water. The Fire Brigade have again offered to help in filling it over the **Seaside Festival** weekend in August. Better news is that we have had a tremendous response from both the Berwick Town Council and the new Northumberland County Council (NCC) about resolving this issue with the pool. We have had the (free) help from a local architect who has designed a proposed building to house the necessary equipment. NCC has looked at our proposals and is now taking this forward with thoughts of their own. So, we may not achieve a filled pool this year but, hopefully, we will see this resolved by next summer.

Just a final thought. People often ask why things take so long to do in Spittal. One thing quickly learned from dealing with the powers that be is patience! The Trust has been asked over recent months to take part in several groups that are working away at improving all manner of issues in and around Berwick. From this participation we believe we are beginning to get somewhere and, with patience, we will start to see things happening. Ok, it may not be as quick as some would like but please be patient, it will be well worth it!

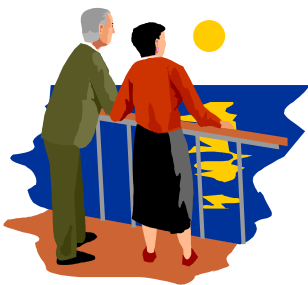
Mike Greener (Secretary SIT)

CAR BOOT SALES

*The next dates for these are:-
21st June, 5th & 19th July & 9th August.
They all take place in the Sandstell Road car park, except for the one on Gala day (21st June), starting at 10am. Weather permitting of course!*

A VIEW FROM THE PROM

A couple of pieces were in a recent edition of the Berwick Advertiser which were alarming. Firstly, our beach has failed again for water quality. It was realised however that we have



a problem when we are in receipt of all manner of detritus from Coldstream, Kelso and farther a field when the river is in flood. Secondly, someone sent in a letter in the same

issue of the paper commenting on the fact that it would appear that we are receiving 'undesirable' elements from the rest of Berwick. It's sad to hear of senior members of our community who feel intimidated enough with what goes on after dark that they are frightened to look out of their curtains for fear of reprisals.

In addition to these you can also add the fly tipping that goes on around Spittal Point and the cans, bottles and litter left over from parties at Huds Head and by the Stone Jetty. It would appear that we are now the local dumping ground in more ways than one!

On the subject of rubbish, each day we watch visitors trying their best to put their rubbish in the sadly inadequate bins, and each day we watch the gulls, crows, jackdaws and starlings pull it out again to leave it scattered over the Prom. True the bins are collected every day so that is not the problem – the problems are that there's not enough capacity in them for the number of visitors we now attract, and they are too easy for birds to get into. While it is also true that I have seen two minibus-loads of visitors trying to put large plastic sacks of rubbish in the bins, which is just plain daft, for the ordinary, sensible, visitor who wants to keep the place looking nice by disposing of their rubbish properly, there is frustration – has somebody out there got some bigger bins – please !!!!

LOCAL HISTORY

My first book, *An Anecdotal History of Spittal*, sold out within the year of its publication and I have had such a tremendous response from various people giving me fresh tidbits about Spittal of old that I have brought

out a **reprint** to include all the new pieces - an extra 8 pages. I have been able to add much more about 'Lucky' Martha plus an extra piece about the anniversary of Spittal Bowling Club. I have also received much more about Spittal's 'ghosts' (present and past!). What I haven't been able to find out is the history of Spittal Rovers so if any of 'The Point' readers can give me any info at all please contact me at 230 Main Street, 308020, or george@geomar.plus.com.

I donated most of my profits from my first book to Spittal Community School. I am donating all the profits from my reprint to the Spittal Improvement Trust for the preservation of the Fishing Shiel in Sandstell Road. I am delighted also to tell you that David and Jackie Laidlaw are also donating all the profits from the sale of my book in their Spittal Foodstore to the preservation of the Fishing Shiel.

George Martin

PILATES IN THE PARK

This summer there will be a *Pilates* exercise class on in Seafield Park, next to the Bowling Club, with Sarah Patterson. *Pilates* will chill you out and relax any tension you may have built up during the week. Ideal for everyone of any age, so no excuses, why not come and give it a try? Bring plenty of water and sun cream! Every Sunday from 12th July - 16th August @ 10:30am - 11:30, £2 per session, money goes towards SIT. (Please bring a mat or towel to lie on.)

(Ed. – and there's me thinking Pilates was another type of coffee!!?)

AND FOR THE OVER 50's

If you think that 'doing it in the park' is a little too much exposure then why join the exercise classes for the over 50's being held in the BURC Church Hall, off Middle Street. These are being held on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 11am at a cost of £1.50 per session. The sessions are aimed at benefiting flexibility, mobility and overall well being.



We will be sending Gladys Friday along to report back in the next issue (*Sorry she is booked for modelling sessions every Tuesday morning until 2020 – Agent*).

SCHOOL NEWS

The year has flown past at school and here we are into our busy summer term, when we prepare to say goodbye to our Year 4 pupils as they head to middle school, and we look forward to our new intake in September!

You may remember that last year the school celebrated its 100th birthday and the children have all been helping with the production of a book to mark this event. 'A Seaside Village School,' written by Maureen Raper, is the story of two modern-day children who travel back in time to some of the school's most important moments. These include the opening day in 1908 and the harrowing war years. Funded by a Lottery grant, it contains some wonderful pictures drawn by our pupils. Every child has been given a copy but extra ones are available from the school, priced £5. Our class 4 teacher Miss Bayly is preparing a banner and the remainder of the money will be used for some outdoor art. I think we all agree the outside of the school is looking good – we've bought more compost and plants for the garden

A second, more detailed, book on the history of Spittal is being prepared by the Berwick Archives and will be released later this year.

Diary date: Friday 3rd July. We're having a barbeque and camp-out in the school field (fingers crossed for nice weather)!

**SPITTAL
SCOUT
GROUP**



The Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and parents recently took part in a sponsored walk from Goswick and Cocklawburn to Spittal. It was a bright and sunny day but cold, so thanks to everyone who took part and for those who donated. The Group also enjoyed a camp at Ford. We enjoyed better weather this time and the sun cream came in handy! The Beavers joined us for the last day of activities and this

was followed in the evening with a family BBQ and camp fire.

Also, can anyone shopping on line please register with, and shop through, our fundraising web site as this will increase group funds and allow us more capital to spend on activities and events. The address is:
www.easyfundraising.org.uk/2ndbutssg

Brenda Rollo – Group Scout Leader

NATURE DESK

The Skylark (Alauda arvensis)

The skylark is probably the best known of the British larks and is a common sight when we're walking along the cliffs. The bird is best associated with its song flight. The male bird rises almost vertically from the ground to a great height where it remains for several minutes on fluttering wings before parachuting down to the ground (*Does it wear a green beret? – Ed*). All the time it is in the air the bird continually sings its familiar warble. If threatened it runs across the ground to distract a predator before taking to the air, so it is quite difficult to find its nest, which is a cup in the ground made from grass and hair. It's diet includes seeds and insects.

So the next time that you are along the cliffs, listen out for the singing of the skylark. In appearance it is slightly smaller than a starling and has brown upper parts with heavy black streaks. The under-parts are buff to white with the breast streaked with black. The outer tail feathers are white.

John Dougall

BEACH CLEAN

The next beach clean will take place on Saturday 13th June.

Meet outside the Amusement Arcade at 10am as usual.

All are welcome, tea or coffee to finish.

2009 The weather so far

In the following, 'Temp' is the average of daytime and night-time extremes of temperatures and 'Normal' is the average over 30 years. January was clearly colder than normal but other months have been warmer. The most remarkable feature of the

weather so far this year has been the shortage of rain.

Month	Temp Deg C	Normal Deg C	Rainfall mm	Normal mm
January	3.7	4.1	33	49
February	5.1	4.1	69	30
March	7.2	5.5	25	39
April	9.1	7.3	16	36
May	11.5	9.8	32	48

Apart from February, which lived up to its nickname 'fill-dyke', rainfall totals have been well short of normal and by the end of May the ground was dry, and on clay soils, badly cracked. However, holiday weekends brought us superbly sunny weather so I guess very few will complain too loudly for fear that it might go away for the rest of the summer. The Met Office long-range forecast for the coming summer is warm and dry which is slightly worrying.

Berwick Wildlife Group

Sunday 14th June, 1.30pm. Goody Patchy. Walk led by Maurice McNeely.

A patch of unimproved grassland with orchids, woodland and old walls, now under the care of the St Boisil's and St Bartholomew's Residents Association. Meet at Dock Road entrance to Goody Patchy, near pumping station (NT 998 520).

Members and non-members are welcome at all our events. Want to know more about us at our website www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk, phone 01289 330591, e-mail mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk, or just come along to one of our events.

Border Green Festival

Celebrating our Seas and Coasts

28th June 2009

**Five Arches Playing Fields,
Tweedmouth**

11am – 5.30pm

**Adults £2.50, Concessions £1,
Children under 14 FREE,**

THE PARISH CHURCH

The church now has a fund-raising manager for the repairs to the west window and we are hopeful that we shall be able to replace the badly worn stonework within the year. Many of you will have noticed that the railings and support pillars are in a bad condition, so the church is also working to replace these.

The next fund-raising event is the **SUMMER ANNIVERSARY FETE** in the church grounds at 2.00 pm on **Saturday June 20th** so do please come along and help us raise the funds that we need.

PS Contrary to rumour, I am **not** about to leave St John's Spittal, nor St Peter's Scremerston, – but Averil and I are in the process of buying a retirement place in the Tyne valley to which we will move at some future date. OK ?

Rev John Harrison

AND FINALLY

Gladys Friday

Still Gladys receives no call to be the Gala Queen – what a gorgeous talent going to waste !!!

A clergyman was introduced to a sweet little old lady in the retirement home that he was visiting. During the Sunday service that he had conducted he had talked about forgiving our enemies, so he asked the lady whether she had forgiven her enemies – to which she replied that she didn't have any. "How is it that after so many years of life, you don't have an enemy in the world?" he asked. The lady looked him straight in the face and said "I've outlived the bitches".

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Printed in Spittal by Shiel and Morrison