

# SEASCALE

## VILLAGE NEWSLETTER



AUTUMN/WINTER 2006/7

# PARISH NEWS

We have had a record number of visitors this summer owing to the fact that we have had some of the best weather for a few years. We have a free car park and even the sorry story of the dead whale brought in the visitors.

*I'm afraid the Villagate pavements and the grassed areas that have been left to go wild are still causing us a problem. The whole of the village is starting to look scruffy because of the grass. We feel let down by the lack of response from Dixon and Webb over pavements and not being able to establish ownership of the uncut grassed areas.*

**We had to purchase a new goal post for Coniston Avenue as one of them was becoming dangerous; in between the old one being removed and the new one put in place someone removed one of the stainless steel sleeves that had been keeping these posts in place – it is unbelievable what some people will sink to.**

*We have had major work done on the west facing wall of the Sports Hall so this should eliminate ingress of water.*

**The toilets on the beach have had a facelift and the railings have been repainted.**

*The slide on the beach has had a lot of work done, thanks to some very hard working councillors and members of the public.*

**We have four new seats – two on the beach, one on Arch Hill and one outside the Library.**

*The Front Garden Competition was once again a success. Thanks go to the judges. A list of winners is printed in this newsletter.*

**We have been promised some high visibility markings on the road approaching the school. These will be put in place after Christmas.**

*We would like to congratulate the Seascale Cricket Club on their very successful season – they won the Midweek League and came runners up in the North Lancs and Cumbria 2nd Division. The Juniors also had a very successful season.*

Lastly, thanks to Judith and Trevor for continuing to produce the newsletter and to all of you who take the trouble to say how much you enjoy reading it.

*Eileen Eastwood, Chairman*

## The Dell

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We are desperate for someone to come forward and volunteer to keep the grill in the dell stream free from weeds and rubbish. On 20 September the water was up to the lintel and more rain was forecast. I asked Ken Mawson if he would come and help me to free the grill and lower the water level – it only took half an hour. There must be someone who could spare 10-15 minutes each week to ensure that the stream flows properly. It cost a lot of money to be refurbished and it would be a shame to let it become overgrown and flood the surrounding area, as in days prior to 2002, and maybe cause a serious accident.

I have given up this job once, so Volunteers – please contact Barbara Ramsden on 28126.

## Seascale Sports Hall

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Now autumn is here you should start thinking about using your Sports Hall.

We have purchased some new soft play with the help of a grant from Neighbourhood Forum. This will enhance the Friday mornings of mothers and toddlers and also parties.

Please contact a committee member for more information or if you are new in the village contact a member to show you round.

Eileen Eastwood, Chairman	019467 28653
Jen McClemmens, Treasurer	019467 28201
Linda Platt	019467 27335
Pat Kirkham, Secretary	019467 28929
Bernard Dickinson	019467 27288
Alan Bell	019467 28761

We would welcome new committee members.

## Calendar for 2007 with Seascale Scenes

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The Methodist church in Seascale has prepared a calendar with scenes of the village and its life. It will be on sale from mid-October price £5. It could make a good present for family members and friends who have moved away and would like to be reminded of their times in Seascale.

Copies will be available every Saturday morning in the Methodist Church hall and from John and Judy Hall (28542) and from David and Glenda Davies (28404).

## NSPCC

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Seascale NSPCC last year raised £1,583.68 which goes to the Wedgewood centre in Whitehaven helping children who have suffered physical, sexual or emotional abuse. The committee would like to thank the people of Seascale and district for all the help and support they have given us. Our forthcoming event is a concert by Wyndham Wind Band on Tuesday, 21 November at St Cuthbert's Hall – always a lovely evening so please come again and support us.

*Joyce Roberts, Chairperson*

## Seascale Soft Play

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Seascale Sports Hall provides the venue for a very popular event for parents and toddlers. The bouncy castle and soft play area allows local children from near and far to come and expend their energy in a safe and friendly environment. (A parent or carer must be present to supervise their child.) Refreshments are provided, and there is a small charge to cover costs. Softplay is held on the 2nd and last Friday of each month (excluding Christmas holidays and Good Friday) from 9.15 to 11.15am. The next dates are as follows:

13 October	27 October	10 November
24 November	8 December	12 January
26 January	9 February	23 February
9 March	30 March	

**Seascale Parish Council is happy to accept donations for advertisements placed in the Seascale Newsletter. The expected rate is £10 for a quarter-page, and pro-rata for larger advertisements. Contact: Eileen Eastwood on 28653.**

## Seascale Churches' Advent and Christmas Celebrations 2006

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### Advent Sunday 3 December at 6.30pm

Advent Carol Service at St Cuthbert's with the Amethyst Green Choir (note that the service will include Advent, not Christmas, hymns and carols)

### Sunday 10 December at 6.30pm

United Christingle Service at St Cuthbert's

### Sunday 17 December at 6.30pm

United Village Carol Service at St Cuthbert's

### Friday 22 December at 7.00pm

Carol Service at St Peter's, Drigg with the West Cumberland Choral Society's Youth Choir

### Christmas Eve

9.00am: Mass at St Joseph's

9.30am: Parish Communion at St Cuthbert's

10.00am: Morning Worship at the Methodist Church

4.30pm: The Crib Service at St Cuthbert's

11.30pm: Midnight Communion at St Cuthbert's

### Christmas Day

9.0am: Mass at St Joseph's

10.00am: All-Age Christmas Worship at the Methodist Church

10.00am: Holy Communion at St Cuthbert's

## Christmas Lights

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The lights will be switched on this year on Sunday, 10 December. The afternoon will kick off at 3.00pm and end with the usual refreshments in the Pavilion. We hope to see you all enjoying the band and the fireworks – watch notice boards for more information.

Seascale Parish Council

# Amenities Report

## Arch-hill

You will have noticed, I am sure, a new fence round the grassed area on arch-hill courtesy of Network Rail, and also a little tree which Ken Mawson kindly watered during the hot weather. We have also raised money for the hexagonal seat. Some of the old privets have been removed and Copeland Borough Council have sprayed the area prior to landscaping and grassing the area. We have had the promise of another seat and specimen bushes will be planted in the autumn or early spring.

## The Foreshore

Those with small children will have noticed – I hope – that the embankment behind the slide has been repaired. My thanks for all the hard work entailed in the repair go to Keith and Vicky Borrino, Mark Neate, Ian Simcock and David Moore. It was hot, hard work but worth it. Unfortunately it was laid on 16 July in the heat-wave, but David Taylorson did a marvellous job

watering it well for the first week. I took over for the second week.

I appeal to all parents to try and encourage their children to go up the steps and not to climb up the grassed embankment – if it breaks down again there will be no alternative but to remove the slide for good.

There are also two new seats on the foreshore. One has been donated by the Round Table to whom we say a big thank you.

## The Sun-clock

A notice has been placed by the sun-clock on the castle wall with full instructions on how to use the clock.

Last but not least I report the retirement of John Hodgson, the play-inspector for Copeland Borough Council. He has been a great help to me as amenities chairman; his help and guidance will be sadly missed.

*Barbara Ramsden*

# Rapunzel

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# Cold Calling in Seascale

Cold calling exclusion zones are springing up across the UK as householders try to deter door-to-door callers. Such zones can be seen as part of a growing trend among people wishing to sever themselves from all unsolicited contact. Seascale is now officially one of these and signs have been placed at both ends of the village, but people are confused as to how these signs work.

The ban covers all-comers and is partly designed to deter “distraction burglars” who tend to exploit elderly and vulnerable homeowners. But, in truth, such schemes are relatively toothless. Trading Standards and Police can be called to warn callers off, or search suspected burglars, but to date there is no sanction for cold calling itself. Nevertheless, it is important to report these uninvited intruders to the Police to enable them to judge how this initiative is working.

Cold callers come in many disguises and the latest trend is for charities to hire a firm to street call to persuade people to fill in a donation form. This will mean that they will request your bank details and other private information that should never be given to strangers. These people are known as “chuggers” and are usually paid on commission so they are bound to apply pressure. It also means that part of the money you are donating will go to paying their wage!

All this gives a perfect opportunity for unscrupulous people to pose as a legitimate caller. It is very easy to supply yourself with fake identification and charm your way into someone’s confidence. We are all familiar with the horror stories of people being ripped off by bogus tarmacers and so-called house repairers but even that well-spoken lady collecting envelopes might not be as innocent as you think.

In a Trading Standards Institute survey of 9000 people, 98% said they did not want cold callers; none said they welcomed them. This included unsolicited mail and phone calls.

If, however, you decide to do business with a firm knocking on your door it is wise to familiarise yourself with your rights.

## Key Facts

The Doorstep Selling Regulations give customers:

1. The right to a seven day cooling-off period during which they may cancel an agreement to buy goods or services worth more than £35 from a trader whose visit is unsolicited.

Beware though, if you have had goods installed in your home before the seven day cooling-off period, e.g.: fitted kitchen or security system, it is your duty to pay in accordance with the contract for the supply of goods and the provision of any services in connection with the supply of goods before cancellation.

2. The same right to a seven day cooling-off period where a visit by a trader follows an unsolicited doorstep or telephone approach.

Traders who fail to inform consumers in writing of their right to a cooling-off period are committing a criminal offence. Door-to-door traders must provide a notice setting out cancellation rights when any agreement is made. Failure to do so makes the agreement unenforceable, whether a deposit is paid or not.

Another annoying and intrusive type of cold-calling is via the telephone. There is nothing more frustrating than to answer a call only to be greeted with silence. Many silent calls are caused by the computerised dialling equipment that is common in telesales. The equipment often dials more numbers than there are call centre operators available – in the expectation that some of the people being called will not be at home. This can leave recipients without an operator on the end of the line, resulting in a “silent call” which is irritating at best, but sometimes quite distressing.

If you want to prevent this, register with the Silent Callguard Service: [www.silentcallguard.co.uk](http://www.silentcallguard.co.uk); or if you wish to stop unwanted sales people phoning, register with Telephone Preference Service: [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk).

*Vicky Borrino*

### **Door to Door Salesmen**

It has been brought to our attention that some door-to-door salesmen have said they have licences granted by Copeland Borough Council. We have checked with Copeland BC and this is not true – they do not give licences for door-to-door selling.

## Conveniences

Well over 20 years ago a lady called Pam Sinclair used to make cards – her husband did photographs for the front and she wrote original verses for the inside.

Those of you who can remember the antiquated toilets we had will appreciate this verse that was written for one of our popular characters in the village who built the toilets in the car park.

### HOGG'S BOGS

Victorians were noted  
For being most genteel  
And all forms of 'convenience'  
They hastened to conceal.

For many years at Seascale  
The gentlemen made do  
With a highly ornamental  
But antiquated Loo.

However, it was handy,  
(Well, handy for the MEN)  
Situated near the bus stop  
So the drivers could pop in.

Alas, for desperate ladies  
Fate hadn't been so kind  
Their loo was in the sand dunes  
(And bloody hard to find!)

After years of patient waiting  
Some bright bods set a date  
For the 'Gentlemen' and 'Ladies'  
To at last amalgamate.

They asked a friendly joiner  
One, Mr Phillip Hogg  
To raise, amid the car park,  
A new and central 'BOG'.

Well here's to the Victorians  
Who knew a thing or two,  
'HOGG'S BOGS' may be convenient  
But they sure impede the view...

## Seascale Scouts

Did you see our District Commissioner in the Great North Run on Sunday 1 October? Dave was running to, amongst other things, raise money for training equipment for scouts in our district. While he was doing that, our cubs were enjoying the experience of Carlisle Airport – I believe that the planes over the Great North Run were the Red Arrows and not the Cubs trying out the controls of some aircraft. I have no doubt that they did enjoy themselves.

Our Group Camp last July at Branthwaite was a success, but poor weather did mar it somewhat. The district trip to the South Lakes Wildlife Park, a couple of weeks later and in glorious weather, was an excellent trip as well.

Most of the Cubs and the Beavers have completed their Scientist Badges, following visits to the wildlife area at Yottenfews arranged in conjunction with British Nuclear Group. Judging by the reactions, when their coaches returned, a good time was had by all.

So what is planned for this term? There is a Beaver sleepover in a couple of weeks; on past performance, the Beavers will have a great time and the Leaders will get a little sleep – probably on the Sunday afternoon! There will be (we hope) a camp for the Explorers and Scout Patrol Leaders, to help them learn what it means to be a PL.

Explorers – the section for 14 to 18 year olds – are more flexible than Scouts, to allow the youngsters to accommodate school work. They can either work as Young Leaders, helping a section, or can follow one of two training schemes – one is purely Scout achievements, which bear a remarkably close resemblance to the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, or they can do the DOE and a couple of other awards and obtain their Chief Scout's Platinum Award. Of the three, one has elected to be Young Leader with the Beavers, and the other two are planning to complete the DOE Bronze award. You never know, in a few years we may have our first Queen's Scout in many years from within the group.

There will have also been a District Swim to enable many of our members to complete a

swimming award, and a District Christingle Service at Egremont – it's hard to believe that we are already planning Christmas events. This year, we are planning to attend the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial as usual, but afterwards we hope that many of our members will join the All Age Worship and Remembrance at the Methodist Chapel.

We do rely entirely on volunteers giving up their time to run and help run sections. It can be very rewarding, and there is always room for more to help – both as leaders or assistant leaders in all sections, or as occasional helpers. We do need a rota of parents to ensure that there are always at least two adults present, and we are very grateful to the parents who have helped us out here – the more who can help, the easier it is for all. So far as leaders and helpers go, we do provide training – maybe using the new equipment that Dave is trying to buy. If you fancy joining the Adventure, do give me a ring.

*Graham Worsnop, Group Scout Leader*  
019467 28296

## **Play and Learn at Seascale School Playgroup**

The playgroup currently runs on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for children over the age of two and up to reception age children. The Thursday Session is a family session where children who are under two can come and use the facilities under the care of their parent or guardian. They can play alongside the older children. Being on the school premises it is an ideal starting point to introduce children to the surroundings and staff who are qualified vetted people. Visits to the nursery within school are organised with the foundation stage teacher, which means smooth transition into the school setting. We are looking to increase these sessions to 5 with the hope of introducing a new mums group and more family sessions.

Anyone who is interested at looking around the facilities, meeting the staff or enrolling their child can either visit/telephone the school 019467 28403 or contact Jill Reece PALSS Manager on either 019467 21003/28403.

# **THE WINDSCALE CLUB**

**GOSFORTH ROAD**

*Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas*

Open all day Saturdays and Sundays  
Big Screen TV – all Sports Channels available

Saturday 11 Nov.	ROCK STEWART – Tribute and Disco. 7.30pm 'til late. Tickets £8
Wednesday 20 Dec.	OAPs Carol Service: With Sherry and Mince Pies 7.30pm
Saturday 23 Dec.	Live Music – The return of the ever popular Graham Brown
Tuesday 26 Dec.	Quiz Night – 8.00pm start. Great Prizes to be won
Friday 29 Dec.	Pool & Darts Competition. 8.00pm start – names in asap please

*Traditional Christmas opening hours*  
*Christmas Day 11.00am – 1.00pm*

# What is that metal plate?

There are not many reminders left of the tumultuous events surrounding the formation of the “new” parish of Seascale. There is always the local paper – but still to be found in the village is one object remaining marking the remarkable events occurring in the late 19th century. I refer to the cast iron plate found just inside the car park boundary directly across the road from Fern House. When the more observant amongst us notice this artefact, it can give rise to many questions. Such as:

What is it? Who put it there and when? – and finally “why does it protrude 3 inches above ground level”?

## Background

The three marks on this circular plate are the letters G divided by a line from a D, the letters representing the parishes of Gosforth and Drigg whilst the line signifies Whitriggs beck, aka Polly beck.

During the period 1880 to 1885, and probably for some years before, the parish councils of Gosforth and Drigg were at loggerheads concerning the new tradesman houses being built on the sea side of the railway line. Relationships between the two sets of parishioners were severely strained and there were frequent parish meetings held to allow the members to express their views on the financial implication of the building programme. The householders apparently considered themselves to be in Drigg parish and paid their rates accordingly. The fact that the parish rate for Gosforth was five times greater than that for Drigg may have had something to do with their choice.

The expansion of Seascale in accordance with the plans of the Furness Railway Company meant a large increase in the number of houses with a

resultant increase in demand for the services provided by the Council. Gosforth Parish Council wanted to maximise their income and was therefore reluctant to see any money being diverted

into Drigg. The crux of the problem centred on just where the boundary between Gosforth and Drigg was in relation to the houses already built and being built. The parish boundary was well established in that it was established as the water course of Whitriggs beck, where the north bank was in Gosforth and the

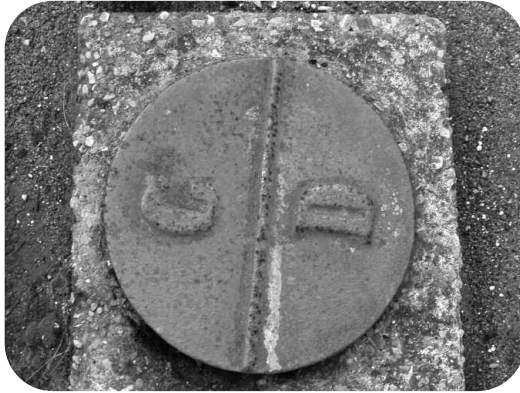
south bank in Drigg. The problem with this boundary was down to the fact that in the coastal area of low-lying sea washed turf, this beck changed its course at regular intervals. To allow a housing estate to be built on this area the beck had been re-aligned and culverted thus leaving open the question “where now was the parish boundary?”

Meanwhile the two Parish Councils maintained their positions and continued to claim rates from the residents of the houses close to the sea shore – particularly those on South Parade. Eventually the two Councils decided that this matter could only be resolved by resorting to the law.

## Resolution

The first John Wrigley (1834-1904) lived and carried out his business at the corner shop on South Parade, today known as Beach Stores. As a matter of public service he allowed himself to be sued by Gosforth Council for non-payment of his rates.

In March 1894 the case was heard in the County Court where the Judge ruled that the matter be resolved by an enquiry to be carried out by a committee consisting of the great and the good of the area and to be chaired by Lord Muncaster. This group took their evidence from all those





people who were resident in the area and who had a direct interest in the position of the parish boundary. It appears that the committee came to a decision as to the line of Whitriggs beck at a time before the building work started and that line became the official parish boundary. The line ran through the third house from the sea on South Parade, dividing it between the two parishes and hence on to the sea-shore where the car-park stands today. The greater area of this house, Fern Bank, was in Gosforth so presumably the owner paid his rates to Gosforth parish.

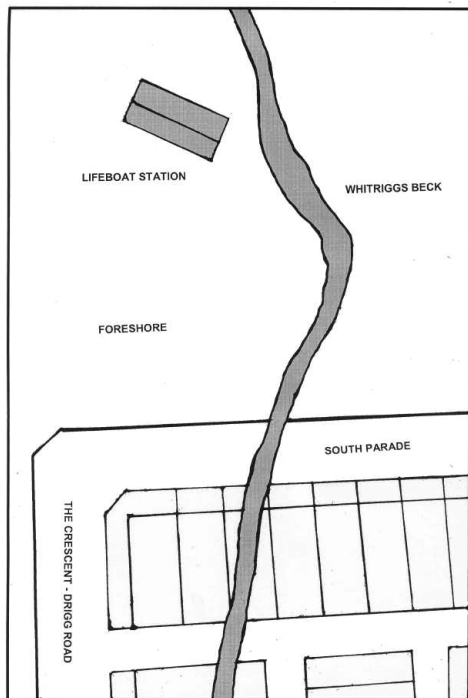
Lord Muncaster decreed that the line of this boundary would be marked for posterity with boundary markers to prevent any future altercations over who lived where. The cast iron marker plates were fixed along this boundary line back to a point on Whitriggs beck from where it had never deviated its path. These markers were once evident in the streets behind South Parade.

Matters rested there until April 1897 when the Privy Council confirmed the formation of the new civil Parish of Seascale out of the ancient Parish of Gosforth. The new parish boundaries were taken to be those of the ancient Manor of Seascale. As a result of this decision the once disputed boundary became the new boundary between Seascale and Drigg. Finally the problems generated by the village of Seascale being divided between two different Parishes was resolved in October 1901 when the Seascale/Drigg boundary was moved back to the lonning running from the Drigg Road to Panope. This expansion brought 175 people along with 21 houses and one farm into the village.

Finally, why does the metal boundary marker stand proud of the surrounding ground? Well, in 1895 this plate would have been set flush with the sea-washed turf that made up the seashore at that date. This turf and sub-soil was lost when the land was levelled in the process of making today's car park.

The enquiry that was held to fix the boundary position was very useful in explaining the name of Nebb house – and it had nothing to do with the burial of Viking warriors! But that is for another day.

*Nev. Ramsden, Seascale*



**Seascale Foreshore circa 1890.**

## Girlguiding – Guides

Where have the last 3 months gone? I suppose that owing to the fact that we don't meet in the holidays, we only have a month and a half of activities to report on.

Some of the Rangers organised a most enjoyable Masked Ball for the Guides, holding various competitions in aid of Leukaemia Research. We BBQd, made sand sculptures on Drigg beach and took part in the Gosforth Fun Run. The Giant Sleepover (a national event sponsored by BT) this year provided the opportunity of sleeping under the stars (no tents!), and our thanks are due to the Head of Eskdale Primary School who allowed us to use the school playing field for this experience. Sadly the stars didn't appear, but the night stayed dry and warm – just the right conditions for the midges! The proceeds from this event went to the charity Childline.

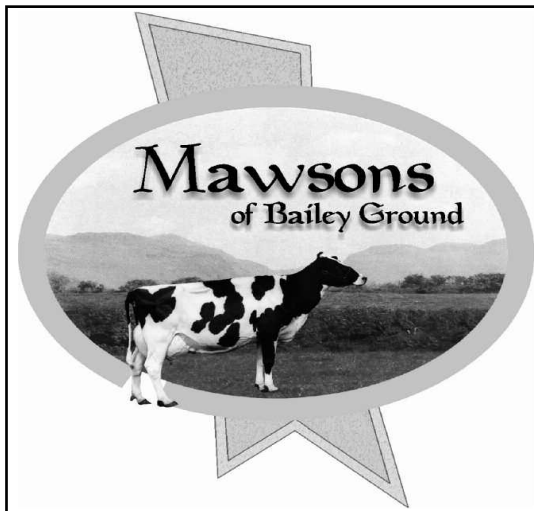
Our remaining meetings were spent preparing for summer camp. This year was a county-wide camp involving three hundred of us sleeping in tents at Braithwaite near Keswick. 24 Guides, 12 Rangers and 6 leaders from our local area participated in loads of activities – swimming, mountain biking, climbing, abseiling, horse riding, windsurfing, canoeing, raft building etc, shopping and plenty of visits. There was also the chance to have a go at DJing, animation, handbell ringing, crafts galore, line dancing, singing, acting and the

list goes on. Everyone made loads of new friends and many will treasure the fact that they had a chance to meet some Russian Guides who had come especially from Siberia to join us. We are hopeful that there will be a return trip in the summer of 2008 for some of our older girls. I would like to thank the girls for behaving so well and participating in all the activities so enthusiastically, the leaders who gave up a week of their holidays or changed their shifts to help and Andrew Raywood and Vic Nicholson who transported all our equipment to and from the camp – girls don't travel light I'm afraid!

And so on to the new term. We have six new members joining in September and I hope that they will be happy with us. By the time that this newsletter goes to press, the girls will have planned their programme for the year and I expect we shall be counting the days until we go to London for the weekend – a Guide pop concert at Wembley (the arena!!) and a little sightseeing and shopping.

If your daughter would be interested in knowing a little more about Guides but has not been a member of one of our local Brownie units, please give me a ring on the number below. We are currently just about full with 36 girls, but a number will be moving to Rangers over the next few months which will create a few spaces.

*Sue Smith 019467 28625*



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# The Sellafield Natterjack Toad Nature Reserve

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The Sellafield natterjack toad nature reserve was created in 1986 to accommodate natterjack toads that were displaced from the adjacent BNFL site. It is situated to the west of the railway near the Calder Viaduct on the coastal footpath from Seascale to Sellafield Station. The footpath passes through the reserve alongside a stock fence that separates the breeding pools from the beach where the reserve extends down to the high water mark. The nature reserve was designed and engineered by BNFL in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy Council (now English Nature) and the British Herpetological Society who currently manage the site under a lease agreement with BNFL. Natterjack toads existed at the site before the nature reserve was established but the habitat was in decline and the future of the natterjack population was uncertain. Restoration of good habitat conditions and continuous management thereafter has helped to maintain a viable natterjack toad colony.

The natterjack toad is one of six amphibian species native to the British Isles. It is our rarest amphibian, surviving in isolated populations at fewer than 50 sites in the UK, half of which are to be found on the Cumbrian coast. Natterjack toads in the Sellafield colony are to be found in suitable habitat from Seascale village northwards beyond Sellafield Station and inland for up to 1km, including the natterjack toad reserve, the golf course and parts of the BNFL site. Sellafield has an adult population ranging from high tens of individuals to low hundreds. The species and its habitat are fully protected by law and it has been identified in the Biodiversity Action Plans as a species that requires particular conservation effort to ensure its continued survival.

The natterjack toad looks similar to its close relative the common toad but has a prominent yellow stripe that runs along its spinal ridge. Both species share the same amphibious life cycle occurring as eggs and tadpoles (larvae) before metamorphosing into the familiar terrestrial form which matures into breeding adults in 2 to 3



years. Toad spawn is laid in strings dotted with little black eggs. Natterjack spawn has a single row of eggs in each string, whereas common toad spawn has two parallel rows of eggs. Frog tadpoles are mottled grey/brown in appearance but common toad and natterjack toad tadpoles are shiny black, later in their development natterjack tadpoles develop a grey chin coloration.

Adult natterjack toads avoid competing with the two common species by exploiting different niche habitats and hunting different prey species. It is during the larval stage that they are at a competitive disadvantage where one or both of the common species spawn in the same breeding pools. Grass snakes will prey on adult toads, as will herons, and possibly otters but it is at the larval stage that natterjacks are most vulnerable, particularly to predators such as aquatic dragonfly nymphs. Newts and some species of bird have been witnessed eating natterjack spawn.

Natterjack toads require a combination of terrestrial habitat for feeding/hibernation and suitable breeding pools for spawning/tadpole development. Ideal terrestrial habitat will have areas of short vegetation or bare ground where adult toads can hunt their prey (mainly ground beetles) by running after them. Tall vegetation hinders natterjack mobility making it difficult for them to find prey and reach their breeding pools. Sandy places/dunes allow them to dig burrows for hibernating and for secreting during the day. For breeding, natterjacks require temporary shallow

pools that warm up quickly to aid development of tadpoles and speed up metamorphosis before the pools dry up in late summer. Pools that dry up in late summer harbour fewer invertebrate predators of toad tadpoles and are less likely to be used by competing common toads and frogs which require a longer larval development period.

Natterjack toads are generally nocturnal but are sometimes seen abroad during the day in the breeding season (April to July). Male natterjack toads are heard calling from the breeding pools on most evenings in springtime and later in the season tiny thumb-nail size toadlets appear in their thousands in the vicinity of the reserve, particularly along paths during warm wet evenings.

Although the reserve is only a small area within the natterjack range it has been designed to incorporate all of the features that a natterjack toad needs at every stage in its life cycle. The provision of a manually-operated sluice arrangement enables timely flooding and draining of the breeding pools to favour natterjack toads which tend to breed later than the common species. The pools are just below the high water mark so that they are occasionally inundated with seawater that suppresses invertebrate predators without affecting natterjacks. Sheep are occasionally introduced to the enclosure around the breeding pools to maintain a suitable terrestrial habitat.

The beach area outside the enclosure provides a dynamic environment for natterjacks to forage and hibernate in. This part of the reserve also

provides good habitat for adders, slow worms and common lizards, and a small community of ground nesting birds. People are welcome to explore the nature reserve, including the breeding pools enclosure, but care should be taken not to disrupt breeding activity at night in springtime, or trampling on toadlets from July onwards. Late evening, just before dark and very early in the morning are the best times to experience natterjack toad activity on the reserve, and you may also catch a glimpse of otters which are now regular visitors. Interpretation visits for interested groups and individuals can be arranged by contacting myself on 01946 823852 or emailing me at [ecocumbria@btinternet.com](mailto:ecocumbria@btinternet.com).

*Les R. Robertson*

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## **SPRING NEWSLETTER**

**To be published in March 2007. Please  
submit articles and items of general interest  
to [news@epic.gb.com](mailto:news@epic.gb.com)  
by mid-February**

# *Dressing Rooms*

## *Soft Furnishings by Liz Poole*

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# FARMING CRACK

Our open day certainly caused some interest. We estimated that just over 500 people came to look round. Patrick Gordon Duff Pennington from Muncaster Castle officially opened the dairy. He said he fully supported local people who started their own businesses producing local produce and employing local labour. Very little of the food produced in Cumbria stays here; most of it goes out of the county to be processed and then is returned here, travelling all those miles for nothing. Over the years Patrick has not only done a lot for Cumbrian farmers but he has also highlighted the problems facing rural communities. On several occasions he has invited MPs and members of the House of Lords to fact-finding visits on farms and villages in this area.



A few facts of interest regarding the open day: during the afternoon 450 teas were served by our band of helpers; 250 pairs of overshoes were used – most of them several times. The shed containing the animals proved to be very popular with the youngsters. The puppies, which are always bouncing with energy, were totally worn out after an afternoon with the kids. When I fed them later they came up to the food dish, had a couple of licks and then flopped down totally jiggered. I think some of the kids would have been as well. The saddleback pig that was due to have its young produced 12 healthy piglets the next day; they are all doing well. Tilly the cow has now got a fan club. She stood there all day letting everyone stroke her. She was also very well behaved when the Whitehaven News came to take her photograph.

Then there was the little girl who I asked what was the best thing she had seen on the farm – she said without hesitation “the guinea pig”. We were sorry for those unable to make it, we intended to arrange transport for them but things happened so fast and got so busy it was

not possible – that’s something we must do next time. Thanks to everyone who came and a special thanks to all those who helped in any way to make it such a special day.

This year has been one of the worst years on record for the number of leather jackets, a caterpillar type of grub that lives in the ground just below the surface. They live on any type of plant root, especially grass and cereal crops. This year large areas have gone brown where all the grass has had its roots eaten off and died. Several fields of barley had to be resown in this area after the plague of leather jackets had destroyed them. They are also a menace on golf courses, bowling greens and particularly on your lawns. The only treatment is a special type of spray which brings them to the surface to die in their thousands. In summer time the leather jacket grub hatches out into a fly called the crane-fly, commonly known as the daddy-long-legs. This year there are masses of them about. The daddy-long-legs has a lifetime of only 24 hours. During that time they have to learn to fly, mate and lay their eggs on to the grass to grow into grubs for next year, so they certainly don’t mess about. Unless there is a hard frost this winter there will be a massive plague next year.

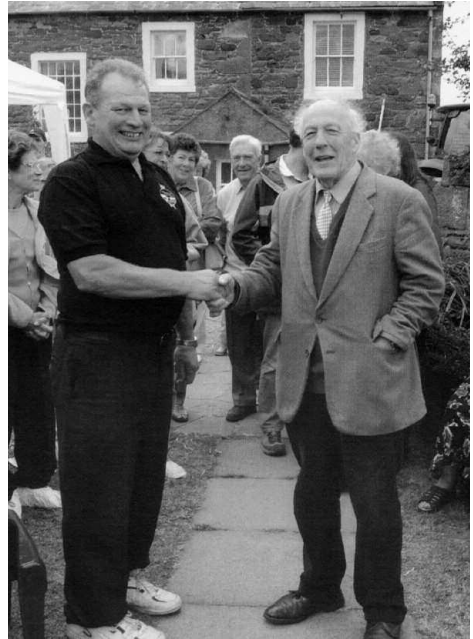
## Wildlife

A wildlife programme the other night filmed a pet rat that was let out of its cage in a house. It

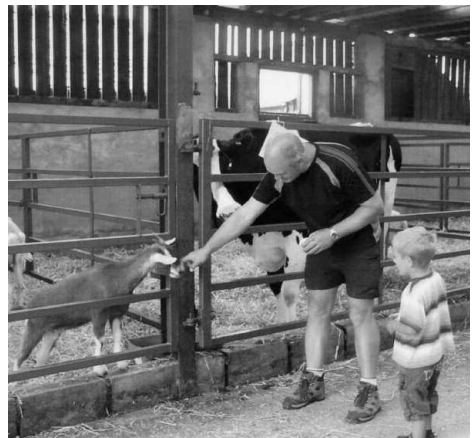
went into another room, where a box of chocolates had been left on the settee, and one by one it removed and carried every chocolate out of the box, back to its cage where it stored them. It reminded me that several years ago an elderly lady who lived alone told me that kids had been getting into her house and stealing sweets and fruit. The sweets had disappeared off the sideboard and a bunch of grapes in a fruit dish on the kitchen table had also disappeared, half of them one night, the rest the following night. Also apples out of the fruit dish were found scattered on the floor. A thorough search revealed a shiny, well-used hole under the water heater just big enough for a rat to use but not big enough for an apple to go through. How the rat had got on to the table to remove the grapes one at a time is difficult to imagine. How long it had been there and where else it had been in the house was also very worrying. Treating it with some rat bait and blocking up the hole prevented it from returning.

In the old days when there was a rubbish dump up the lanes rats used to swarm from one area to another. Charlie Parker, who used to farm at Acrelands farm, told me once he had seen hundreds of them marching across a field near the dump, just like you see marching ants; anyone or anything that got in their path they would attack. Someone else told me his father was cycling past the old dump at Tinkerhill, between Seascale and Gosforth, when he came across a swarm of rats completely blocking the road coming his way. He quickly dismounted and jumped over the hedge for safety. If he had tried to cycle through them and fallen off they would certainly have attacked him. The marching rats stopped on a farm long enough to eat everything they could get, then they would move on somewhere else. One day you were swamped out with them, the next morning every last one of them had gone. So had a lot of your crop, leaving you short of feed for your stock during the winter months.

Another swarm this year that I have never seen before has been the jackdaws. A bunch of about



60 of them spent the summer months around the village, making lots of noise and causing considerable damage to some gardens. The other night they were perched about a foot apart all along the length of St Cuthbert's Church roof. It was quite a sight to see.



## Front Garden Competition 2006

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### Best PORCH

- First 4 Whole House Road  
Second 61 Santon Way  
Third 36 Santon Way

### Best BUSINESS

- First Cumbrian Lodge Hotel  
Second Calder House Hotel  
Third BB Services

### Best FRONT GARDEN

- First 30 Wasdale Park (Colour)  
Second 'Vyner', Cross Lanes  
Third 7 Hallsenna Road  
Commended: 2 Wasdale Park

### Best SPECIAL FEATURE

- First 4 Links Crescent (Hanging displays)  
Second 17 Wastwater Rise  
Third Round Fold, Santon Way

### Best COMMUNITY GARDEN

- First 40-46 Gosforth Road

### MIXED GARDEN - SPECIALS

- First Swang Farm & The Brambles (Family)  
Second 79 Gosforth Road  
Third 72 Gosforth Road

### OVERALL WINNER

- 30 Wasdale Park



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# IN YOUR GARDEN

## Top 10 jobs – November

- 1 Continue clearing leaves – from lawns, ponds and beds.
- 2 Raise containers onto feet to prevent waterlogging.
- 3 Plant tulip bulbs for a spring display next year.
- 4 Prune roses to prevent wind-rock.
- 5 Plant out winter bedding.
- 6 Cover brassicas with netting if pigeons are a problem.
- 7 Insulate the greenhouse from frost – bubble wrap works well.
- 8 Stop winter moth damage to fruit trees using grease bands around the trunks.
- 9 Order seed for next year. Catalogues will be available from Seascale Horticultural Society.
- 10 Use a seasonal bonfire – where this is allowed – to dispose of excess debris unfit for compost.

## Top 10 jobs – December

- 1 Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place.
- 2 Check that glasshouse heaters are working OK.
- 3 Prevent ponds and stand pipes from freezing.
- 4 Prune open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls).
- 5 Prune acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding.
- 6 Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops.
- 7 Deciduous trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted.
- 8 Take hardwood cuttings.
- 9 Keep mice away from stored produce.
- 10 Reduce watering of houseplants.

## Top 10 jobs – January

- 1 Recycle your Christmas tree by shredding it for mulch.
- 2 Ventilate the greenhouse on sunny days.
- 3 Dig over any vacant plots that have not been dug already.
- 4 Repair and re-shape lawn edges.
- 5 Inspect stored tubers of Dahlia, Begonia and Canna for rot or drying out.
- 6 Prune apple and pear trees.
- 7 Start forcing rhubarb.
- 8 Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season.
- 9 Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds.
- 10 Prepare a polythene shelter for outdoor peaches and nectarines, to protect from peach leaf curl.

## Top 10 jobs – February

- 1 Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover.
- 2 Chit potato tubers.
- 3 Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches.
- 4 Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off.
- 5 Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering.
- 6 Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'.
- 7 Prune Wisteria.
- 8 Prune hardy evergreen hedges, and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges.
- 9 Prune conservatory climbers.
- 10 Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter.

## Open Mind (West Lakes U3A)

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If you're over 50 and no longer in full-time employment you may be interested in an organisation designed for you. **Open Mind**, or the West Lakes U3A. **Open Mind** has about 170 members, is based around Gosforth and Seascale and its members come from an area stretching from Egremont in the north to Bootle in the south. There are a number of topic groups: Local History; Bird Watching; Family History; Art Appreciation; Discussion (topical topic); Reading Group and Mah Jong.

There is a general meeting with a speaker each month and in addition outings to the theatre. As well as keeping the mind active U3A (University of the Third Age) also provides many opportunities for social intercourse which is just as important for the third age especially in a rural community.

So what is the third age? If the 'first age' is

childhood and full-time education, the 'second age' the time of work and career, then the 'third age' is after retirement.

And it may be the third age but it is also the first 'university' for many and don't worry about the 'university' part, it's educational but it's mainly social gathering and entertainment. The general meetings take place at 10.30am in Gosforth Public Hall on the 3rd Thursday of each month; History Group meets at 10.30 at St Joseph's Church Seascale on the first Wednesday; Art Appreciation at 10.30 at St Joseph's on the 2nd Thursday and Mah Jong at the Brassington's home, 7 Denton Park Court, Gosforth on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 2.00pm.

If you would like more information, call the Secretary, Joan Bell on 019467 28761 or the Chairman, John Hall on 019467 28542.

  
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# Seascale Primary School

## Tesco Computer for Schools Vouchers

We would like to say a big THANK YOU to all who donated Tesco Computer for Schools Vouchers. We received enough tokens to order a new computer for the school. Well done to you all! We are now collecting the Tesco Sports for Schools Vouchers; please feel free to send them into school if you have any spare.

## Recycling Rewards Scheme

Last term we took part in a Recycling Rewards Scheme. Children obtained pledges from their family and neighbours to recycle as much of their waste as possible. We were successful in obtaining two digital cameras, a violin and a music centre for school for taking part in the scheme. The scheme is now complete.

## Library Books

We seem to have a shortage of library books in school; perhaps your child has taken some home from school and forgotten to return them. We would be grateful if you could check your children's rooms to see if you have any books which might belong to school or the School Library Service. Thank you for your support.

## Booster Seats

As you are all aware, the new regulations for transporting children have come into operation. Do you have any booster seats that are not in use? If so could we perhaps have them? This will help us greatly when we are transporting children to sporting fixtures or on school trips etc. Please contact the school on 019467 28403. Thank you.

### NEW IMAGE

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CA20 1PZ  
Telephone 01946 728496

**NHF**  
NATIONAL HOMEFRONT FOUNDATION



## New Seat outside Library

Seascale Women's Institute have presented a new seat to the village. It is situated outside the library and replaces an old seat also presented by the WI many years ago. The photograph was taken at the presentation on Thursday 7 September. In the picture are, from left to right: June Bastow; Sylvia Thompson; Dorothy Todhunter; Barbara Ramsden (Chairman of Amenities for Seascale Parish Council); Eileen Eastwood (Chairman of Seascale Parish Council); Muriel Dorward; Judy Hall (President of Seascale WI); Dorothy Lawton (WI Vice-President) and Mary Gilbert.

*Judy Hall*

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