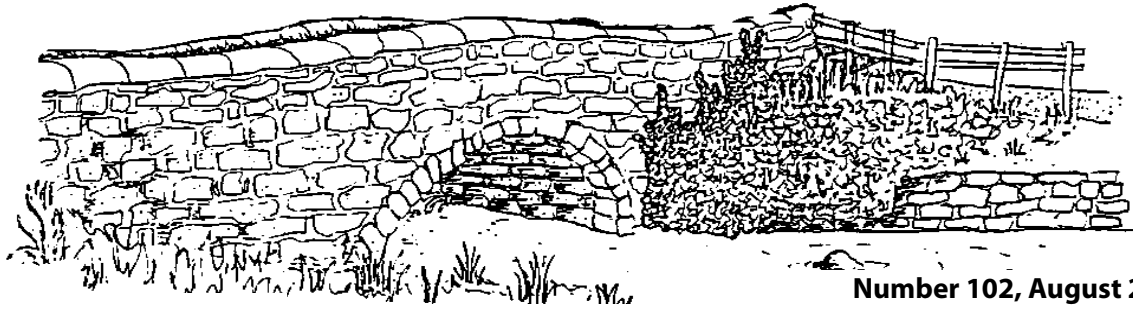


CLAPHAM & DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



Number 102, August 2016

CLAPHAM STREET FAIR — *the same but different!*



Clapham Street Fair is one of those village traditions where the charm seems to lie in the fact that so much of it is the same year after year. It is always the fourth Saturday in July (whatever that date is); it is always held on Riverside in Clapham; it always has the air of a traditional village fete, with the stalls lining the streets and the usual range of tombolas, raffles, cakes, jams, bric a brac etc.

However, there are also things that make Clapham Street Fair just that little bit special every year. Saint James' Church, which organises the Street Fair as its main fundraising exercise, takes great pride in the fact that the event enables so many other charities and community groups to raise funds for their own good causes. Many come every year but there are also new ones. Two new groups joining in have been the Forget Me Not Children's Hospice and the Bentham Area Refugee Support Group. This year it was also possible to welcome a group of 16 refugees

and asylum seekers from various world trouble spots who are now based in Blackburn.

They had a terrific time and it was tremendous to see the children joining in with the Morris Dancing which was led by Rainbow Morris. Their leader expressed their appreciation in an email, perhaps summing up the day:

The day was fantastic especially for children, who enjoyed it the most. It was an interesting experience for all of us as it was totally a community event.

There were also some records broken on the day:

- The most Duck Race tickets ever sold – 700.
- 60 cars in the fantastic Classic Car Rally.
- 427 bacon butties sold!

... and probably others.

If we add to all of this the great music making of Dales Jam, great crowds and perfect weather we can agree that, once again, we had a Grand Day Out!

(More Street Fair pictures on pages 8 & 9)

Sue Mann

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CHURCH NEWS

The Vicar's thoughts . . .

EU Referendum: Statement by Archbishops of Canterbury and York

Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop John Sentamu issued this joint statement after the UK voted to leave the European Union.

On June 23rd, millions of people from across the United Kingdom voted in the referendum, and a majority expressed a desire that Britain's future is to be outside the European Union.

The outcome of this referendum has been determined by the people of this country. It is now the responsibility of the Government, with the support of Parliament, to take full account of the outcome and, in the light of this, decide upon the next steps.

The vote to withdraw from the European Union means that now we must all re-imagine both what it means to be the United Kingdom in an interdependent world and what values and virtues should shape and guide our relationships with others.

As citizens of the United Kingdom, whatever our views during the referendum campaign, we must now unite in a common task to build a generous and forward looking country, contributing to human flourishing around the world. We must remain hospitable and compassionate, builders of bridges and not barriers. Many of those living amongst us as neighbours, friends and work colleagues come from overseas and some will feel a deep sense of insecurity. We must respond by offering reassurance, by cherishing our wonderfully diverse society, and by affirming the unique contribution of each and every one.

The referendum campaign has been vigorous and at times has caused hurt to those on one side or the other. We must therefore act with humility and courage – being true to the principles that make the very best of our nation. Unity, hope and generosity will enable us to overcome the period of transition that will now happen, and to emerge confident and successful. The opportunities and challenges that face us as a nation and as global citizens are too significant for us to settle for less.

As those who hope and trust in the living God, let us pray for all our leaders, especially for our new Prime Minister Theresa May.

We also pray for leaders across Europe, and around the world, as they face this dramatic change. Let us pray especially that we may go forward to

build a good United Kingdom that, though relating to the rest of Europe in a new way, will play its part amongst the nations in the pursuit of the common good throughout the world.

*Blessings as ever,
Ian*

DIARY DATES FOR AUGUST

Sunday, 7th – 'Songs of Praise' at Clapham Caravan Park at 3 pm – Keasden Church Walk and Barbecue – meet at Clapham Wood Farm at 6 pm.

Monday, 15th – Wednesday – Vicar's Sponsored Run along the 80 miles long Cumbria Way from Ulverston to Carlisle.

Wednesday, 24th – Afternoon Church Fellowship – visit to Liverpool Cathedral.

27-29 August – Special Craft and Flower Display in Clapham Church.

PARISH NOTICES

Church Flowers – Please add your name to the rota at the back of Church if you would like to put flowers in Church for a Sunday Service. The ladies who regularly see to the flowers would be happy to arrange them on your behalf.

Austwick and Clapham Church Book Sales – If you're short of a good read you may find what you're looking for at the back of Church where there is a good selection of reading material from hardbacks through to magazines. Please leave a small donation with all proceeds going towards the upkeep of the Church.

CHURCH SERVICES IN AUGUST

Sunday, 7th 9.30 am Holy Communion at Austwick and Eldroth

11.00 am Holy Communion at Clapham and Keasden

Sunday, 14th 9.30 am Morning Prayer at Austwick

11.00 am Holy Communion at Clapham

2.00 pm Holy Communion at Keasden

6.30 pm Holy Communion at Austwick

Sunday, 21st 9.30 am Holy Communion at Austwick

11.00 am Holy Communion at Clapham

6.45 pm Evensong at Keasden

7.00 pm Evensong at Eldroth

Sunday, 28th 9.30 am Holy Communion at Austwick. No service at Clapham

2.00 pm Evensong at Keasden

Holy Communion is held in Austwick Church every Wednesday at 10.30 am.

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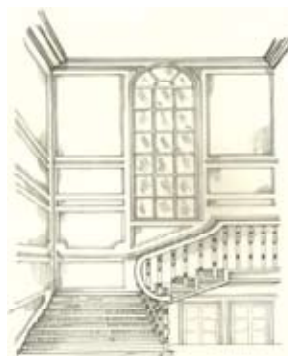
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Photo courtesy of John Cheeseborough

Tallulah takes a star turn

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The Craven Accordion Orchestra was in concert at St James' Church on Saturday, July 2nd.

Those who had previously attended a concert by them knew that they were going to hear some excellent arrangements and were not disappointed. Those attending for the first time were amazed at the sounds produced by the orchestra and said they had no idea what to expect and what a thoroughly enjoyable evening it had been. The guest soloist was our own very talented Tallulah Williams who began playing at Clapham Primary School and has further developed her musical skills.

The orchestra, under the leadership of its musical director, Harry Hinchcliffe, is based at Cross Hills. It aims to enable accordionists of all ages and abilities to play and to practise together and give them the opportunity to play in public and to improve their confidence and music skills, thereby bringing live music to the community. For further details contact www.cravenaccordionorchestra.co.uk.

Music included works by Sousa, Glenn Miller, James Horner and arrangements by Daniel Hinchcliffe who conducted the orchestra. The orchestra has been booked for a return visit on June 24th, 2017 – don't miss it!

Liz Mason

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Clapham Village Store

The shop's annual general meeting on July 19th was well-attended, with around 40 people (mostly shareholders) coming along to hear about how well the shop has done over the last year. The minutes and annual accounts will be available from our website www.claphamvillagestore.co.uk/downloads.

For the past year, the shop's management committee has consisted of Jill Gates (treasurer), Marilyn Galpin, Keith Blondel, Sue Mann (vice chair), Denise Wilson, Diane Elphinstone (co-opted secretary), and myself (chair). To enable new members with new ideas and energy to play their part in managing the shop, the company rules state that each year a third of committee members has to step down to make way for new members to be elected. Those stepping down can, however, stand for re-election. Keith stepped down, Sue and Denise stepped down but put themselves forward for re-election, Diane, who had been co-opted onto the board late last year, now stood for election, and there were three new nominations – Angela Peach, Kathy Hall and Chrissie Bell. All six were unanimously voted in. I'd like to thank Keith for his help and welcome Angela, Kathy and Chrissie onto the board.

I will be stepping down as chair, so at the next management committee meeting in September the members will elect a new chair.

The shop is doing well, and with the ongoing support of residents, committed staff and volunteers and an effective management committee I'm sure it will continue to be the heart of the village.

*Don Gamble, Chair
Clapham Village Store*

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Clapham Playpark

The new shelter is being installed in mid-August and it will be a nice additional feature for younger children to play in.

One of the benches was recently broken and was repaired by Ken Buttrick, who lives close to the playpark. Our thanks go to Ken, and to David Crutchley and Tracey Bilton for raising funds for the costs of ongoing maintenance and insurance.

*Don Gamble
Clapham Park Association
015242 51775*

How to choose a wife (or sheep!) . . . by John Dawson

At Bleak Bank we keep three main breeds of sheep, Dalesbred, Teeswater and Masham. We cross the Dalesbred sheep (mum) with the Teeswater tup (dad) to produce the Masham lamb. The gimmers (girls) are sold for breeding in the autumn sales and are dispersed around the country. The boys are reared and go into the food chain as they reach weight. It's a substantial part of our income and helps to keep the overdraft in check, or at least that's what I tell myself.

Over the years it has occasionally been my privilege to be asked to judge these breeds at local shows or the annual sales that each breed society holds.

This year I was asked to officiate at the Great Yorkshire Show and judge the Masham classes. The letter arrived in January, and if the offer is accepted, you agree to not judge at any other major agricultural show for the rest of the season, although I am not sure how that could be policed.

Judging is much less work than showing, for example any breeder entering sheep for the show at the Yorkshire has been preparing them for months. They need to be taught to stand in the correct manner which is very time consuming, the best method is "little and often" which means show sheep tend to live near the house in order to make it easier to spend half an hour with them in an evening – after Coronation Street. They need to be dipped to colour the wool and just before show day the faces and legs are washed thoroughly with soap and water to remove sheep grease and give them a bright and healthy appearance.

Livestock are at the show for all three days and each exhibitor is responsible for the welfare of their own animals which often means staying on site and sleeping in the sheep pens, cattle trailer or the old caravan that usually lives in the nettles behind the cowshed. I have nothing but admiration for the commitment of time and effort made by those who exhibit livestock in order to promote the breed they keep.

All I have to do is turn up after a hearty breakfast (at the show's expense) and put them in the correct order, or at least in the order that I consider to be correct, which could be a different thing. The thing about judging sheep is that it is very much like being the England football manager, everyone knows how it needs to be done and when the competition is over everyone knows exactly where the judge got it wrong.

I remember many years ago at a local show the owner of a sheep that came second was not happy, he questioned the judge about "Why as ta put mine second?" He obviously thought it deserved better. The judge stood his ground and replied "Cos that's where it should be" and walked away.

I have shown sheep at many local shows and some of the best advice I ever received was that if you come second say very little and if you come first – say nowt.

It is true in the sheep showing world that if you are a poor loser then it is best not to get involved at any level, the effort, the tension and the nerves will just drive you to an early grave. Much better to stick with something less wearing – like bomb disposal.

Judging sheep is much like looking for a wife or



John Dawson judges the Mashams

(I imagine) a husband. The first look down the row of exhibits immediately tells me which are going to be in my top four or five, no matter how many are out in the class. They are the ones that have drawn my eye in the way they are presented, they need to be stood proud with long necks, class and a certain style (wife/husband). Having walked down the row and allowed those first impressions to sink in, it is time to work back through the sheep in much more detail, starting at the head, is the colour right? Is the black black? The white white? How are those teeth? Are they short, broad, and behind the grazing pad? How is the fleece? Is it free of black wool? How is the staple? Is the fleece too open? Could it keep the weather out? How well does it walk? Are the front legs too close together because the chest is too narrow? All this information is kept in my head as the class continues.

It is vital to remember that each exhibitor has gone to great lengths with their pride and joy and as a judge it is my duty to treat each sheep as a prospective winner, even though I already know who is in my top five. I like to encourage a new or younger exhibitor and get them as far up the line as possible in the firm belief that "praise is a powerful engine", but it has to be on merit.

Many of the exhibitors have a good idea as to how they are going to do even as I start. They can see that their animal is on top form, or not, it's in with a shout, or not. My job is to be certain in my mind that I can explain my reasoning at the end. Basically the sheep that is truest to the breed standard and the one I would most like to take back to Bleak Bank wins (back to the wife/husband thing again).

When the classes have been judged, there are four in the Masham section, a breed champion is selected from the class winners and this animal goes forward into the inter breed section to compete for champion sheep on the field while I go for my dinner, again at the show's expense.

We are hosting a BBQ on Saturday, August 13th from 6.30 pm onwards to which all are welcome. There will be the opportunity to have a go at sheep judging. Please ring on 51350 so we have an idea of numbers.





Warm and sunny weather ensured a steady flow of happy visitors to the Street Fair. Stall holders reported good takings, and the total raised for St James will be published in the next issue.

Top row from left: the book stall; the bacon butties sell out; Cave Rescue are well supported; Barbara Marshall clears her last few bottles; one of the beautiful historic cars which almost filled the Car Park; the White Elephant doing brisk business; pet charities prove popular; Justina Sexton's beautiful flowers; Church Avenue in the sunshine and Ken and Brenda Pearce add literary flair to the mix.



Update and thoughts from Eggshell Lane

May I first say a huge thank you to all those who so kindly send me good wishes cards and also those who dropped in to see me at Lancaster Royal Infirmary. While I was there, Clapham and district was well represented amongst the patients!

I am progressing well I think, if far too slowly for my liking, but despite the brain being the amazing machine that it is, time is required after the type of stroke that I had, for the brain to find new ways to address the affected arm and leg. I have learned that the neural pathways from brain to limbs are fewer to the arm and hand than to the leg and the foot. I found this surprising, since the hand is capable of very dextrous movements, if a left hand can be dextrous. The leg and foot on the other hand (sorry couldn't resist that) are not just making physical movements, but are responsible for balance information too, thus neurologically more complex. So arm recovers faster than leg.

Interestingly, people I meet very kindly comment that I am looking well. Despite the time in hospital, so far I haven't felt ill at all; shocked, worried, tired and frustrated at my limbs losing their education, but not ill. I have been very lucky that the only things affected are my arm and leg.

I have nothing but praise for the staff at Lancaster Royal Infirmary. If only more politicians could spend time in hospital under NHS care, perhaps facilities, staffing levels and wages would become more appropriate for the wonderful care that is administered.

Remember F.A.S.T. If you think you are in the presence of someone you think is having a stroke:

F: FACE Has the face fallen on one side?
Can they smile?

A: ARMS Can they raise both arms and
keep them there?

S: SPEECH Is their speech slurred?

T: TIME Time to call 999 if you see any
one of these signs.

Note the time it occurred. You will be asked and it is significant in terms of diagnosis.

I hope to see you out and about soon.

Best wishes, Gus Stewart

If you wish to advertise in the Newsletter please contact Ray Hull at Park View, Church Ave, Clapham LA2 8EA. If you have an article or some interesting news that you would like to appear in the newsletter please email: hull365@btinternet.com or phone 51492.

The Hylton memorial bench in Newby

Dick Hylton lived in Newby until his untimely death (in a road traffic accident) 40 years ago. He was the local postie and, despite having only one leg, his main mode of transport was by bicycle. Dick was a keen caver and an active member of Clapham's Northern Pennine Club based at Greenclose (just off the Bentham road). There is a memorial bench dedicated to him outside the Methodist chapel in Newby.

Many senior members of the NPC remember Dick and a few of us are interested in trying to restore the memorial bench, which is fast deteriorating. For some time I've been attempting to find the owner of this bench to ask permission to do some work on it. Several local folk have helped me with this, for which I'm very grateful. We're pretty sure the bench was commissioned by Dick's sister, who lived out Lancaster way. However, no-one seems to have had contact with her for a great many years.

Does anyone know how I might get in touch with Dick's sister, or have any idea of her whereabouts? Does anyone know her full name (as her surname is unlikely to be Hylton if she married)? Is anyone aware of any other surviving family members? The easiest way to pass on information is probably by leaving a note for me in the Clapham shop, as I'm there each Thursday evening and often at other times as well. Please help if you can; thanks.

John Cordingley

Bulk oil buying scheme

Once again we are asking for a contribution of £1 from households participating in the Bulk Oil Buying scheme run by Glenys McMahon. As you are aware this is to cover running expenses, such as telephone costs incurred by Glenys over the past year. We hope you will find this a reasonable request and an acceptable amount in view of the savings we all make on our domestic fuel bills and in appreciation of the work carried out by Glenys on our behalf.

Your contribution can be made at Clapham Village Shop. Next time you visit the please ask for the Domestic Fuel contribution box kept under the shop counter. Don't forget to tick your name on the list and add 'paid'.

Many thanks to those of you who have already paid.

*Clapham Waste Reduction Group
Part of Clapham Sustainability Group*

BOXING THE CLOCK

When the present church clock was installed in 1885 its works were quickly encased in a tall wooden cupboard to protect them from dust and unskilled interference. This cupboard suffered extensively from woodworm as the decades passed. When in 2009 the tower had to undergo major restoration it was decided to have the clock overhauled as well. So on August 18th 2009 the worm-eaten cupboard was removed piece by piece so that the clock could be dismantled and taken away to the clock doctor's. The cupboard and its woodworm were consigned to the flames.

I blithely promised to make a new casing for the clock on its return. In April 2014 I wrote a short piece for the Newsletter in which I wrote that "The new wooden casing is now being constructed." Finishing the job has sadly taken a long time – it was not until June 11th this year that a small working party lifted the hatches in two of the floors within the tower and hauled the last component parts of the new casing up to the clock chamber where they were slotted into place.

The old cupboard had been made of solid boards which entirely hid the works of the clock. When in 2011 the many parts were returned from the clock doctor's, each bright and shining, gleaming with new paint to be carefully re-assembled, it seemed quite wrong that the magnificent machine should once again work away in the dark, unseen and unsung. The new casing has been built to reveal the works in all their glory, with 12 glazed panels like sash windows which allow the whole of the enclosed machinery to be viewed from three sides while keeping it free from dust. The top and bottom sections together stand nearly 2.4 metres high, nearly 1.25 metres wide and 1.1 metres deep from front to back. The 12 sashes are firmly held in six stout wooden frames screwed together in such a way that the assembly can be dismantled to allow the whole mechanism to be accessed easily by the clock doctor should that ever be necessary. Meanwhile each sash can be removed individually to allow any part of the mechanism to be attended to. The 12 panes of glass are safety glass. The finishing touch will be internal lighting to allow the works to be seen during the dark winter months or evening emergencies.

For reasons of economy all the wood used had been recycled, salvaged from Valerie Potter's old house, Bridge Cottage, during improvements. Many of the brass screws used came from the old wooden sailing dinghy which used to be a feature in the school play area. The new casing has been made



strictly in accordance with Clapham's philosophy of re-use and recycle. It has taken a long time but has been a remarkably low-cost job.

Ken Pearce

Festival of Flowers and Crafts

This will take place at Saint James' Church, Clapham on August 27th, 28th, 29th (Bank Holiday weekend).

There will be flower arranging sessions in advance. For more information contact Melanie Greenhalgh on 51313.

Spaces are available for crafters, both to sell items and to clear out their cupboards! Spaces are 4' by 2' and the table is provided. Costs are £10 per day, £25 for three days. For more information contact Sue Mann on 51792.

Did you know!

I didn't. We can now dispose of food cartons (washed) in the blue bins along with glass bottles, food and drink tins, aerosols and plastic bottles. The cartons are the ones that hold juices, soups, milks, sauces etc. I saw a notice for Settle residents at the Whitefriars car park recycling area and telephoned Craven District Council to find out if the new facility for Settle applies to Clapham. And it does.

Ann Stewart

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This free Newsletter aims to keep everyone in Clapham, Keasden and Newby in touch with what is happening in our community. It does, however, cost a significant amount to produce, and advertising is a very necessary aid to the finances. An advert costs as little as £3.50 per issue. To advertise your products and services, please contact Ray Hull on 015242 51492 or by email below.

Articles, news and ideas please for the next issue
by **25th June, 2016** to

Chrissie Bell: ChrisHarte@aol.com
or Ray Hull: hull365@btinternet.com

Local men who fell at the Somme, 100 years ago

It was Franz Ferdinand's 14th wedding anniversary. He was heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire and there would be great celebrations. The date was June 28, 1914 and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie had been invited to an official reception in the town hall in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia. On the way they had a narrow escape when a bomb was lobbed into their open carriage. The Archduke, with great presence of mind, picked it up and threw it into the road. But a second attempt killed them both, shot by a 19 year-old Serbian student. A month later the Emperor declared war on Serbia and within days the principal European powers mobilised for war, Britain declaring hostilities on August 4th.

In February 1916 there were 700,000 French casualties at Verdun. As a result the French put enormous pressure on Britain to mount a joint offensive against Germany. They chose the River Somme, a battleground which the Germans had occupied since October 1914. They had taken high ground wherever possible and had fortified it with three lines of trenches, a metre-high belt of stout barbed wire 20-30 metres deep, more trenches behind and deep dugouts in which to shelter from the anticipated British bombardment. The week-long bombardment failed to destroy many of these dugouts, with the result that when it ended and British troops were ordered to walk towards the German lines, countless thousands were mown down by machine gunners who emerged from below ground.

The carnage was awful. More than 57,000 were injured on that first of July day, of whom more than 19,000 were killed. The battle wore on until the November of that year and continued sporadically throughout the remainder of the war.

Among those killed or wounded on the Somme were the following men from Clapham:

Harold Camm (Clapham post office) – enlisted aged 16½ yrs, wounded in July 1916 on the Somme, invalided to Britain, returned to the Front and wounded again in February 1917 while carrying a wounded officer to the rear.

Robert Casson (Hammon Head farm) – invalided home with 'septic poisoning' in October 1916, fought on the Somme and in the 3rd Battle of Ypres, killed in action on April 13 1918.

Thomas Casson (probably Hammon Head farm) – gunner in D Battery of the Royal Field Artillery 79th Brigade, went to France in October 1916, fought on the Somme, killed April 14 1917, probably directing fire from an observation post in the Battle of Arras.

Ralph Corbett (one-time Clapham resident) – landed in France July 1915 and died of wounds on July 13 1917 probably sustained in the early stages on the Somme.



The grave of Sydney Cross

Sydney Cross (Clapham Station post office) – hospitalised after fighting in thigh-deep freezing water without boots on the island of Limnos off Turkey in December 1915, killed in action July 7 1916 aged 19, close to Ovillers in the Battle of the Somme.

Arthur Harrison (Brackengarth, Keasden) – died on the Somme on May 31, 1917, possibly of earlier wounds.

William Marklew (probably born in Newby) – arrived in France during December 1915, died July 24, 1916, of wounds thought to have been sustained during some of the worst fighting on the Somme.

Frederick Stockdale (born in Clapham) – emigrated to Canada with his parents but on October 15 1916 was killed in action on the Somme fighting in a Canadian regiment. His Unit War Diary suggests that he was killed by 'friendly fire' from British heavy artillery.

Henry Taylor (born in Clapham) – moved to Sutton-in-Craven and worked as a wool-sorter before enlisting, killed on the Somme 5 July 1916.

These nine men are taken from the total of 76 Clapham parish men who fought in the First World War. The nine are all believed to have died in the Battle of the Somme. We should remember them particularly at this time 100 years on – and at all times.

(This information is thought to be factual but corrections and further information would be welcome. Thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Lovett for help with this article.)

Ken Pearce

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Development Association

We are delighted to announce that after much discussion and planning, the new Clapham signs have now been installed. The old signs were originally placed by the Clapham Traders Group, (our predecessors) about 30 years ago.

We are grateful to Councillor David Ireton and an anonymous donor, who have between them virtually covered the £2,500 required for the three signs.

We also thank the Ingleborough Estate and farmers for allowing the placement of the signs and finally the members of the Clapham Development Association who gave up a lot of time to ensure that the message would be clear and concise so that visitors to the village will know that we have something worthwhile to offer.

David Kingsley



You are invited to join us at our
COFFEE MORNING
 at Arbutus House, Riverside, Clapham
 on Friday, 16th September
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Seabird bonanza on Handa Island

The birdlife around the local area has been fairly quiet recently, so I am writing about the island of Handa where myself and Tommy Coultherd have worked as volunteers for the Scottish Wildlife Trust for one week in May for the past three years.

Handa Island is situated in north west Scotland about 20 miles south of Cape Wrath. The island is one mile off shore from a small harbour called Tarbet. The only access to the island is by a small boat that carries a maximum of 12 people from the end of March to the end of August.

The island is approximately three square miles in size and is bounded with steep cliffs on three sides, one of which is named the Great Wall and reaches up to nearly 400 feet.

On the south side of the island the cliffs are not as high and there are several sandy beaches where the boat lands, depending on the weather conditions.

There are no facilities on the island, such as cars, planes, trains or shops. There used to be a village, but the population left during the potato famine of 1847. The only residents that live on the island now are the long-term wardens, and they are there between March and September, and the weekly volunteers. The accommodation for everyone is in the one and only bothy on the island (which sleeps up to 10 people). The visitors have to bring their own food, enough to last them through their stay on the island.

Handa is primarily a seabird island where thousands of guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes and fulmars breed. Although there are also about 300 puffins we only regularly saw about 10 to 20 as we walked around the island each evening. Great skuas and Arctic skuas also breed on the island, and fortunately, during the early part of May is the time when they do not dive-bomb visitors to their



The giant skua

breeding area, so you can get quite close to them. A few waders, such as snipe, oystercatcher and ringed plover can also be observed.

Land birds are quite scarce with only wren, meadow pipit, skylark, wheatear, blackbird and willow warbler. Cuckoos also try to breed, using the meadow pipit as the host species. One male cuckoo was very annoying as it would start calling at about 4am right outside the bothy (a very early alarm call).

A great number of migrant birds has appeared and the best I have seen were the black-tailed godwit, barnacle goose, short-eared owl and summer-plumages sanderlings.

Grey seals, common dolphins, harbour porpoises and occasionally minke whales have also been seen around the island. I was lucky enough on our last trip to see a minke whale just 100 yards off the shore.

If you are ever in north-west Scotland I recommend a day visit to Handa, it is well worth the trip just to enjoy the views and the seabirds.

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