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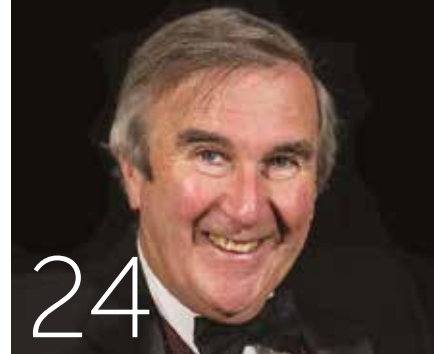
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inside MORPETH

A group of Morpeth sixth-formers have been on a voyage of discovery over the past few months, learning about some fascinating facts surrounding people and events associated with the town which might come as a surprise to many.

What they have been doing is working with Greater Morpeth Development Trust among others, to create a series of information boards to enable not only local residents but visitors to the town, to uncover some perhaps forgotten or little known stories that have been hidden for too long.

For instance, some of the students were surprised to learn that Morpeth has its own war cemetery in a corner of St Mary's Churchyard where men who lost their lives in both World Wars, lie buried, often far from their birthlands. Nearby in the church, they found out about the graves of two jockeys from the same Morpeth family who won the Epsom Derby, which is unquestionably one of the world's greatest horse races. By an amazing co-incidence, close to their final resting places, is the grave of suffragette Emily Wilding Davison who as every schoolboy knows, lost her life on the same Epsom Racecourse as she endeavoured to draw world-wide attention to the campaign to give women in this country the right to vote.

Those and other stories, as we report in this edition of Inside Morpeth, have now been unveiled on three new information boards and more will soon follow including two about Morpeth-born William Turner who became known as the 'father' of English botany, and Admiral Lord Collingwood who took command of the English fleet when Horatio Nelson was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Another story from Morpeth's past that we tell readers about in this edition, is that for more than 80 years the town annually staged with it rather grandly called 'Morpeth's Olympics'. They were started well over 150 years ago long before the modern games were first held in Athens, and, although very different to the sort of events we have been watching from the 2024 Games in Paris, they regularly attracted huge crowds to the town, as well as competitors who would have been classed as the top athletes of their day.

If you did not know any of these stories, we trust you will enjoy reading about them in this edition of our magazine and at the same time, we would invite you to look out for the new information boards telling so many stories from Morpeth's past.

Jan Leech

Editor of Inside Morpeth

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Front cover: KEVI students signposting town's history

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KEVI students Amy Wardle, Tom Clarke, Mary Alexandru, Catalina Chaundler-Martinez, Chloe Coward, Earlene Sequeira and Dylan Sneddon who have worked on the new information boards

Signs of times past in Morpeth!

Sixth-form KEVI students have worked with Greater Morpeth Development Trust, to create a number of fascinating new information boards telling some of the perhaps lesser-known stories about events and notable people from the town's past, writes **Inside Morpeth Editor Ian Leech**.

The first of the new boards have just been unveiled in and around St Mary's Churchyard and more will follow over the next few months. In a unique twist they contain a code which visually impaired people will be able to access to share their information, something which has never happened before anywhere in the UK!

A good number of years ago the Trust began commissioning a series of information boards around town, to help both residents and visitors to understand more about Morpeth's rich history and heritage, as well as learning about the

wildlife, flora and fauna they could enjoy seeing on woodland and riverside walks. Some of those original boards which are still in place, were written and illustrated by good friends Alan Davidson and John Caffrey who shared not only a love of Morpeth, but the countryside on the town's doorsteps.

At the beginning of the last academic year, Dai Richards, now GMDT's Director of Environment, approached the school to see if any of its students would like to join the Trust in uncovering more stories and information from Morpeth's past, to

add a new series of boards to the existing ones, and as their teacher Sheila Clark told me: "Almost immediately seven of our students studying a range of A Level subjects from art graphics to computer science, psychology to maths, jumped at the chance."

Since then those seven students – Chloe Coward, Mary Alexandru, Dylan Sneddon, Tom Clarke, Earlene Sequeira, Amy Wardle and Catalina Chaundler-Martinez – have worked with GDMT to get the boards ready to be unveiled.



Chloe Coward and Mary Alexandru



Catalina Chaundler-Martinez and Dylan Sneddon



Tom Clarke and Earlene Sequeira

"Together with our students, they have all helped to bring the town's history alive."

Sheila Clark

The first three about St Mary's Church, notable Morpethians and the war graves in the churchyard, are now in place and will be followed in a few weeks' time by two more about the 'father of English botany' William Turner who was born in Morpeth around 1508, and Nelson's second-in-command at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1815, Admiral Lord Collingwood whose family home when he was not at sea, was in Oldgate

Among the notable Morpethians featured on the board as being buried in St Mary's Churchyard are suffragette Emily Wilding Davison; artist Joseph Crawhall who was one of the famous 'Glasgow Boys' group of painters; solicitor and town clerk William Woodman who helped in the building of the new grammar school in Cottingwood Lane; Robert Whinham who grew a distinctive red variety of gooseberry at his Allery Banks nursery; jockeys Ralph Bullock and his nephew Billy who won the Epsom Derby in 1861 and 1908 respectively on their horses Kettledrum and Signoretta; and John Rastrick who built a threshing machine that revolutionised the farming industry and his son John Urpeth, who became one of the first steam locomotive engineers.

The war graves' display board features a corner of the churchyard where soldiers and airmen from both World Wars are buried including flyers who lost their lives in crashes while training at the RAF Morpeth Gunnery School between 1942 and 1944. Many pilots at RAF Morpeth were from the Polish Air Force and had

escaped to Britain to fight alongside British Armed Forces. After the war ended many Poles chose not to return home but stayed at a disused army camp on Morpeth Common with their families until they were rehoused locally in the 1960s.

"When we carried out a survey of our original display boards, we found some needed repairing and some refreshing," commented Dai. "But, we also decided we wanted to do a little more than that by improving and expanding on the information available, so that people could learn more about our town and some of the notable people who were either born or lived in Morpeth."

Dai said it was also decided that the project should make use of the latest technology available, by incorporating the new Navilens code designed to benefit the visually impaired by enabling them to log on to a QR code to access the website that sits behind the boards. As he said, this is the first time the new Navilens codes have been used in this way anywhere in the UK.

All the students said the project had been a fascinating one to be involved with and they had learned so much about their town's past, and some of its more notable residents. As Catalina said: "For example, we knew nothing about the war graves in St Mary's Churchyard until we started our research," while Tom added: "We hope people take the time to look at the boards and learn more about the stories behind

them. What really pleases us is that the boards will still be here long after we have moved on from KEVI."

Sheila Clark added: "With Dai and GMDT's support and the help of various experts from Morpeth heritage groups, the project has given our students the chance to learn a great deal about famous local people and places." The students, she said, had worked with Newcastle University history degree students, exploring common grounds for research as well as working with Northumberland County Council staff to develop plans for a new history website, then hosting guests in school such as Nigel Collingwood and Paul Macdonald from the Collingwood Society, Mike Booth, a volunteer on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Andrew Tebbutt on behalf of Emily Wilding Davison's family, Frances Povey from the County's green spaces and Dr Marie Addyman, a specialist in the history of William Turner.

Student Amy Wardle took the lead in designing some of the boards and worked alongside professional print manager Darren Turner of CBS World, to produce the finished display boards. Three of Morpeth's Northumberland County Councillors – Richard Wearmouth, John Beynon and David Bawn – between them contributed £2,500 from their councillors' allowance funds towards the cost of the new boards, while Morpeth Town Council has helped with the repair of some of the original boards.

Baby beaver born at Wallington

By Jack Brodie

Less than a year after their re-introduction at Wallington Hall Estate, the National Trust has announced the first birth of a baby beaver to be born there in 400 years.

The baby beaver – known as a kit – is thought to have been born around late May, and following the birth Helen McDonald, the National Trust's Lead Ranger at Wallington, told us at Inside Morpeth: "We are thrilled that after an absence of around 400 years, we now have beavers back and breeding at Wallington.

"Over the past 12 months the beavers have put a lot of effort into building and maintaining their lodges, getting their families settled in, showing great perseverance and resilience during their relocation then during the floods we have had over the past year."

The beavers were relocated into a 24-hectare enclosure by the National Trust in the hope that they would significantly impact the habitat allowing



for the formation of a dynamic wetland. A year down the line, their relocation has proved to be a great success.

The Trust's goal is to improve 25,000 hectares – that's an area the size of 47,000

football pitches!! – of land for wildlife across the country, and the Wallington beavers are certainly playing their part in making that happen.

On the estate, the changing landscape is allowing for significantly greater diversity thanks to nature's water engineers. Because beavers build dams that impact the flow of rivers and streams, so water is now flowing into areas of the estate where it had not done so previously.

This, in turn, has led to the formation of ponds, deep pools and mudscapes and the National Trust has described these changes as 'astonishing' for the way they have attracted feeding kingfishers, foraging Daubenton's bats as well as benefitting the declining, native white-clawed crayfish. Down the line it is hoped that even more creatures will benefit from the changing landscape.

The Wallington Hall estate is the largest intact estate cared for by the National Trust, and the beaver population is just one small part of the push towards achieving the nature recovery plans of the Trust.

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It's exhibition time at Wallington



This coming Autumn, Wallington is hosting the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) and Parker Harris Earth Photo Exhibition 2024.

If you go down to the East Woods from Saturday September 14th to Sunday November 3rd, you will see a beautiful and thought-provoking exhibition displaying the short-listed and award-winning images from this year's competition.

Spread throughout the woodlands, it is hoped that the context of these moving images set among nature itself, will enhance the experience even further for visitors.

Created in 2018, Earth Photo is a world-leading programme engaging still and moving image-makers, to showcase the issues affecting the climate and life on our planet. The main objective is to reveal the narrative behind the pictures, encouraging conversations about our world, its people, environments and the changing climate.

Wallington is, therefore, the ideal location for this exhibition given the estate's ambitious, long-term recovery aims, through species re-introduction, hedgerow and woodland planting, as well as peatland, wetland and grassland restoration too.

Out of over 1,900 entries, a judging panel made up of experts from the fields of photography, film, geography and environment, selected the Earth Photo 2024 shortlist – 112 images and 12 videos by 31 photographers and 13 filmmakers from around the world.

A selection of outstanding photography and film projects, was chosen as the Earth Photo 2024 winners, which will be on display for visitors to enjoy at Wallington.



Visit the Earth Photo Exhibition from September 14th to November 3rd, from 10am to 5pm. The exhibition is free to enjoy, normal admission charges apply. Head to the website to plan your visit at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington



Tim Klipuis Trio

Marvellous music - magnificent musicians

Morpeth Music Society (MMS) will remarkably, shortly open up its 79th season to once again give local people the chance to enjoy the very best chamber music performances of classical, jazz, baroque, and contemporary works on their very own doorsteps at the Methodist Church in Howard Terrace, as **Louise Freeman** reports exclusively for Inside Morpeth.

The original inspiration for MMS was a series of inspired concerts put on in Morpeth during World War II by the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA). As a result, over the past seven decades Morpethians have had the opportunity to see and hear great musicians such as Kathleen Ferrier, cellist Julian Lloyd Webber and oboist Leon Goosens.

Today the Society is still very much connected to its early days as our President Ian Armstrong took over as Chair from his father Archie Armstrong – a noted singer – who was our chair for 19 years.

Ian remembers the Society's 50th anniversary in the 1990s when a concert for two pianos in the Town Hall Corn Exchange was followed by a dinner in the upstairs ballroom

Still entirely member-run, the Society is very proud to be nearing its 80th anniversary during the 2025-2026 season.

Before then, MMS will start its

forthcoming season on October 17th with a concert by the renowned Gould Piano Trio, and will then turn to jazz for the second concert on November 15th, with a visit from the Tim Klipuis Trio, who describe their mission as 'total music without barriers' inspired by classical, jazz and folk music.

Oboist Armand Djikoloum will be the next to visit Morpeth on December 5th. With pianist Iyad Sughayer, Armand has chosen a super programme of Mahler, Schumann, Saint-Saens as well as introducing us to less familiar composers.

A piano duo – Emma Abbate and Julian Perkins – follow on January 16th (2025) with a familiar first half of Mozart, Schubert and Ravel, plus a well-chosen second half. Violinist Bradley Creswick, the former leader of the Royal Northern Sinfonia, with his regular recital pianist partner Margaret Fingerhut, will delight us with his trademark engaging style, before finally on April 10th the baroque ensemble Red Priest will entertain us with a wild ride through well-known baroque



Oboist Armand Djikoloum

masterpieces – you will never have heard recorders played like this!

Once again, the season offers amazing value. A season ticket for all six concerts still costs only £75 – costing just £12.50 a concert. A saving of £33 compared to buying separate adult tickets. Apply now via the JOIN page on the website. From September 1st (2024) individual adult concert tickets will also be on sale at £18 per concert. Students aged 18 years old and under, are warmly invited to attend for free. Single tickets can be bought from Morpeth Methodist Church; via the Society Secretary (telephone 01670 512075); from the Morpeth Tourist Information Centre at The Chantry; or from the MMS www.morpeth-musoc.org.uk website.



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Leave a thoughtful legacy

There are few more confusing – or unpopular – taxes than Inheritance Tax (IHT). If you're unsure of the details, or you'd like more of your inheritance to go to your family and less to the HMRC or on care fees, we can help.

Leaving loved ones to incur up to a 40% reduction due to tax on their inheritance is a hard ask. Yet despite many children and grandchildren being ill-equipped to grapple with IHT, more and more families are having to deal with it.

It's a situation that is set to continue, with the Office of Budget Responsibility forecasting that IHT revenues will reach £8.4 billion by 2026/2027.

Once thought of as a tax on the truly affluent, IHT now affects more families than ever

In better news for your family, there's been a staged increase in the residence nil-rate band threshold, which is now set at £175,000 for those who qualify when passing their main residence to direct lineal dependants. This goes some way to reflect the growth in property prices, as well as other asset values, which together have dragged more households into the IHT net.

Nevertheless, it can come as a shock to discover that a large proportion of your wealth, which includes the family home, investments such as Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), life assurance plans not in trust and even old family heirlooms, might have to be sold to meet tax bills when you die.

Get in the know

So what exactly could your family be liable for? We've already discussed the residence nil-rate band threshold of £175,000. Then you can factor in that the first £325,000 of your estate is likely to be exempt from IHT. This means that, subject to various conditions, if you're married or in a civil partnership, you could have a tax-free estate worth £1,000,000.

Yet the simple fact is that IHT could be considered a voluntary tax. The Treasury relies on our inertia and reluctance to confront the issues of death and inheritance. To make things worse, the Treasury's coffers are boosted at the exact time your loved ones least need the added hassle.

Help your family now

There are many perfectly legitimate ways to mitigate IHT through foresight and careful financial planning. You don't need high-powered tax planning, just a willingness to discuss the issue, act and make use of the many options available. These include establishing trusts and making use of annual exemptions such as gifting.

With a little planning, more of your wealth can be passed on to future generations

Bear in mind that if you're domiciled, or resident, in the UK, IHT rules are complex. Certain transfers are deemed exempt from the tax if they pass between a husband and wife or civil partners.

The levels and bases of taxation, and reliefs from taxation, can change at any time. The value of any tax relief depends on individual circumstances.

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Get in touch

If you're after a little help to guide you through the IHT maze, give us a call. We're here to make a difference to your family's future.

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Each of our brands, from the timeless elegance of Clarins to the iconic sophistication of Estée Lauder, brings its own unique charm and expertise. Our beauty advisors take the time to understand each customer's individual needs, concerns, and preferences. Whether you are seeking skincare advice, makeup tips, or a fragrance consultation, you can expect a tailored and personalized experience. The advisors will guide you through their extensive product offerings, ensuring you find the perfect match for your unique requirements.

Clarins offers a wide range of skincare, makeup, and body care products that are known for their natural plant-based ingredients. Combining science and nature to create gentle yet effective solutions for various skin concerns. Over the years, Clarins has expanded its product portfolio to cater to diverse skincare needs, including hydration, anti-aging, brightening, and sun protection. The brand's makeup range features a variety of foundations, lip products,

eyeshadows, and more, focusing on enhancing natural beauty.

Clinique's commitment to research and innovation is evident in its collaborations with dermatologists and scientists to develop innovative skincare solutions. The brand is known for its fragrance-free and allergy-tested formulas, making it a favourite among those with sensitive skin or fragrance sensitivities. One of Clinique's iconic products is the 3-Step Skincare System, which includes a customized cleansing, exfoliating, and moisturizing routine tailored to individual skin types.

Estée Lauder offers a comprehensive range of skincare, makeup, fragrance. Their skincare line includes highly sought-after products like Advanced Night Repair and the iconic Estée Lauder Double Wear Foundation, known for their effectiveness and long-lasting results. In addition to skincare, Estée Lauder's makeup collection offers a diverse range of foundations, lipsticks, eyeshadows, and more. Known for their exceptional quality

and luxurious textures, these products have gained a loyal following among beauty enthusiasts and professionals.

Molton Brown, a British luxury brand, is renowned for its high-quality bath, body, and beauty products. Established in 1971, it blends exotic ingredients with distinctive fragrances, offering indulgent experiences. Their sustainably sourced, cruelty-free products emphasise elegance and sophistication, making them a favourite for discerning customers worldwide.

L'Occitane, a French luxury brand founded in 1976, specialises in skincare, body care, and fragrances inspired by Provence. Known for using natural ingredients like lavender, shea butter, and almond, the brand emphasises sustainable practices. L'Occitane's products offer a sensory journey, combining tradition, quality, and ethical commitment to beauty.

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MORPETH

Arcade unveils new business sponsorship opportunities

The team at Morpeth's Sanderson Arcade has just launched a brand-new package of sponsorship opportunities targeted at local businesses as the award-winning centre celebrates its 15th anniversary this year.

The Arcade, which attracts more than 60,000 customers every week and has recently welcomed the opening of new premier brand retailers including Oliver Bonas and The White Company, is planning to elevate its diary of events over the next 12 months in partnership with companies seeking to raise their profiles in the area.

A special package of sponsorship opportunities with costs from £150 to £5,000, is now available on a range of events and promotions at the Arcade, including a premium deal to partner its Christmas activities.

It was back in 2009 that showbusiness 'Royalty' Dame Joanne Lumley officially opened Sanderson Arcade for Dransfield Properties, and since then customer numbers have increased year-on-year with a growing number of premium brands selecting the centre for its North East location, making it now one of the leading retail and leisure destination in the region.

For instance, Morpeth is now 'home' to M&S, Mint Velvet, Hobbs, JoJo Maman Bebe, Crew Clothing, Seasalt, and Next, as well as a great range of high quality and family-run businesses.

A busy diary of events is organised around the centre including a fantastic line-up of Christmas activities when

weekly footfall rises to between 75,000 and 80,000 shoppers. The Arcade's stunning Christmas decorations' display bring many thousands of visitors into Morpeth from across the region, and the centre team wants to build on that success by offering local businesses the chance to become involved.

Centre Manager Lottie Thompson told Inside Morpeth: "We have some really innovative ways in which businesses can get involved with our events in the coming months, to help them promote their own brands and services at our award-winning centre.

"We know from experience that this can work well for a range of different businesses, so we have decided to pull this together into a comprehensive package of opportunities for us to work together to help promote other local companies and the town."

To find out more about what sponsorship opportunities, Lottie Thompson can be contacted via Lottie.thompson@sandersonarcade.co.uk or by visiting the 'Contact Us' section of the Sanderson Arcade website at www.sandersonarcade.co.uk



Centre Manager Lottie Thompson

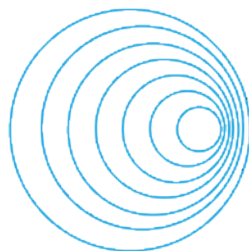


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Mais oui Paree - but we had our Olympics long before you did!

The eyes of the sporting world are on Paris this summer as the French capital plays host to the XXXIII Olympiad. But, did you know that more than 20 years before Baron Pierre de Coubertin founded the inaugural modern games in Athens in 1896 that have now become the world's most spectacular sporting event, Morpeth was staging its very own Olympics. **Inside Morpeth's Jack Brodie** explains.



That first event so long ago in the 1870s, was not a day of 'village fete-style' games, but rather a serious sporting competition that unashamedly sought to attract the very best athletes of the day to Morpeth and would continue to do so until 1958.

Initially started by local wheelwright and wrestler Edmund Dobson, the games grew to reach their peak of popularity around the 1920s when they were attracting crowds of more than 15,000 spectators – and that was at a time when Morpeth's population hovered around the 5,000 mark!

While the games' events varied slightly year-on-year, the initial biggest draw was undoubtedly wrestling. In 1873 a prize purse of £2 was on offer at the Morpeth Olympics, to the wrestlers. While a £2 prize might not seem much to us today, it would have been equivalent to more than £180 in current values and would have been a princely sum back in the 19th Century.

From then on, the sky was the limit at the Morpeth games. By 1876 a committee had been formed to manage the games, and a 'commodious stand' had been built to encourage wealthier locals to attend,

including bankers, doctors and military men. During the late 1880s and early 1890s the prize pool was more than £180, or £19,000 in today's money. Gambling and betting on the outcome of events, was very much the order of the day.

With the increasing calibre of the games, the greatest attraction became the skill of the competitors. By that time the games were no small event and they were attracting the best and most talented athletes from across the region. In 1914, for example, there were 220 competitors in the 120-yard handicap alone.

The games came to a temporary close that year with the start of the Great War, but they returned in a more limited fashion in post-war years with a decreased prize pool, although still attracting incredible public support before the cash incentives of the games started to increase significantly again. A prize pool of £350 – not far shy of £20,000 at today's currency rates – was a huge incentive for working class competitors at the time of the Great Depression. There was a similar boom in interest after the Second World War.

Sadly, for the Morpeth Games, all great things come to an end and by the early

1950s the post-war booms were drawing to a close as other leisure and sporting pursuits became more appealing. Other competitions such as the Powderhall sprint races at Edinburgh, were offering larger prizes to professional runners, and, as the athletes went, so did the spectators.

The downward spiral in popularity led to the final Morpeth Olympics being staged in 1958 when they were watched by only 800 spectators.

However, the legacy of the Morpeth Olympics lives on today. What they did was champion the skills of the working-class of the day, and, not only that, but they demonstrated a transparency about professionalism that was otherwise unheard of at the time.

There are traces of the impact of the games still visible today, from Rutherford department store whose owner at the time – George Rangdale Rutherford – was a committee member and proudly displayed the winners' medals and trophies in the window of his department store in Bridge Street, to the parks and open spaces that hosted the event.

Morpeth Olympics Factfiles

Over the 88 years the Morpeth Olympics were held they were staged at four different venues around town. Initially, they were held at the Old Brewery Field, a natural amphitheatre that was a great viewing point for spectators, which would be developed for housing including the current appropriately named streets Olympia Gardens and Olympia Hill. From 1896 the games were held at Grange House Field in Mitford Road – now the home of Morpeth Rugby Club and Morpeth Harriers. After the end of World War I they transferred to the old cricket ground at Stobhill (now Boundary Drive and The Covers housing estates), before moving to Mount Hags field close to the new health centre, and then ending up back at Mitford Road.

At first, the Morpeth games were dominated by wrestling but later boxing, throwing, jumping and running events – quaintly referred to as ‘pedestrianism’ – would be added

There have been some distinguished competitors including **American sprinter Barney Elwell** who won gold and silver medals at the 1948 London Olympics. At Morpeth he lost in the heats! In 1896 the winning pole vaulter at Morpeth jumped higher than the gold medallist at the inaugural modern Olympics in Athens!

The word ‘Olympics’ was adopted by the games in the 1880s to add status to the Morpeth event

Sports historian **Martin Polley** included 10 pages and photographs about the Morpeth games in his respected book about Britain’s Olympic heritage

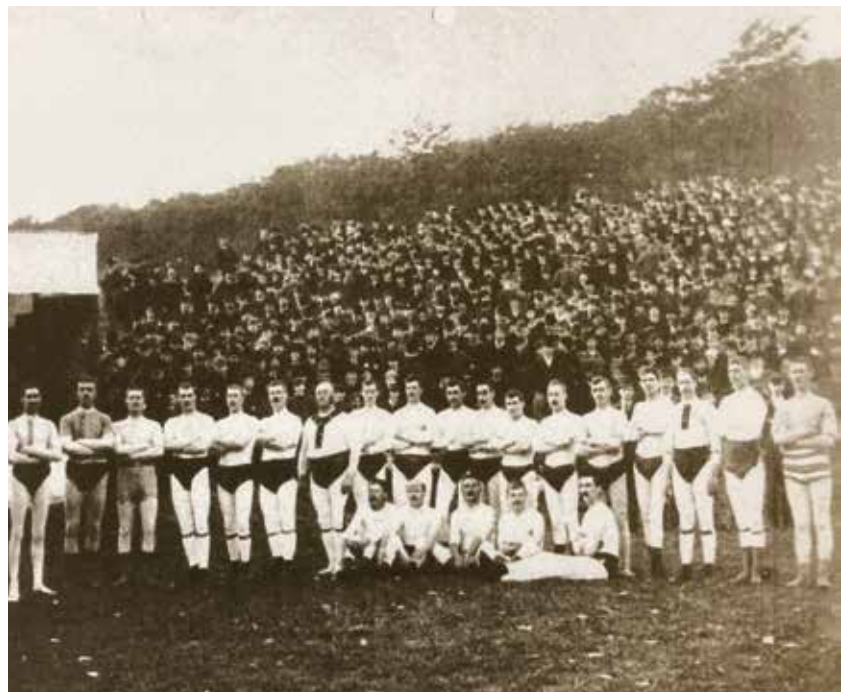
Our thanks go to **Kim Bibby-Wilson** for allowing us to use information and photographs about the games, from the Morpeth Antiquarian Society archives and also to local historian **Barry Mead**



Jack Little, winner of the wrestling in 1897



Banner created by Morpeth schoolchildren



A fine body of men competing in the wrestling at Morpeth Olympics



Ernie Rutherford, another Morpeth ‘Olympian’





The Oswin Project runs a cafe in Newcastle Cathedral



Prison project with a track record of success

Morpeth's current **Mayor, Councillor Betty Bawn**, has chosen to support the Oswin Project through her charity fund-raising appeal during her of office. So, in this special article for Inside Morpeth the project's **Chief Executive Fiona Sample**, outlines its aims and its achievements since it was launched 10 years ago - a journey she describes as an 'interesting' one accompanied by the frustrations of working within a dysfunctional system. This is her report.

The Oswin Project's story started after a visit to a prison which resulted in a resolve to build a bridge of opportunity spanning time served in prison and continuing on through until and after release. A small team of like-minded folk gathered around a kitchen table and the charity was born!

Incidentally, the Oswin Project was named after King Oswin of Northumbria (the lesser-known half of Oswald). The Venerable Bede described Oswin as talking to prince and pauper in the same manner and valuing justice above all things, so using his name seemed appropriate.

From one volunteer we now have 14 paid staff (more than one-third of whom are prison leavers) and 30 volunteers, and we have worked with over 300 Oswinners as we call our clients.

The bridge of opportunity is built through our Café 16s in HMP Northumberland (in 1919 it was a Royal Flying Corps station) and Newcastle Cathedral. Our bakery in HMP Northumberland which supplies our café and other outlets, and the gardens with greenhouses and poly tunnels, are

run in partnership with the prison. These supply our café and farm shop with any surplus donated to Amble Food Bank. Our 'Inside and Out' team specialises in heritage walling, maintenance, painting and decorating, forestry and gardening.

All our enterprises are staffed by prisoners or prison leavers.

The Criminal Justice system has been in the news lately and not before time. Overcrowding has created hot houses for crime rather than places for rehabilitation. The average prisoner in England and Wales has more than 19 prior convictions showing that the present system does not work.

While prison is essential for some, high rates of re-offending affect us all adversely and its financial impact in England and Wales is estimated to exceed £18 billion, with the average cost of keeping just one person in prison being more than £48,000 per year. The personal and social costs are considerable. For example, an estimated 312,000 children are separated from an imprisoned parent every year.

The aim of the Oswin Project is to ensure there are fewer victims of crime, safer communities, that families are kept together and vast savings made. Our training and support results in many contributing to society who were previously dependent upon it.

The North East has the highest re-offending rates in England and Wales, which stand at a shocking 67 per cent. The Oswin Project, on the other hand, records a re-offending rate of under four per cent. What we do works!

We are delighted to be the Mayor of Morpeth's charity of the year. Though our enterprises supply over half our income we still need to fund raise and are always looking to recruit more volunteers to work with us. We have an amazing team and great supporters who are all owed our thanks.

What next? 'Changing the Cycle' which is a bike repair and sales' shop opens on August 17th situated next to our Farm Shop outside HMP Northumberland. More enterprises are planned.

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Back in business... and loving every moment of it!

Morpeth businesswoman Marie Lake is back in business in the town centre shop she sold four years ago. Back then, Marie had decided to retire after running her popular chocolate shop in Oldgate next to the Clock Tower, for some seven years.

But, as she says, she soon discovered retirement was not for her, so when the shop became vacant very recently she decided to go back into business and is loving every moment of it!

"I should never have retired because I loved being in the shop so much and I missed it so much," she said. "When the shop became vacant I jumped at the chance to start again!"

Which is exactly what Marie has done, restocking her Carousel of Chocolates shop with her usual mouth-watering selection of hand-made, delightful Belgian and Italian sweet treats which customers cannot buy anywhere else.

Marie has worked in the town centre for many years, and is remembered by customers of the legendary Smail's hardware store where she worked as a shop assistant for many years.

She then worked in a sweet shop in town, and then an antiques shop before deciding to go into business by opening her own chocolate shop.

"It was a dream opportunity for me because I have always been addicted to chocolate," she said. "I wanted to offer something different to the normal run-of-the-mill sweets so brought to town artisan chocolates from the continent which are some of the very best you can buy." Marie



Plenty of sweet treats on offer in Carousel of Chocolates

now also has a growing stock of vegan and vegetarian chocolates and sweets and is always ready and willing to listen to what customers want to see on the shop shelves.

More than four years ago Marie sold the business as a going-concern, but more recently it has been an artisan gift shop until that closed down earlier this year.

"I found that what I missed as much as offering something no other local retail outlets were selling, was the day-to-day contact with my customers most of whom

became good friends rather than just people popping into the shop," she said.

"I also so much missed decorating my shop window with a different theme each month." Since she re-opened the shop, two window displays have featured Alice in Wonderland and Disney characters and Marie says she will have more up her sleeve in the run-up to Christmas.

"After four years of retirement I wanted a new adventure, and something to get up for in the morning... and what better way to do that by re-opening my shop," Marie added.

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Two classics of the motoring world now available from Wingrove Motors

The region's largest family-owned and operated motoring group has just welcomed two exciting new additions to the range of cars it can now offer local motorists. Wingrove Motor Group has announced that it now has the iconic American Jeep range of cars available at its Silverlink dealership, while the stylish Alfa Romeo has been added to its Newcastle West Road site.



Managing Director Josh Parker

At the same time as Alfa Romeo and Jeep make a welcome return to the area, Wingrove Motors will also for the first time be running a servicing facility at its dealerships, for owners of Fiat, Arbarth and Fiat Professional commercial vehicles. For many years the motoring names of Citroen, Peugeot and DS Automobiles have been synonymous with Wingrove Motors and the newcomers add even more choice to the range of cars available through its dealerships.

All this good news comes at a time when Wingrove Motors is gearing up to celebrate a milestone in the history of the company – the 100th anniversary of its founding in 1925.

Back then the business was founded by John Myers Dalkin and his son John, at the West Road in Newcastle, and since then it has been led by successive members of his family.

Current Managing Director Josh Parker who is following in the footsteps of his mother Louise and his grandfather Peter Dalkin, is the fifth generation of his family to head up the business.

In that time, he says, Wingrove Motors has built up a tried-and-tested reputation for looking after its customers by providing them with a first-class service to look after their new vehicles.

“As a family business born and bred in the North East, we have always prided ourselves on being a showcase for what is good about the region,” Josh explained to Inside Morpeth. “We cherish family values and from the feedback we receive from our customers it is clear they appreciate the way in which we operate.”

Jeep, Alfa Romeo, Fiat and Arbarth are part of the Stellantis group which also includes Citroen, Peugeot and DS Automobiles, and Josh says that the newcomers mark another major step forward in the development and future plans of Wingrove Motors.

“It not only means we can expand our dealership offerings, but will enable us to increase the size of our workforce at both dealerships,” he said. By the end of this year Josh anticipates Wingrove Motors will have been able to increase its workforce to around the 100 mark – just in time for the centenary of the company – and boost its turnover to an estimated £60m.

Wingrove is also moving with the motoring times and its hugely impressive Silverlink dealership is claimed to be the largest single site in the region stocking electric or hybrid cars and commercial vehicles.

So, what of the two new brands. Jeeps come in all shapes and sizes from the

more compact Avenger, Renegade and Compass models to the iconic Wrangler and Grand Cherokee. What they all share in common, however, is that they embody the spirit of adventure with the latest technology including electrification, coupled with their bold, eye-catching styles and all the creature comforts demanded of a new era of Jeep.

For generations, classic Italian styling added to their sporting performance, has made Alfa Romeo models legendary in the world of motoring, and the latest range of cars including the Stelvio, Tonale and the recently updated Giulia, all live up to the reputation of their predecessors.

As Josh Parker said: “The fact that two prestigious brands such as Jeep and Alfa Romeo are returning to the North East to join us at Wingrove, speaks volumes about how confident the Stellantis group is in the future of us as a company, and indeed the North East as a whole.”

It is no surprise, therefore, that Wingrove Motor Company has been nominated for two prestigious business awards by the North East Chamber of Commerce – the national Local Economy of the Future Business of the Year award and the Large Business of the Year category.

The remainder of 2024 and on into 2025, could be quite a time of celebration for the Wingrove Motor Company!





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The benefits of wood burning stoves

There's nothing quite like returning home on a bitterly cold winter's evening, than being greeted by the warm and cosy glow of a real fire burning in the living room which is what more and more home-owners are turning to these days thanks to the latest generation of modern and efficient wood burning stoves.

Stylishly designed, they can be an attractive addition to any home as well as generating all the warmth you need for a cosy night in, in front of the fire. Plus, these days they are also a great way of ticking many 'green' boxes by reducing our reliance on fossil fuels!

One local firm which knows all about installing a wood burner, is the family-owned Hancock Stoves which for the past 25 years had been based on Morpeth's Coopies Lane Industrial Estate.

The business was started by husband-and-wife team Dave and Kathleen Hancock, and is now run by their sons Craig and Scott.

In that time the company has built up an enviable reputation for not only giving expert advice about what stove would be best suited to any particular home, but providing exceptional customer service and craftsmanship.

As Craig told Inside Morpeth, any contact



with the company starts with a free, no-obligation survey of a customer's home to be able to advise on the most appropriate choice of stove, which can be free-standing, or built into a wall or existing fireplace. Installation will then

be carried out by Hancock's own in-house team of fully-qualified HETAS engineers, a Government-recognised organisation regulating the safe and efficient installation of wood burning stoves.

At any one time the company will have around two dozen different stoves on display at its showroom just off the main road in the middle of Coopies Lane, and it can also supply a stylish selection of fireplaces or fire surrounds to complement a new stove.

"We are proud of the reputation which have established for ourselves as a local company over so many years, of looking after our customers in the best possible way to ensure they enjoy the many benefits of choosing to heat their homes with a modern, new stove," added Craig.

And, his final piece of advice is to enquire now about a new wood burning or electric stove, rather than waiting for the cold days of winter to arrive!



Stay warm and cosy this winter with a wood burning stove!

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Top writers lined-up for 2025 Morpeth Book Festival

An Inside Morpeth exclusive by **Editor Ian Leech**

A stellar cast-list of top national, regional and local authors is being lined-up for the next Morpeth Book Festival... and the event is still eight months away!

The organising committee of the Festival, which is co-presented by Greater Morpeth Development Trust and Northumberland Libraries, has announced that the 2025 event will take place over the weekend of March 22nd and 23rd at a variety of venues around Morpeth including St George's Church and the new leisure centre.

The Festival which will be the third to be held in the town, is growing not only in popularity but stature, and the 2025 event will only add to that reputation judging by the quality of the authors who have already confirmed they will be appearing.

Heading the list will be Mari Hannah, one of the North's 'Queens of Crime Writing' who also just happens to be the Patron of the Morpeth Book Festival. Mari is best-known for her crime thrillers featuring her characters DCI Kate Daniels, Ryan & O'Neil and Oliver & Stone, all of which are based around the North East.

Making a return visit will be journalist, broadcaster, television executive and prolific author of books about his beloved Scotland, will be Alistair Moffat. They will be joined for the first time at Morpeth by author, poet, broadcaster, educationalist and after-dinner-speaking guru Gervase Phinn whose books about his warm-hearted reminiscences about his life as a schools' inspector in the Yorkshire Dales are hugely popular, while also making his Festival debut will be James Naughtie, a BBC radio legend of 21 years as an anchor-man on BBC 4's Today programme.

New York Times and Sunday Times best-selling author of suspense thrillers B A Paris will be appearing at the Festival along with Mrs Justice Cockerel and former Sunderland South MP for 23 years Chris Mullin, three times a Minister in Tony Blair governments and a celebrated author in his own right.

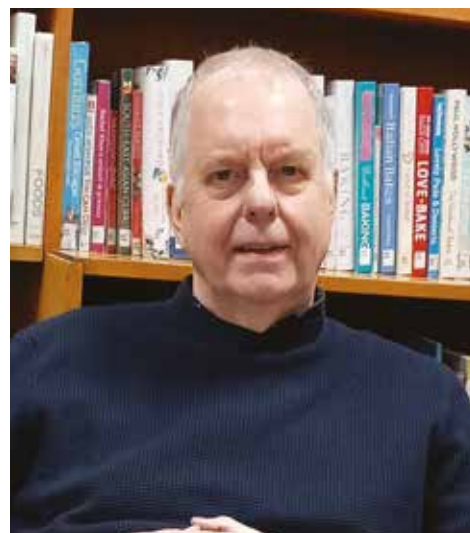
Local playwright Ed Waugh will not only be talking about his books, but also his latest play which will be on tour later this year, about the Train Wreckers, a group of Northumberland miners who during the 1926 national strike de-railed the Flying Scotsman train at Cramlington to draw attention to the plight of more than one million men faced the threat of crippling pay cuts by the owners of Britain's private coal mines. Ed had also written two footballing plays 'Alf Ramsey Knew My Grandfather' about amateurs from West Auckland who beat the mighty giants of Italian football from Juventus to win the very first World Cup, and 'Wor Bella' Reay, a young lady footballer from Blyth dubbed the Alan Shearer of her day.

Other local authors being lined up to take part in the Festival will be Morpeth's own Bridget Gubbins, David Wiliam, Alex James, Colin Green, Jessica Smith, Miles Hewitt and Alan Wilkinson and again children's authors will be running events for young readers which has always proved a popular section of the event.

Two whole days of poetry with some high-profile names, will be included in the Festival in the new home of the Northern Poetry Library at Morpeth.

Frank Rescigno, GMDT's Arts & Cultural Director, told Inside Morpeth: "Our third Book Festival is some way off yet but we wanted to very early wet people's appetites by revealing some of the truly exciting writers, poets and broadcasters who we are bringing to the town next year.

"As an organising committee we are so excited by the big names and high-profile writers who have told us they are delighted to be coming to Morpeth to take part in our Festival, the reputation of which is steadily growing. Over the coming months before next March, we will have plenty more news to announce about Morpeth Book Festival 2025."



Ed Waugh



Chris Mullin



Gervase Phinn



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Why financial planning needs to be designed to support your lifestyle

By **David Lamb** CFP™ MCSI



Many people invest their money to get the best returns possible and the financial services industry encourages this (it helps them sell more products). But within a financial plan it is essential that your investments are designed to support your lifestyle.

The first thing to consider is an emergency fund. For those in work, I would suggest a minimum of six months' salary, to ensure you can continue to fund your lifestyle should you lose your job. This will give you a comfortable period to find a new job.

After ring-fencing your emergency fund, consider what expenditure above normal income you may require in the next five years.

This money should be invested with relatively low risk, but possibly with longer notice period. These funds can be used for funding expenses that exceed normal income, such as holidays.

Longer term funds can be invested to achieve a higher return, depending upon your personal risk tolerances, to provide wealth for retirement or funding bucket list expenditure.

There may be other specific objectives, such as children's weddings, house deposits or university. These need more detailed planning to take into consideration:

- The cost today
- The future value of those costs
- When the money is likely to be required

- Inflation (but the Retail Price Index may not be a good inflation assumption). For example, education fees often rise at a higher rate than inflation.

Once you know the target value, and the assumed rate of returns on your investments, you can then calculate how much you need to save.

If you have a specific budget, you can calculate the returns required - and therefore the level of risk you need to take with your investments.

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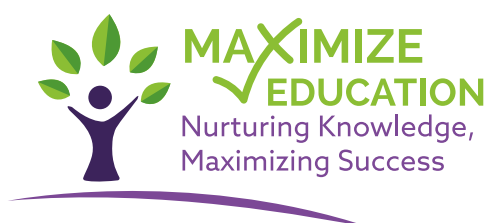
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Care company's Alzheimer pledge

By **Sunny Singh**, Managing Director of Home Instead South East Northumberland

This September is World Alzheimer's month when we are pledging to give out 500 of the Alzheimer Society's dementia checklists which will enable families affected by a loved one's dementia to seek an early diagnosis and receive support before it progresses further. We will be encouraging members of the community to join in with boosting awareness of the condition.

The checklist covers typical dementia symptoms so people with the condition or their loved ones, can fill it to show to a GP or healthcare professional. What it will do is help show the severity of the condition and, therefore, increase the chances of receiving a diagnosis, enabling more help to be sought.

Not only that, it removes the need for families to discuss a loved one's condition in front of them, so preventing conflict and upset.

As a company that supports older people with dementia living at home, we see the impact that the condition has on families. We have care professionals who are specially trained to deliver dementia care, so we have decided that World Alzheimer's Month was the best time to raise awareness.

There are around 900,000 people in the UK living with dementia, with that number predicted to rise to 1.6 million by 2040. There has never been a more pressing time to raise awareness of the condition.

Awareness of dementia among the public is low and often it is only when you are personally affected that you start to understand, which is sometimes too late. Not enough people are able to spot the signs of someone with Alzheimer's or dementia when out and about. For example, if a customer in front of us in the supermarket queue is struggling with change, sadly not all of us will recognise that they may have the condition, to allow



Early diagnosis of Alzheimer's or dementia can be so important

us to wait patiently or to offer support.

For a number of reasons, some people have difficulty in receiving a dementia diagnosis. Perhaps their GP thinks the person is simply showing signs of old age rather than dementia, and maybe their loved one does not think they have developed the condition. So, the dementia checklist is such a useful tool to demonstrate the common signs that your loved one is showing, from asking the same question repeatedly to struggling to find the right word.

Getting an early diagnosis is important and that is the message we are spreading when out in the community to mark World Alzheimer's Month. It might be that your loved one can get treatment to prevent it from progressing further. Or they might benefit from joining a local support group. Finding out at an early stage stands you in great stead to face the challenges of dementia together.

Home Instead's dementia training programme is City & Guilds' assured and has even won a Princess Royal Training Award. Care professionals are equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond to common dementia symptoms to enable older people to live at home safely and happily. If you would like to know more

about the dementia checklist or learn more about Home Instead's care services or career opportunities, please email info.blyth@homeinsteadsenorth.co.uk or call (01670) 338542.

Here is a quick guide summary of common scenarios you might come across, that someone living with dementia might find themselves in when out and about:

- They are struggling to count money to pay for things, or to find their wallet, purse, or debit card
- They look 'lost' on the street
- They are out dressed in inappropriate clothing such as slippers on a rainy day
- They are shouting or arguing with themselves
- They are walking in a non-pedestrian area
- In a conversation they are relating what sounds like a bizarre story of experience.

The checklist offers some practical thoughts on how you may be able to offer help in such circumstances.



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What's on?

NORTHUMBRIAN LANGUAGE SOCIETY

Will later this year host the 2024 National Dialect Festival at the County Hotel, Newcastle over the weekend of October 18th to 20th. It will be a weekend of entertainment and competitions including the National Dialect Competitions and is expected to welcome delegates and speakers from all over the country from Cornwall to Lakeland. During the weekend the Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture will be delivered by linguist Adam Mearns, entitled 'We used to take the bairns when the kids were little.' Roland from Morpeth, was, of course, the founder of the annual Morpeth Gathering. For details of the weekend call (01670) 513308 or log on to the northumbrianlanguagesociety.co.uk website.

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, MORPETH

Coming up at the church over the next few weeks are the following events.

Holiday Club

From 19th to 23rd August 10 am until noon each day. Fun and games

activities. To book a place email stgeorgholidayclub@gmail.com

Autumn Coffee Morning

Saturday September 28th from 10am to Noon. Call in for a cuppa in a warm, friendly place. Everyone welcome.

Charity Christmas Card and Gift Sale

Saturday October 19th from 10am until Noon. Meet your friends, enjoy a coffee at the same time as supporting local and national charities.

Morpeth Antiquarian Society

Speaker at the September meeting – Friday 27th – will be Jack Neill who will speak on 'The Experience of Civil War and Revolution in North East England'. St James' Centre, Wellway, Morpeth, 7.15pm. Donations at door - £1 for members, £4 for visitors. Annual subscription £25. Visitors and new members always welcome.

Morpeth Community Cinema

Opens its new season with 'Wicked Little Letters' which has been described as a 'witty, joyously written piece of forgotten history'. Set in a 1920s English seaside town which is struck by scandal, the film is based on

a true story which follows two neighbours – the deeply conservative Edith Swan (Olivia Colman) and rowdy Irish migrant Rose Gooding (Jessie Buckley). When Edith and fellow residents start to receive letters full of profanities, foul-mouthed Rose is charged with the crime. The anonymous letters prompt a national uproar and a trial ensues. The film also features Timothy Spall, Gemma Jones and Eileen Atkins, and can be seen on Friday September 6th, starting at 7pm at St James' Centre, Wellway, Morpeth. Tickets are £6.50 online from Ticketsource or from The Chantry (card only). Further details from www.morpethcinema.weebly.com

The Community Cinema is looking for a volunteer co-ordinator to lead the small team that organises its monthly screenings. The job entails helping choose and co-ordinate the films' programme at the St James' Centre in Wellway and helping set up the hall for the screenings which are organised by Greater Morpeth Development Trust. The role would suit anyone with a keen interest in films.

For more information contact GMDT's Linda Wilson on (01670) 503866 or email info@gmdt.org

MORPETH MUSIC SOCIETY

First two concerts of new season.

Gould Piano Trio – Thursday October 17th, 7.30pm Morpeth Methodist Church, Howard Terrace.

Lucy Gould, Richard Lester and Benjamin Firth have been making music together for 25 years, touring internationally as well as acting as artistic directors for the Corbridge Chamber Music Festival with clarinettist Robert Plane.

Their Morpeth concert programme will be typically diverse, opening with a trio of works by Hummel - a pupil of Mozart – contrasting with a trio by 20th Century Czech composer Eben. The whole of the second half will be devoted to Tchaikovsky's only piano trio written to commemorate the death of Nikolai Rubinstein.

Programme for the evening:-

Hummel – Piano Trio No 1 in E flat Op. 12

Eben – Piano Trio

Tchaikovsky Piano Trio in A minor Op. 50 in memory of a great artist

Tim Klipuis Trio – Thursday November 25th, 7.30pm at Morpeth Church, in Howard Terrace

Charismatic Dutch violinist and composer Tim Klipuis does not like to be pigeon-holed into one genre. His unique style is influenced by elements of classical, gypsy jazz and folk music. Nigel Clark on guitar and Roy Percy on double bass, have been performing with Tim since 2007.

Programme for the evening

Pictures at an exhibition

Gnomus (Hartmann); Promenade 1; Bydlo (Hartmann); Baba Yaga (Hartmann); Promenade 2; The Old Castle (Hartmann); Great Wave (Hokusai); The Kiss (Klimt); Promenade 3; Starry Night/Nocturne (van Gogh); Ritz Tower (O'Keefe); Django meets Mussorgsky, including music by Hoagy Carmichael and Tim

Tickets for both concerts are £18 adults (children free with an adult); or £75 for the six concert season. Single tickets from Morpeth Methodist Church, via the Society Secretary (01670 512075), The Chantry or from MMS at www.morpeth-musoc.org.uk



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Honda named as simply the 'Best of the Best'

Honda has been named as **'Car Brand of the Year'** in the prestigious Which? Awards 2024 and praised for being simply the 'best of the best!'

Each year, the awards publicly recognise businesses and companies which in the own words of Which? 'consistently get it right for their customers!'

Not only that, but two Honda models – the Jazz and the Civic e:HEV – also received the esteemed Which? Best Buy accreditation for the small and medium sized vehicles categories.

After the awards were announced Which? Chief Executive Anabel Hoult was credited as saying: "Honda is consistently popular among our members. Every model we have tested to date has been awarded a Best Buy rating due to an overall combination of efficiency, quality and practicality. Coupled with good reliability it is no wonder that Honda has earned top marks for customer satisfaction in our latest Which? Car Survey."

Naturally, Honda was delighted at the news, with Rebecca Adamson, Head of Automobile at Honda (UK) being quoted as saying: "To receive one of the most prestigious awards in the industry is incredible and a true credit to all our loyal customers, retailers and associates across Honda UK. Having great products helps too!"

She added: "Honda is a very special brand filled with passion and strong heritage. Thank you also to Which? because this very important stamp of approval means a huge amount to us."

Vertu Honda Morpeth offers the full range of Hondas to its customers, many of whom have been loyal not only to the brand but to its Morpeth dealership on the Coopies Lane business park for many years.

The Honda Jazz has long been a favourite of customers at the Morpeth dealership, seeking a balance between form and function and with the e:HEV variant the bar has been raised even higher to deliver a driving experience that is both engaging and eco-conscious.

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Honda Jazz 1.5 iMMD Full Hybrid Advance - Fuel economy mpg (l/100km) (Combined): 61.4. CO₂ emissions: 104g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted, variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

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Reasons to be cheerful...

By Inside Morpeth's wine columnist **Mark Stephenson**



I am writing this article on the day after England were beaten by Spain in the European Championships, it has rained all weekend, and recent trading conditions have been tough.

So, I am going to do my best to be cheerful and write an uplifting article. At the moment, it is a tough task! The reason for the "Part Three" in the title not only refers to Ian Dury and the Blockhead's song, but this is my third attempt to write something that is not totally solemn and miserable!

Gosh, you should have seen the first two efforts - Victor Meldrew would have even accused me of being miserable so and so! So here it goes...

One good thing recently is that we got our feng shui book out and moved the shop around. We've cut the till in half, moved it towards the back, and put in more shelving.

The reason for this is two-fold: Firstly, our tastings have proved to be very popular with tickets selling out almost instantly. This is great, but sadly, we end up disappointing some people who may be a bit too late. So, we have created more room to fit in more seats and tables. The extra shelving will also help us achieve our aim of expanding wines and beer offerings.

Talking about tastings; that's another reason to be cheerful as we are now finalising our Autumn schedule. It starts off with a bang in September as we celebrate all things Australian. I literally can't wait! As you may know, it is the country that inspired me to come into this game. As for our resident Kiwi, Bryce, well I am surprised he hasn't put annual leave in for that month!

We will have the global brand ambassadors from some of the best wineries Down Under has to offer coming to present for us. This is a real coup and some of these guys

only spend one week a year in the UK, and we've got them to come up to our little shop in Morpeth! That is something that should be celebrated and it is reassuring to know that we are doing our bit to raise the profile of the town.

That's not all, as in October and November we will be welcoming some of the most exciting and dynamic whisky producers to NE61. It will be the first time that we've hosted a ticketed event for whisky. However, we've got lined up some fantastic producers who will be coming to present a selection of their drams.

We hope to have several new releases on show too. Once finalised, we will release the dates of the tasting through our email newsletter, on our website, and through our social media channels on Facebook and Instagram. Now that is a reason to be cheerful!

Lastly, it has been a long time coming, but we are putting the finishing touches to our online shop. Anyone who has set up one of these will know that it is boring, tedious, and takes a lot of time. Hopefully, it will all be worth it!

So, it is reassuring to have some optimism, despite the tough times we find ourselves in. Despite the challenges I wouldn't want to be doing anything else and I am determined to keep going and allow us to realise our potential.

Whether that's a reason to be cheerful or not is up to you... literally. Without your support we won't be able to continue to be a part of the high street. I genuinely believe that would be a shame for the town, because I believe we have so much potential and one day I truly believe Morpeth will be able to

claim to have the top Independent Wine shop in the North-East. That's the aim, but it won't happen unless you come with us on that journey.

One thing is for sure, we'll work tirelessly to keep it interesting for those who are already with us, and we will do what we can to get new people on board to help us to grow and realise our ambitions. There's a lot to look forward to and be cheerful about, if we're given the chance to succeed.

A few wine picks this month include The Clio Red Muse Dry Red from Greece for £14.25, Grower's Touch Durif from Australia for £12.00. And if you're pushing the boat, we have a new New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc Rapaura Springs, Rohe- Dillons Points for £22.00. Well worth the step up!

All available at Grape and Grain now!



Morpeth Heritage Days events

Every September thousands of volunteers across England organise a celebration of the nation's history and culture. This will be the 30th time Heritage Open Days has been held and Morpeth will once again be taking part in what is now the largest community festival of its kind. Greater Morpeth Development Trust is co-ordinating a host of local events which are all free to attend between Thursday 12th and Sunday 19th September.

CHURCH OF ST JAMES THE GREAT, MORPETH

St James' Terrace, Morpeth,
NE61 1BP

**Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th,
10am - 3pm**

Impressive Victorian Romanesque Church, after the style of the cathedral at Monreale in Sicily, with fine wall paintings.

ST ROBERT OF NEWMINSTER RC CHURCH

St. Roberts, Oldgate, Morpeth,
NE61 1QF

**Friday 13th and Saturday 14th
from 12noon until 4pm**

A beautiful Victorian church near the banks of the River Wansbeck.

MORPETH'S TOWN TREASURES

Morpeth Town Hall, Market Place,
Morpeth, NE61 1LZ

Friday 13th 2pm - 4pm

A rare chance to view the Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber, the civic silver and other historic items. The Mayor and councillors will be your guides for the day

COLLINGWOOD HOUSE

Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF

**Friday 13th and Saturday 14th
from 12noon until 4pm**

Georgian house of historical importance as the home of Admiral Lord Collingwood.

COLLINGWOOD SOCIETY LECTURE 'COLLINGWOOD: A BIOGRAPHY'

Corn Exchange, Town Hall,
Morpeth, NE61 1LZ

Thursday 12th 7:30pm

The Annual Collingwood Lecture about Morpeth's famous resident.

'ALL ROADS LEAD TO MORPETH'

The Chantry, Morpeth, NE61 1PQ

Saturday 14th - 2pm

A glimpse of the heritage of Morpeth, through poetry and in costume by the Morpeth Poetry Group. The St Oswald's piping group, will be playing in the Bagpipe Museum, in the Chantry from 10.30am - 1.00 pm. The Group meets regularly, every other Saturday.

HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR OF MORPETH

Market Place, Morpeth, NE61 1LZ

**Sunday 15th September,
meet at 10am**

Explore the historic market town of Morpeth with passionate Northumbrian James Boyd. James will share his knowledge of the history of Morpeth including significant buildings and notable people. Duration approx. 2.5 hrs. Distance 2.5 to 3 miles. Pre-booking required: email info@gmdt.org or by phone on 01670 503866

WOOLLEN WORTHIES: AN EXHIBITION

Corn Exchange, Town Hall,
Morpeth, NE61 1LZ

**Friday 13th 10am - 5pm
Saturday 14th 9am - 4pm**

Morpeth Antiquarian Society invites you to its annual local history exhibition based on the amazing hand-knitted figures of notable Morpeth characters by Joan Howard. Book stall and refreshments available.

MANCHESTER STREET HALL (BOYS BRIGADE HALL)

Manchester Street, Morpeth,
NE61 1BH

Saturday 14th 10am - 4pm

Boy's Brigade. Now being refurbished to create a youth centre. Currently there is no disability access.

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, BOTHAL

Bothal Village, Morpeth, NE61 6SL

11am - 4pm

Beautiful Medieval Church in Bothal village.

ST MARY MAGDALENE, MITFORD

Stable Green, Mitford, NE61 3PZ

**Thursday 12th to Sunday 15th,
10am - 4pm**

Historic 12th century church with interesting stained glass in a beautiful setting overlooking the remains of Mitford Castle

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, MORPETH

St Mary's Field, Morpeth, NE61 2QT

**Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th,
10am - 3pm**

Discover one of the best medieval churches in Northumberland with a 14th Century Jesse Window.

ST GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED

Church, Morpeth Bridge Street
Morpeth, NE61 1PD

Friday 13th 10am - 3pm

This lovely Victorian church built on the site of a mill, has stood at the end of the Telford Bridge since 1860.

MORPETH CLOCK TOWER TOURS AND BELL RINGING EXPERIENCE

Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF

**Saturday 14th, 10am - 12pm &
2pm - 4pm**

This is an unusual clock tower as it is not part of a church. The bells ring to celebrate civic events such as the Mayor-Making. Steep stairs outside and inside. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Contact for the day: Val Cowan 07887 594161.

www.morpethbellringers.org.uk

A stitch in time with Joan!



This September there's a chance to enjoy an amazing collective tribute to some of Morpeth's most noted figures of the past in a way you will never have seen before as **Catherine Byard** – who we welcome as our latest recruit to Inside Morpeth's reporting team – tells readers in her first report.

Born and raised in Pegswood, Joan Howard always dreamed of moving to Morpeth, and now she has made her mark in the town with her marvellous collection of 'Woollen Worthy' Morpethians as she calls her remarkable knitted figures.

So, let's take a step back in time to discover how Joan has created her Morpeth legacy, using her own knitting needles, a few balls of wool... and a whole lot of determination!

Joan has been telling me about how she has secured her place in the Morpeth Antiquarian Society's annual local exhibition as part of this year's Heritage Open Days weekend, with her cast of familiar Morpeth faces from suffragette Emily Wilding Davison to naval captain Admiral Lord Collingwood.

Starting from an early age, Joan was taught to knit by her grandmother with her talent shining through early on thanks to her ability to crochet – a skill that often comes into play in her work – beginning with scarves and graduating to fashioning her own clothes.

But, the origin of Joan's woollen masterpieces, began at a Morpeth Gathering event

in the early Spring of 2019, when she won the hearts of exhibition judges with her stunning knitted character doll entry which accidentally or not, bore a remarkable resemblance to Morpeth Councillor Nic Best who was twice Mayor of the town in 2014 and 2017.

Joan's miniature Mayor stood majestically donning the signature sanguine robes complete with velveteen trim framing the cuffs and collar, and his own tiny lace cravat and, of course, the splendid gold mayoral chain which Joan upcycled from local charity shop treasures.

Her remarkable talent and eye for detail, was spotted by Gathering Chair Kim Bibby-Wilson, leading to further requests for more 'Woollen Worthy' Morpethians such as Admiral Collingwood (a personal favourite of Joan having naval connections on both sides of her family); suffragette Emily Wilding Davison; and Mary Hollon, the inspiration behind the Hollon Trust created by her husband Richard Welch Hollon, to provide money for local organisations helping the poor needy, and, of course, the

Hollon Fountain which stands in front of the Clock Tower. For Joan, it is clear that within her work lies an abundance of care and heart, with much of it centring around the detail of the figures she creates plus the research she undertakes to design an original pattern for each outfit, and on to the additional touches that honour the role and personality of each figure, from the carefully crafted epaulettes on Lord Collingwood's uniform to the teeny tiny chain and spectacles of her mini-Mayor.

Joan also adds a lot of her own humour and charm to her work as seen in figures she was asked to make by the Mother's Union depicting a set of characters from Leonardo da Vinci's painting of

'The Last Supper' in which Judas wears the scarlet stripes of Sunderland Football Club, while James the Greater is kitted out in the black-and-white stripes of Newcastle United!

When I asked her how she stays motivated and persists in the challenge of particularly difficult patterns, Joan replied with a laugh: "I am a Taurean, stubborn and do not give up! I will keep going until I get it right."

Just how 'right' Joan Howard has got her remarkable knitted figures, visitors will be able to see on Friday 13th (10am to 5pm) and Saturday 14th (9am to 4pm) at the Morpeth Antiquarian Society Exhibition in the Corn Exchange, Town Hall.

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Flurry of fruit and vegetable picking

By **Ross Pearson** - Inside Morpeth's gardening expert

Although complaining about the weather is part of our British heritage, let's face it, this summer hasn't been the best. In fact, I can't remember a summer with as many prolonged periods of genuinely cold days. Still, somehow with grit and determination, our gardens and allotments fight with all their might to put on as big a show as possible.

And as we slip seamlessly into autumn, August and September are the months of desperation and determination for plants; a mad frenzy to finish flowering and fruiting and to set seed before it's too late. The poor weather inevitably has a big impact on a plant's productivity and whilst this is an annoyance for us, it can be disastrous for our wildlife.

As I write this, out of the corner of my eye I can see two goldfinches feasting on a banquet of yet to be cleared seed heads and I'm reminded that it's not always what our gardens can give to us that's important but what our gardens can provide for wildlife that really matters most. So as the seasons change hands, let's spare a thought for our struggling birds and beasts and see what we can do to give them a helping hand.

Food for thought

If we do eventually hit the temperatures we are entitled to, we will see a flurry of fruit and vegetable production. Rather than stripping plants of every last morsel of food, leave a proportion for wildlife to consume. Very often at this time of year,

vegetables can bolt due to dry spells or high temperatures, producing rather unsightly, leggy growth and an abundance of seed that is perfect for birds to graze on.

Problematic ponds

Most of us don't have the luxury of a large, deep pond and chances are, if you do have a pond, it dries up pretty quickly. Not only does a pond provide a vital waterhole for birds, hedgehogs and foxes, it also provides the perfect hatching grounds for flies that will keep bats well fed. If a pond dries up, water beetles, pond skaters and water boatmen will fly elsewhere and bottom dwellers such as dragonfly and damselfly nymphs will perish. Wherever possible, top up ponds with collected rainwater.

Mowing meadows

September is the time to cut long grass or meadow areas, however, leave a small patch uncut until Spring to allow creatures to spend the winter in safety. Use the dry vegetation to create a hedgehog home in the corner of the garden to help encourage them to stay

a little longer in your plot. At this time of year, both hedgehogs and hoglets will be feeding on invertebrates that would otherwise be feasting on your plants, so the more the merrier!

Spring food

Plant out bulbs for early spring displays to give bees a helping hand when searching for food. Try and opt for native plants such as daffodils, crocus and snake's head fritillary that our insects find most enticing.

Home improvements

Leave pots or trays of garden mud for house martins to repair their nests for late summer broods before setting off on their long journey back to Africa. Clear out nests from nest boxes to allow smaller birds such as wrens to shelter on colder nights. It is now also safe to trim hedges without fear of disturbing active nests. Creating a simple bug hotel of stacked logs, sticks, bricks, or bundles of bamboo will help insects settle in before the weather really turns cold.

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