

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

June 2025 | Issue 19

# Village POST

Connecting Bridekirk, Dovenby, Gilcrux and Tallentire



We know  
the area, the people,  
the news.  
We strive to support  
the community and  
celebrate the joys of  
village life!



**Happy 80th birthday to Village Post founder Meredyth Bell**



# WELCOME TO EDITION 19

Three years, 19 editions  
**Happy anniversary!**



From the team at Village Post!

**Marjory Thompson** Village Post editor  
email: [editor@villagepost.uk](mailto:editor@villagepost.uk) tel: 07836 371035

Huge congratulations to  
Lisa Turner from  
Tallentire who ran the  
Rob Burrow Leeds  
Marathon in aid of  
Motor Neurone Disease.  
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information.

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October 26-30 Sep  
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## The VP team



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**Junior editor and  
DOVENBY  
REPORTER**  
Matthew Chambers



Edd and Michelle live in Tallentire

# Frogs and crabs ... a brand new life for Edd and Michelle

During the Covid pandemic Edd Woodthorpe and Michelle Mayman made the decision to have a complete lifestyle change and relocate to Cumbria from West Yorkshire.

Edd was able to move with his job in the public sector. Michelle sold her dog walking business and set up another locally. Life had improved dramatically. But after a few years, 10 mile a day dog walks began to take their toll and a change in career for Michelle was on the agenda!

In May 2023, while travelling to Scotland, Edd suggested that, as they had come to love Maryport - not only for the fantastic beach but because of the friendliness of the people who they had met in this fantastic coastal town - they should open a ladies clothing shop. After all, there wasn't a clothing shop within five miles of Maryport.

By the end of a week Michelle had sourced several suppliers for her new venture. Within the next four weeks, further suppliers were obtained, a shop had been located at 24 Curzon Street. Only eight weeks after the initial idea, *The Three Frogs* was born!

The support from the people of Maryport and further afield was overwhelming. So in November 2024 *The Three Frogs* was relocated exactly six inches away to a larger corner shop location on the corner of Senhouse Street and Curzon Street.

Further fantastic suppliers were sourced for the grand opening so now the shop was stocked with Joe Browns, One Hundred Stars, Dream, Goose Island, Lighthouse, Vestopazzo, Elvis and Kresse & Abigail Ahern to name a few!



*The Three Frogs* is in fact the only UK stockist of the Italian made Vestopazzo jewellery which is made from recycled aluminium and brass. Elvis and Kresse is equally eco friendly and its range of bags, belts and accessories are made from recycled London Fire Hoses which are guaranteed for 20 years ... as they are very waterproof!!

*The Three Frogs* was the perfect venture for Michelle and, as it developed, it was then that Edd decided that he'd also like to have a career doing something he enjoyed!

In February 2025 Edd hung up his boots in his career of 18 years and began creating the shopfitting for his new venture which is located at 24 Curzon Street, Maryport - the initial location of *The Three Frogs*!

On 1 March 2025 Edd opened *The Rusty Crab* menswear shop with an emphasis on stocking smaller independent clothing companies from mainly the UK and around Europe.

A week before the opening, an Isle of White clothing company called Rapanui had just made the decision to stock physical clothing stores, as prior to this they just sold on the internet. Edd immediately became one of their first stockists and the first delivery of clothing arrived on the eve of the grand opening! Rapanui are focussed on being extremely eco friendly and this is important to Edd.

The Dirty Velvet t-shirt company were also acquired a few weeks later not only due to their fantastic designs, but because they also use 100% organic cottons. *The Rusty Crab* also stocks skateboards and accessories, as a new skatepark had just opened on the Maryport promenade. There are now 16 suppliers to *The Rusty Crab*, in order to offer a huge choice of clothing to cater for lots of genres and age groups.

Edd says: "*The last 18 months has been a totally amazing unforeseen sequence of events that has been a total life changer for Michelle and I. We both work in a fantastic coastal town which is currently undergoing regeneration, and it's changing on a monthly basis. There are new shops, bars and activities opening and I can't wait for 'The Carlton' Events and music venue to open soon.*"

Michelle's son Miles is the talent behind the graphics





## Invisalign at St Helens Dental Practice

### 1. What is Invisalign?

Invisalign is a revolutionary teeth straightening system that uses clear aligners to straighten your teeth. The system is unlike traditional braces, in that you don't need to have brackets stuck to your teeth. Invisalign has been used by more than 14 million people worldwide to transform their smiles. At St Helens Dental Practice we are accredited Invisalign Comprehensive providers meaning we can treat a wider range of patients, challenging cases than Invisalign Go providers.

### 2. How does Invisalign work?

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### 3. How long per day should I wear Invisalign clear aligners?

It is recommended to wear your Invisalign aligners for 20-22 hours per day. This gives you plenty of time to remove them whilst eating and brushing/flossing your teeth.

### 4. What is the average treatment time for Invisalign?

The average Invisalign treatment time varies dramatically depending on your specific situation. On average it's likely to take 6-18 months.

### 5. Are there monthly payment options for Invisalign?

At St Helens Dental Practice we offer finance solutions for every budget with Invisalign treatment costing as little as £60/month. Call our friendly reception team to book your free consultation.

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## GARDENING WITH MEREDYTH

### JUNE

Well apart from watering every day there are still so many jobs to do! It goes without saying - weeding and deadheading and tying up spent narcissi for starters. Look out for pests and suckers on roses - I hate greenfly! Finish pruning spring flowering shrubs and cut back and tidy perennials. You can take cuttings from pinks - always good value. Lift and divide overgrown clumps of bulbs and remove all pots with finished bulbs ready to store them until the autumn. Plant out summer bedding plants - instant colour! Give tired lawns a fluid feed and if allowed water lawns that are very dry. Plant winter brassicas and keep fruit and veg well watered during dry spells. Plant out tender veg such as tomatoes, provided we have finished with cold evenings. Lift pots and tubs to look for snails. In bloom: foxglove, rose, oriental poppy, lilac, alium, delphiniums, wisteria (mine has been spectacular), astilbe.



With thanks to  
RHS  
Gardening  
Year and  
Gardeners'  
Year  
Calendar

### JULY

Ensure the birds have water. I have to top mine up every other day. Keep all young plants well watered and feed/water containers regularly. Continue to be vigilant spotting disease and pests and deadhead all fading flowers. Trim conifer hedges and summer prune that magnificent wisteria. Divide bearded iris and layer and take cuttings from carnations and pinks. Plant autumn flowering bulbs. Water veg regularly. Lift new potatoes, onions and garlic and pinch out runner beans. Pick raspberries and harvest herbs. If you are feeling strong enough order spring flowering bulbs and remember to have plants cared for when you go away. Keep dahlias well staked. Take care not to add grass cuttings to compost for the first few cuts if you have used weed killer on your lawn - obvious reasons!

In bloom: penstemon, clematis, honeysuckle, buddleia, hydrangea, lavender, hibiscus, lupins, hostas.



Jackie Wilkinson  
Village Post  
nutritionist

## Cooked or raw?

With the warm, sunny days, lunch choices have moved from soups towards salads, from cooked to raw. Of course humans ate everything raw before we invented fire but in the modern world most food is cooked giving us more energy and time for living than the ancients.

Cooking makes foods more tender and easier to chew and digest but all types of cooking change food and can damage its delicate nutrients. Generally the longer the time at high temperature, the more you lose, although microwave cooking is particularly damaging due to its unique molecular resonance action.

Salads are usually based on raw lettuce and other leaves. Raw carrots are tough and fibrous so are better lightly steamed. Broccoli, cauliflower, green beans and peas are similar. For tomatoes you get more benefit from the lycopene if you cook them in olive oil. Raw potatoes leave the stomach undigested and will make you poorly so always cook them, then let them cool for your salad. We digest raw grains very poorly so they should be cooked too.

Eggs need treating gently to protect the anti-oxidants in the yolks, eg lightly poached, soft boiled or fried with the yolk still runny. Worst are over-done scrambled - think of the rubbery offerings you get with some hotel breakfasts. Meat we usually cook first and add cold for safety reasons. You can have good beef rare, but make sure chicken and pork are cooked through first.

I once had the most delicious tuna tartare in France, and when the others discovered that meant raw, I got theirs too! Today, raw fish isn't a big part of UK culture as it is in Japan, other than smoked salmon which is splendid on top of your salad.

**Top Tip – Enjoy your summer salads**

# Henry's battlefields trip

"I was fortunate enough to go on a battle fields trip with my school. The whole trip was amazing and had an action-packed itinerary including visits to the Somme area - which was the scene of some of the most devastating fighting involving British troops during the Great War - to see the memorials to the soldiers, as well as looking at the battle sites. We also visited the town of Ypres where, once a day at the Menin Gate Memorial (pictured right), the buglers of the Ypres Fire Brigade sound the Last Post as a living tribute to those who gave their lives. It was an outstanding experience seeing this and hearing the Last Post echo through the arches of the great memorial and gave me a shiver down my spine. I could not help but feel sad about all the young brave men who died for us all. The Somme area was deadly silent and had a strong sense of loss and pain yet glory at the same time. The muddy fields still had remnants of the battle that took nearly 20,000 British lives. The trip was directly related to my curriculum and served as an excellent opportunity to see where history was shaped first hand. The Gilcrux Educational Fund paid a contribution to the cost of the trip for which I am grateful."

**Henry Ellams (13) thanks the Gilcrux Educational Fund for their support**



## Henry then reads the famous Winston Churchill speech at St Mary's VE service

It was standing room only at St Mary's Church Gilcrux as the community came together for a service of evening prayer with a commemoration of Victory in Europe day VE80. The beautiful day of May sunshine started on Gilcrux village green with a sports day for the children. Gilcrux Village Hall and Education Trust served up delicious sandwiches and mouthwatering cakes with lashings of afternoon tea and a dash of patriotism. There was joy and laughter amid the red, white, and blue flags. The VE scarecrows were also a nostalgic reminder of the celebrations that villagers would have enjoyed in May 1945. A packed service at St Mary's, our beloved 1,000-year-old church, saw villagers young and old come together to celebrate this landmark VE anniversary. Henry Ellams (13) opened the service with former Prime Minister Winston Churchill's rousing address to the House of Commons on 4 June 1940 with the immortal words "*We shall fight them on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing ground, we shall fight in the fields ... we shall never surrender.*" The service was presided over by Rev Matt Richards from St Kentigerns church, Aspatria.



**VE scarecrows**



Yvonne Fearn read out a compelling excerpt from *War Horse* by Michael Morpurgo. It was followed by local poet Mr Malcolm Wallis from Cockermouth reading his poem "*The Secret of Everlasting Life*".

With warmed hearts the congregations stood for the Act of Remembrance and the large crowd shouted together "*We will remember them*" followed by a two minute silence. This was solemnly followed by heartfelt prayers of thanks to every man woman and child who had played their part in WW2.

Charles Ellams (12) read from the Book of Revelation 7 9-17. Matt reminded everyone of just how many had sacrificed their lives in fighting and that at times it seemed doubtful that victory could ever be achieved.

Gilcrux author Elaine Kelly read an amazing extract from her book about her father Albert "*My Dad the Soldier*". It was sensational and well worth a read. I'm certain if we ask nicely a copy of her book may well find itself on the bookshelf library in the church in which all visitors are welcome to "loan".

Kathleen West then read out a poem to honour The Home Guard on VE day. Cockermouth poet Malcolm Wallis (88), who was only eight on VE Day, gave a vivid and heartfelt insight into the sights, smells and scenes of victory and jubilation in Cumbria eight decades ago.

As the service ended it felt as though it had been a befitting service with so much love, so much admiration and respect for those that gave up their tomorrows so that we could have our todays. The parish at St Mary is indebted to all those that made this service so wonderful but, in all honesty, it was all those brave people 80 years ago who gave so much .. we will remember them".

That's all for now!

**Jo Ellams, Co Warden at St Mary's Church**

**The next service at St Mary's will be a "Songs of Praise" service at 5pm on Sunday 8 June. People have been sending their favourite hymns in readiness for this fantastic service. Please do come and join us you will be most welcome.**







This wonderful pen drawing of a Land Girl by Kathleen West (left) raised £250 for St Mary's in a raffle won by Catherine Mason.



Andy and Nala from the Mason's Arms proudly showing the certificate from Oaktree Animal Rescue. A total of £602.05 was raised on Easter Sunday from an egg dump, raffle and tombola.

**BIG CONGRATULATIONS** to former Gilcrux resident Henry Wilkinson who was 99 years young on May 6!  
Always remembering his wife Sheila. The couple moved to Gilcrux in 1965 and made a huge contribution to village life.



## Idle thoughts from Chapel Terrace

Thanks to our resident author **David Purcell** for some inspiring words on living life to the full

## Christian Aid Week Gilcrux May 2025



Yet again, the people of Gilcrux responded with huge generosity to the annual Christian Aid collection. The grand total of £752.44, whilst not quite reaching my rather over-ambitious target, was an amazing result in what are challenging economic times for many. The final total also included £118, which was tax returned by HMRC under the Gift Aid scheme, so many thanks to those who went to the trouble of completing the form. It is heartwarming to witness the willingness of so many to reach out to the wider world community and contribute to the greater good of mankind in this way. As a small, rural village we have a reputation with the charity of giving extremely generously, and this has been confirmed once again this year. Unfortunately several of the regular donors were away on holiday, but I was particularly touched by those among you who made larger donations than usual in order to attain the target - and to those who gave more than they could really afford. All contributions, big or small, are greatly appreciated. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Gilcrux is a vibrant, interesting and wonderfully supportive community to be part of and, as always, I hugely enjoyed catching up with old friends in the village and meeting new residents. With best wishes and thanks,

**Geraldine Baxter**  
Gilcrux Christian Aid Collector

When I was at school, historical time was always defined by the letters BC, for Before Christ or AD, for Anno Domini, or After Christ, but recently it seems to me that people are referring to BC as Before Covid or AC as After Covid.

Have you noticed? Covid! It all seems so long ago! Do you remember the isolation, crossing the road when someone walked towards you, queuing outside the supermarket three metres apart, wearing masks, standing on the doorstep on a Thursday evening, clapping for the NHS?

I remember before Christmas, meeting the family to exchange presents in an empty car park, like some prisoner exchange at the Berlin Wall in the Cold War! Now we have heard about the incompetence, the indecision, the corruption as government friends made millions on the backs of the dying thousands. The COVID enquiry drags on, but will anyone be held to account? Will anyone pay? I doubt it! But enough already! In the February after COVID, with life getting back to normal, I went as I had done every year to the pantomime that my grandchildren appear in. The kids first started in the chorus at six or so and gradually moved up through the cast so that, this year, my eldest grandchild was the principal boy.

Anyway, that year it was Dick Whittington and the eldest was playing Idle Jack or something like that and the younger one was in his first panto playing a rat, which rather suited his cheeky character, I thought!

It was a lovely evening and I was so proud of my grandchildren - of course I was! Afterwards, we retired to the kitchen table, opened wine and discussed the show, as we always do. The other grandfather was still isolating and missed the evening. I thought how sad it was that he had missed seeing such a special memory of our grandchildren. As I drove home the following day, I was thinking about that when it suddenly occurred to me that I had probably already lived most of my life. If I can make it to 100, I've got a quarter of my life left! Not the happiest of thoughts, but then not depressing either. It made me realise that time is precious. After all, we are only here once. We need to make the most of the time we have left! Of course, now I'm retired I have all the time in the world to do things but with only my pension to rely on, I don't have the money to do it! So what to do? I wrote a book, started working as an actor again, fell in love and realised there are an awful lot of things you can do for not very much. I'll talk about that in the next issue. I'd love to hear any ideas you may have for those of us with a few grey pounds to spend and the time and energy to do it.





## VE Day - Celebration and Remembrance



On VE Day we all came to school dressed in red, white and blue. Some children arrived as evacuees.

We joined a National Live Assembly which informed and moved many of our pupils - helping them understand just what a difficult time World War II was for so many people.

At 12 noon we all listened to the radio in the playground and observed two minutes silence.

Once the two minutes were up, we listened to celebrations that were taking place in Westminster and held our own celebration in the playground.

We played a special VE day compilation of music and Mrs McMillan and Mrs Litt prepared us a tasty picnic which we ate on the grass in the sunshine. Lots of children smiling reminded us all how lucky we are.

## Governor's chat

At the time of writing, Year 6 are taking SATS, which, for them, is their first experience of formal assessment. Preparation for SATS is done well here at BDS with good preparation and encouragement but no anxiety-inducing pressure. Each year, the results have been good.

I believe that it is character-building to face tests, learning how to handle them with resilience and positivity.

There will be many tests ahead, in their education and in life beyond, so we wish them success and a sense of personal achievement.

**SILVANA HEWITT**



## After Easter experience

Every class walked to church and back to spend an hour exploring different stations set up in the church. Parents and siblings were also invited.

Each station taught the children what Christians believe happened to Jesus following his resurrection: Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday & Ordinary Time. The children discovered the significance of each and the liturgical colours that represent each.

Members of St Bridget's Church set up the stations and enabled the learning to take place - we wish to thank them for all the hard work which went in to making it a very special day.

They also provided refreshments for parents and children at the end of the experience which kept us all going and fuelled children for their walk home!!!





## Hawse End Residential



### Year 2 enjoyed two days of outdoor fun at Hawse End.

Activities on the first day included canoeing across Derwentwater to St Bridget's Island where the children enjoyed following a map to find the hidden treasure.

The weather was glorious, allowing us to enjoy jumping in the water on the way back.

On day two the children challenged themselves to rock climbing. Everyone had an amazing time, enjoying their first residential at Bridekirk Dovenby School.

### Anna and Isabelle (P4) interviewed Ophelia and Eleanor (P2) about their visit to Hawse End

*What activities did you do at Hawse End?*

We went canoeing to an island where we did a treasure hunt and there was real treasure at the end. We went rock climbing up a very high rock and we swam in the lake!

*What was your favourite part?*

**Eleanor** – My favourite part was swimming in the lake because I like to get wet.

**Ophelia** – My favourite part was digging a hole looking for clay. It was really messy and I like to get messy!

*What did you get to eat?*

The food was delicious and we had pizza for our tea. In the morning, we got a big breakfast with bacon and sausages.

### Sensory Garden update

There has been a lot to do in the garden and the weather recently has been perfect to be outdoors.

Pupils have been weeding and planting, setting up the beds so they will be beautiful and productive.



## Have you a child ready to start school? Bridekirk Dovenby Primary School Open Days

Friday 6th June @ 1pm – 2.30pm

OR Saturday 7th June @ 10am – 11.30am

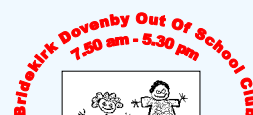
Ask questions and have a tour of the building and grounds...

Enquire at our school office **01900 829889** or via email:

**admin@bridekirkdovenby.cumbria.sch.uk**

Can't make the date? An individual appointment can be provided.

We look forward to showing you around our wonderful school!



**O.O.S.C**

Established 2009

Work Together, Aim High, Shine Bright





happy birthday

# MARJORY meets MEREDYTH



Interview by  
Editor  
**Marjory Thompson**

**At the same time as Village Post marks its 3rd anniversary, the wonderful Meredyth Bell celebrates her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

Her energy and enthusiasm started the publication and ensured its survival through 19 editions ... and counting!

In fact, if Enid Blyton wrote a book about this amazing lady's life it would have to be "*Meredyth Makes It Happen*"!

Challenging authority, standing up for what's right, pushing boundaries, doing things differently and with humour for the good of everyone. That is Meredyth Bell MBE, Founder and Trustee of Village Post.

Her regular *Meredyth Meets* column introduces you to a myriad of interesting local people. Now it's her turn to be interviewed about "a brilliant life, the best life" in her own words.

Born in Wallsend - within spitting distance of the Tyne - Meredyth was the only child of Charles and Sally Paton.

Her first school was La Sagesse Convent School where she remembers getting the slipper for drinking the holy water. Very Meredyth!! After that she went to Church High and was prefect and head of house - a taste of the future!

Full science qualifications were needed to follow her father into dentistry (he was a technician) but Meredyth failed her chemistry A level with, she says, "the worst results recorded!"

Undeterred she got the required results at Newcastle College of Further Education and in 1964 started at Newcastle Dental School. She was Year Rep in the first year and then in 1966 became the Head of the Medical and Dental Students' Committee - the first woman and the first dentist to do so. The Medical Dean called her the Lady Mayoress of Gateshead.

As Vice President of Newcastle University Students' Representative Council she welcomed Martin Luther King to receive his honorary degree - six months before he died.



**Life in the fast lane: Racing Aston Martins and being awarded the MBE**

Then, as Lady President of the Students' Union, she managed to book the Kinks to appear at her Ball. They were an hour late arriving but Ray Davies agreed to play way longer than planned so all turned out well.

Around that time a handsome young man called Richard Bell interviewed her for the Students Courier. And the rest is history. They married in February 1970.

In 1969, after qualifying, Meredyth worked in Workington Nook Street for Cliff Roebuck for nine years. Then she and Richard bought a house in Papcastle.

During the next few years she and Richard with five other local people set up and build Cockermouth Squash Court and Meredyth was proud to top the first division there while eight and a half months pregnant.

After being elected President of Papcastle Parish Council she fought and won the battle to build a bridge over the A595 to ensure the farmer could move his cattle about as required without shutting the road four times a day. Makes sense!! Richard and Meredyth had four children at regular two year intervals - Imogen in 1974, Alexander in 1976, Christopher in 1978 and Charlie in 1980 (a 10th wedding anniversary present). They have four wonderful spouse/partners and there are eight grandchildren. Alex and his family are in Australia.

After working in Whitehaven and Egremont, Meredyth bought a derelict property in Market Place. They sold their Papcastle home and moved above the practice only to face their next battle locally - a fight with the Council over parking in the Kirkgate Centre when it suddenly was closed to the public. She won! She also fought the Council's opposition to bringing Sainsbury to the town - another win after successfully amassing 9k+ signatures on a petition.

**LEFT: The Bell family**

**RIGHT: Meeting Martin Luther King**





Meredyth's dentistry career has been ground-breaking both in terms of achievements and awards personally but also for the innovative and forward-thinking methods she has used to improve standards in dentistry.

She helped establish Denplan - now is Life President. She campaigned for a Private Dental Complaints Scheme and won!!!!

Meredyth was elected to the General Dental Council, Carlisle College Vice Chair of Governors, Government committees looking into dentistry and prescribing.

Then in 2000 she was awarded an MBE for services to Standards in Dentistry by the late HM Queen Elizabeth. They had a right good chat, longer than anyone else at the occasion talking about the importance of looking after the dental health of the older population. A very kind footman held the handbag during the chat.

In 2019 Meredyth retired and sold the St Helen's Practice to her three associates turning down a very lucrative offer from a big corporate company. A decision she is proud of.

She and her beloved late husband Richard travelled the world - north/south America, Africa, Russia, Australia (24 times), New Zealand, Canada, Japan, China, South Korea amongst others. But they both shared a huge passion for their home at Parkhead and their stunning garden.

The pair shared a love of Aston Martins and Richard used to race them until he had to give up after a stroke affected his eyesight. He then founded the 50s sports car racing club. So Meredyth got herself into the driving seat and took over the Aston Martin racing and time trials, even giving Stirling Moss a whirl round the Silverstone track in her DB2 drophead. She got her racing licence at 45.

Twenty years later the family suffered a tragedy while in Australia. While in the sea, Richard was infected by ocean bacteria (the same one which killed Michael Winner when he ate an oyster). Richard lost both legs and most of his fingers as a result. Meredyth has always been so grateful to the exemplary care provided by the Australian medics who saved his life.

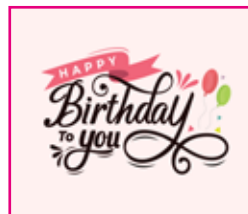
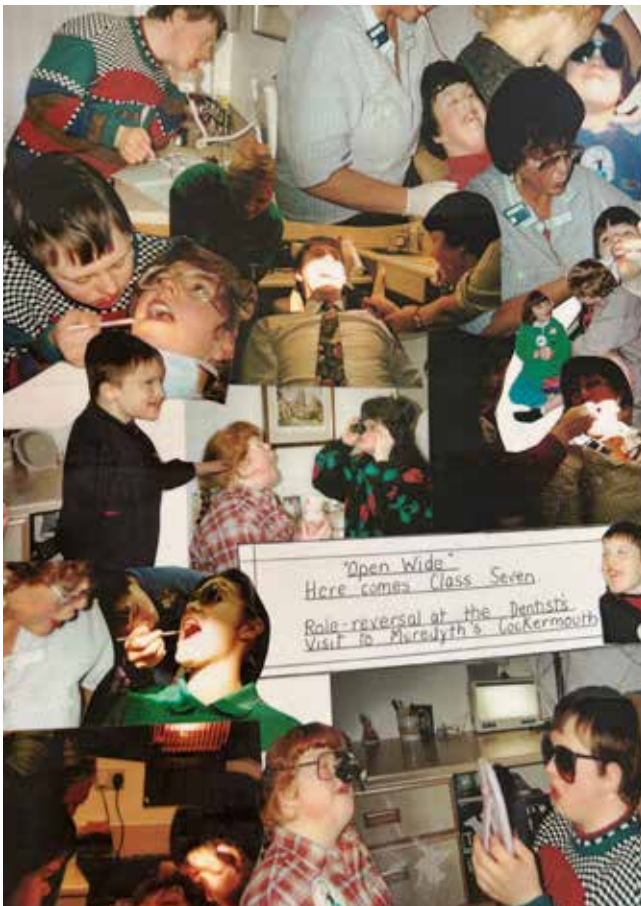
*Village Post* arose from another Richard and Meredyth partnership. He took over the editorship of the small parish magazine for many years but became disheartened at lack of support to try and improve it. So Meredyth took it over and in the Xmas edition, asked if there was anyone out there in the villages who could help.

As a former journalist it was right up my street and we soon had a team together to successfully apply for funding from the Cumbria Foundation.



Until his death in August 2023, Richard Bell (above) was THE biggest supporter of this magazine.

His technical knowledge, writing skills and overall encouragement and infectious enthusiasm were invaluable. Meredyth continues that with boundless energy, ideas, interviews, support and a real desire to bring our communities together and keep people connected.



## 'Open Wide' dentist sessions for pupils

Playing by the rules when things make no sense is not part of Meredyth's makeup.

So being threatened with being struck off as a dentist by the Chief Dental Officer was wilfully ignored as she introduced the pupils from Mayfield School to "Open Wide"!

To encourage their dental visits without fear, Meredyth had the pupils come into the surgery - some many times before even sitting in the chair. They would do role reversal - with Meredyth sitting on the chair while being prodded by a young pupil. One young man David, who is now 28 and an actor with fine teeth, is still in touch. He had to visit 50 times before even getting on the chair.

"Goodness knows what the powers that be were worried about," said Meredyth. "These youngsters need even more support to look after their teeth and we made it fun and relaxing.

"I'll always treasure the picture collage (on the left) given to me by the class teacher Gill Wilson".





**Tel: 07886 637296**

**Email: [vowvisionmedia@gmail.com](mailto:vowvisionmedia@gmail.com)**

**VowVisionMedia is on  
Facebook, TikTok and  
Instagram**

## Local wedding videography business brings BIG SCREEN magic to your Big Day

Cumbria's wedding scene has a new creative talent on the rise with the launch of VowVisionMedia, a professional videography business capturing love stories in cinematic style.

Founded in September 2024, the business is led by local filmmaker Daniel Gordon, who holds a degree in Film and TV and brings a wealth of experience from both the wedding industry and wider film projects. Based in Dearham, but able to travel nationwide, VowVisionMedia offers couples beautifully edited wedding films that combine the emotion of the day with a cinematic finish.

Daniel's background in film means every moment - from the quiet, heartfelt glances to the big "I do" - is captured with care, creativity, and expert storytelling. Whether you're planning a countryside celebration or city ceremony, VowVisionMedia is ready to turn your special day into a timeless film to treasure forever.



**Film-maker  
Dan Gordon, his  
fiancée Poppy  
and one-year-old  
son Alfie live in  
Dearham**

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**ANNETTE GIBBONS** is well known for her wonderful cooking. A former **Cumbria Woman of the Year**, she hosted her own **Border TV series "Home Grown"**. Annette has taught nutrition and cooking, run her own **cooking school** and organised **'Cumbria on a Plate' gourmet tours**.

## Home grown cooking with Annette

### Spinach roulade with creamy mushroom filling

This recipe may be a throwback to the 1980's but it's said that what goes round comes around and here it is again. This light but tasty impressive main course for family and friends that's easier to make than perhaps imagined. If you have spinach or chard leaves in the garden just cut a large handful.

#### Preparation

Heat your oven to 190 degrees F, No 4 gas.

Take a Swiss roll tin and line it with baking parchment.

Take one bag fresh spinach leaves washed then cooked with the water that sticks to the leaves. Place this in a saucepan with a lid, put the heat on low, lid on and wait for the leaves to wilt. This will take all of five minutes maximum!

Place the wilted spinach in a colander and press it down to remove excess liquid. Keep the liquid to drink, add to your smoothie or into a soup. It's full of iron and vitamin C.

Take five eggs, separate them and add the yolks to the wilted, drained spinach. Add one tablespoon flour to this bowl and use a blender to make a smooth paste, no need to do more than a few pulses just until the egg yolk is well mixed.

In a clean, greaseless bowl whisk the egg whites to soft peaks. Using a metal spoon gently combine the two mixes, using a figure of eight movement until they are one. Place in the oven for 12-15 minutes until risen and firmish.



Have ready a clean tea towel on a wire cooling rack and holding the baking parchment, tip the baked mix upside down on to the tea towel. Cover it with another tea towel to cool down. This should make it easier to release from the paper. Mine did not come away easily! Not to worry, this is on the inside of the roulade.

Make a thick creamy white sauce and add some cooked mushrooms with freshly ground nutmeg - this spice works so well with many vegetables. Season with salt and black pepper too. Cool the sauce. Spread the thick sauce onto the roulade and roll up the roulade using the tea towel, making sure the end is underneath.

Serve warm with vegetables or cold with salad. This will keep in the fridge, covered, for 24 hours so is good to be made in advance and it cuts cleanly when completely cold. Perfect for the summer table.

In mid-2016, nine men met in a small room in the stereotypical Yorkshire town of Halifax with a simple aim of talking through their issues and helping each other deal with their mental health. All in attendance agreed there was magic in that room that had to be shared. This was the start of a movement that has grown faster than anyone first involved could have ever imagined. Fast forward eight years and ANDYSMANCLUB now has groups in over 270+ locations, stretching from Plymouth to Aberdeen. ANDYSMANCLUB takes its name from Andrew Roberts, a man who sadly took his own life aged 23 in early 2016. Andy's family had no inkling that he was suffering or struggling to the extent that he would do this, and as a result looked deeper into male suicide and men's mental health. They soon discovered that male suicide is the biggest killer of men under 54, with male mental health surrounded by well-ingrained cultural stigma in the UK.

Elaine Roberts and Luke Ambler are Andy's mum and brother-in-law. Together they came up with the idea of ANDYSMANCLUB, a group where men aged 18 and above can speak openly about their mental health in a judgment-free, non-clinical environment. Groups now operate nationwide and are completely volunteer-led, with the vast majority of group facilitators having first interacted with ANDYSMANCLUB when they came

**GOING THROUGH  
A STORM  
OR JUST BEEN  
THROUGH ONE?**

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those storms.

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MORE**

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**www.andysmanclub.co.uk**



**#ITSOKAYTALK**

through the door as a service user. Following on from the COVID-19 pandemic, ANDYSMANCLUB created an online function via Google Meet. This follows the same model and enables men who cannot leave their home due to a variety of issues to join sessions. In the long-term, the charity aims to have a location within 30 minutes travel of any man in the UK.

To find out more, email [info@andysmanclub.co.uk](mailto:info@andysmanclub.co.uk) or head to [www.andysmanclub.co.uk](http://www.andysmanclub.co.uk)

**Locally they meet in James Walker & Co in Cockermouth on Mondays at 7pm**



## A big thankyou to our egg collector Lilly



So what to do when your baby grandsons Rudy and Alphie are too young for chocolate at their first Easter, says *Editor Marjory Thompson*. Well you buy them a personalised wooden 'dippy egg' board so they can

taste the real thing. Then you call on Tallentire's top egg collector Lilly Rayson who makes it happen! Next thing, splendid boxes of multi coloured eggs stamped with her name are delivered personally to my door.

And, as you can see, young Rudy (*above right*), who will be a year old on June 3, approves. Thankyou Lilly and mum Abbie.



**Egg lover Alfie (left) who was one year old on 14 May**

# CastleGuards

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## Rev Roy's birthday ramblings

I recently had a 'milestone birthday', '70', and it got me thinking of what my birthday actually meant to me. Birthday celebrations are special, especially when you get to enjoy them with friends and family. The older I get the more my celebrations turn to reflections. (They tell me that reflection is just another sign of old age!)

Every milestone in life is an opportunity to examine your own heart.

I'm very grateful that God has allowed me to live to my 70th birthday. It has been a joy this week to hear from so many special friends and rejoice in the goodness of God. And it has caused me to think about so many things.

Years are made up of days and every day matters for eternity.

I have spent 25,550+ days on this earth. The average person lives 27,375 days. If this is true, I've lived more days than I've left. Now, only God knows how long any of us have to live, but one thing I do know is this: everyday matters.

Firstly, we should acknowledge the significance of the occasion, another birthday, enjoy celebrating life's journey.

It's good to reflect on the past and express gratitude for the good times. You could spend some time thinking about the events of the past, recognising the growth, the challenges and the blessings you've experienced over your life.

Think about the people who have supported you, through the good and the bad times. The friends you have made and where life's



**Rev Roy with the aptly named rambling rector rose**

journey has taken you. Think of your family, how family life has developed during each decade of your life.

I found it good to write this down, a reflection on the seven decades of my life.

Childhood 1-10, youth 10-20, young adult 20-30, middle age 30-40 and so on.

It's not just the past you can dwell on, you can consider what you want to bring into your life in future, whether it's personal growth, new experiences or creative endeavours - never too late to start something new. Make the best of every day, don't wish your life away and always remember that today is a gift that's why it's called the present.

Blessings to you all,

**Reverend Roy**



### Plastic Free July challenge

Do you use plastic or do you avoid it like a plague?

Plastic has only been around for the last 60-70 years, and has transformed our lives in many ways. Light, durable, versatile and cheap to produce, plastic is all around us in items such as tea bags, wet wipes and even clothing.

Being made from chemicals that come from oil, petrol, gas and coal the production of plastic is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.



Plastics also take hundreds of years to decompose, and sometimes it never fully disappears but turns into micro-plastic particles. Both these factors make plastic a major problem for our planet. You can read more about it's effects on the environment and nature at

<https://a-rocha.org.uk/plastic-summer>

Perhaps this summer you may like to take up the Plastic Free July challenge (<https://www.plasticfreejuly.org>).

A great opportunity to review where you might be able to reduce single-use plastics in your life; and find great alternatives that can become new habits forever.

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# ST. BRIDGET'S, BRIDEKIRK

## People of hope and love

Loving and serving our neighbours - Lois Sparling (*pictured right*), Cumbria's first Community Chaplain introduces her new role.

Back in mid-March, I had the absolute joy of starting work as a Community Chaplain to the Grasmoor Mission Community (GMC) - a group of 15 churches in and around Cockermouth, across three denominations and seven church parishes, of which Bridekirk is the most northerly. I've worked with and for vulnerable and marginalised people (in homelessness, addiction and poverty) all over Cumbria. For me, using my community work experience on behalf of the churches to support the people of this area, is a dream come true. Tim and I fell in love with this part of the world many years ago and have been coming up to Lorton Vale very regularly, from our previous home in Kendal, for 10 years now. We've been cycling through Dovenby, Bridekirk, Tallentire and Gilcrux enroute to the coast, or to favourite local pubs for quite a while and we still can't quite believe that we have settled here at last.

The role is a brand new one, which the GMC is piloting for Carlisle Diocese. It's about inspiring, equipping and enabling churches and church people to love and serve their local communities.

Among the things we hope to be able to offer are resources (volunteers, buildings, fundraising), connections (to one another, to funders, to statutory services) and pastoral support. Many local churches are doing some of these things already (with food shares, community lunches, initiatives like Linking Lives and the Comfort Café) - but there is more that we can do. We're already having discussions about new initiatives on community transport, mental health support and digital inclusion.

This work starts with meeting and listening to the people we want to help - particularly those who are not heard through 'the usual channels'. That's easier said than done, of course, and in my first few months I've been meeting and learning from church people, local leaders and representatives - people who know their communities well and can give me introductions and point me in the right direction.

I'm so grateful to all those people who've already spent time with me, invited me to meetings and made suggestions - please don't stop. And if you haven't spoken to me yet, and would like to, I would love to hear from you. You can contact me on 07415 693012 or [community.chaplain.gmc@gmail.com](mailto:community.chaplain.gmc@gmail.com) but please be aware that I'm trying to stick to 21 hours a week, mainly between Tuesday and Thursday, so I may not reply immediately.

If you're on Facebook, you can also read more about the people I'm meeting week by week on the GMC Facebook page.

Thank you! Lois

### Services at St. Bridget's Church, Bridekirk

Children's Church will be available during the 11am services.

#### June

- 1: Holy Communion (11am)
- 8: Morning Worship (11am)
- 15: Holy Communion (11am)
- 22: Morning Worship (11am)
- 29: Morning Worship (11am)

#### July

- 6: Holy Communion (11am)
- 13: Morning Worship (11am)
- 20: Holy Communion (11am)
- 27: Morning Worship (11am)

**St. Aidan's All Age  
also meets at  
3pm  
every Sunday at  
Bridekirk**



**BRIDEKIRK  
FRIENDSHIP  
GROUP**

**St Bridget's Church room,  
Bridekirk**

**10:30 - 12:00**

We offer a warm and friendly place for people who are in need of friendship to meet others for a chat over a cup of tea, coffee and home baked cakes each Monday morning.

Why not drop in anytime in the morning, for as long or as little time as you feel comfortable. You will always find a warm welcome from our volunteers.

£3 per person

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

bridekirk\_church@grasmoormc.church  
0785 8074 133

**EVERY MONDAY  
MORNING**  
(EXCEPT BANK HOLIDAYS)

**Are you feeling lonely or isolated?**

Why not come along and meet the team. We love to meet new people.

16

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# JUMP YOUTH GROUP

J E S U S U S E M Y P O T E N T I A L

DATE	ACTIVITY / TOPIC
1 June 5.30-7.30pm	<b>Kayaking and Canoeing on Derwentwater</b> <i>Please wrap up warm, wear sturdy trainers and while no plans to go "in" the water please bring a towel and change of clothes and footwear just in case.</i> <b>Meet at Derwent Water Marina at 17:30. Postcode: CA12 5RF</b> Turn off the A66 at Portinscale, follow road round past the cafe and 100Yds on your left, turn off into the marina. <b>Registration required – please do not just turn up</b>
7 June 2-7pm	<b>Solway Network Youth Church</b> <b>ABLAZE – at Bencogo (near Wigton)</b> <b>£10 incl. BBQ and snacks</b>
22 June 7-8.30pm	<b>Youth for Christ Session on</b> <b>Pixar Film 'Monsters Inc'</b> <b>Christ Church Rooms, Cockermouth</b>
06 July 6.30-8pm	<b>Year 6 Taster Session</b> <b>Note: Earlier start and finish time</b> <b>Christ Church Rooms, Cockermouth</b>
13 July 7-8.30pm	<b>End of year party: Walk and barbecue- Meeting location to be confirmed near Wythop</b> <b>Please wear, sturdy trainers or walking boots, and bring a coat.</b> <b>(Note timings may be adjusted)</b>

The new JUMP programme for SUMMER is out. Those in current Year 6 are invited to come and try JUMP on 6 July at the earlier time of 6.30-8pm. JUMP is a great chance to keep in touch with friends as Year 6 move off to different Secondary Schools.

JUMP usually meets 7-8.30pm on Sunday evenings at Christ Church Rooms on South Street in Cockermouth. But also, in the summer, we can be found out and about.

Are you aged 11-18, then why not come and join us?

We use 'Youth For Christ' resources to provide a variety of components to our Bible-based sessions. a group game and activity, video content, prompts to chat, reflect, create ... and a challenge for our young people to take away into the week.

The aim of JUMP is to help our young people navigate and live wisely in the world today.

Email [jumpyouthgroup@gmail.com](mailto:jumpyouthgroup@gmail.com) or contact Christina on 01900 824526 for more information.

Or just pop along to one of our sessions. We'd love to see you!



## Baby & Toddler Club



**ST. BRIDGET'S, BRIDEKIRK**  
People of hope and love

You're Invited!

**Date – Starting – Thursday 8th December**

**Time – 1-3pm. Every week**

**Place – St Bridget's Church, Bridekirk.**

**Toys & Refreshments provided**

Please bring your own travel mug/lid



## EVERYONE WELCOME

An opportunity to share time and a chat with other families whilst the children play together.

 [stbridgetsbridekirk](#)  
 [stbridgetsbridekirk](#)  
 <https://cockermouthareachurches.church/st-bridgets-bridekirk/>

Join our team!

Perhaps you would like to volunteer to join our helper rota?

For more information contact us : [bridekirk\\_church@icloud.com](mailto:bridekirk_church@icloud.com)



# USEFUL NUMBERS— — — — —

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Goodwins Dental Care	01900 823467

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## Vets

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Cockermouth Emergency Response Group (CERG)	07852 599794
Citizens' Advice Bureau	01900 604735
Cumberland Council	0300 373 3730
Cockermouth Library	01900 822634
Aspatria Library	07557 499129



**Isel and Bridekirk Parishes  
First Responders  
150 Club Draw  
May 2025**

1 C Springett  
2 A Wilson  
3 G Thyer  
4 M Hall

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If you would like to join the "150 club", or know someone who would, contact Moira Purvis on telephone 01697320534 or email [moirapurvis@hotmail.com](mailto:moirapurvis@hotmail.com)



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By popular demand ...



## Teddy's dog blog

### Hello Humans and Doggy Dudes!

Teddy Edward, your Rover reporter, wishes everyone at the *Village Post* and all our readers a very happy third birthday! As you can imagine, I have been celebrating this marvellous milestone in my usual understated manner. Who doesn't love an excuse for a chipolata or two and a bit of a knees up?

My pawrents are great ones for decorating the house for special occasions. It's so much fun to watch Daddy getting boxes out of the loft, followed swiftly by a sigh and rolling of the eyes, then being told "those are the wrong ones" and having to do it again properly, this time under close supervision from Mummy.

Always a good spectator sport, especially watching from the safety of my couch in the upstairs window.

We've been loving having lots of walks and enjoying this sunny weather. The other day, just after my pawrents had bought me a posh new annoying dangly thing for my harness, we went for a bit of an adventure.

It didn't take me long to dump it (along with the harness) down a convenient rabbit hole at Allonby. They spent hours searching through all the prickly dog-rose bushes and getting scratched in all manner of unimaginable locations, while I had a lovely time sniffing here there and everywhere. All to no avail, as I was supremely confident they would never find where I had buried



it. What a result! *See me laughing above!*

When they eventually gave up looking, I needed to cool off so popped over to the nearest ditch for a drink and a dip. That didn't go down very well either, as apparently the damp dog aroma was particularly pungent that day and I had soaked it nicely into the car seat.

Not my problem pawrents, you took me there.

Amazingly, a few weeks later they got a phone call to say someone had actually unearthed my secret hiding place and the harness was available for collection. Devastated!

I have clearly had a very rare mission failure, so I'm just going to have to up my game. Watch out World!

Great to see you all out and about on these lovely evenings.

Keep on sniffing, smiling and don't forget to pick up the poop.



*Love, Teddy Edward,  
your Rover Reporter*



Jack  
Robinson  
from  
Tallentire  
as an  
evacuee for  
VE Day at  
Bridekirk  
Dovenby  
School



**Do not miss this wonderful  
exhibition at Maryport!**





# An invitation to visit/join a garden project

Village life is bursting with greenery and flowers ... and brings with it a calm, relaxed way of life which allows us to socialise with family and neighbours as well as enjoy our gardens.



But not everyone in our four villages has a garden - or one big enough for growing produce. And, with allotments in short supply with long waiting lists, what can we do to find that special place where we can grow our vegetables, enjoy the flowers and enjoy the calm and gentle activity that is so good for health and wellbeing.

Now there's an opportunity to visit a hidden gem of a community garden just a short drive away (*which featured in an earlier edition of Village Post*) as part of Cockermouth Garden Trail 2025.

Situated just behind Hames Hall on the road into Cockermouth this wonderful walled community garden is well worth visiting.

It is within the Bridekirk Parish area in which our villages sit and is run by volunteer

friends of the garden. Hard to imagine that 10 years ago this was just an overgrown field of apple trees and long grass, having once been the Hames Hall kitchen garden. But the local Riversmeet Group managed to clear it and a wonderful community project was born. Only stipulation to join at that time was promising two hours of work a week and a small yearly subscription.

Everything is much more flexible now - some of the members are able to work in the garden on a daily basis whilst others come along when work and family commitments allow.

No one is in charge of the garden and there are no experts. Just ordinary folk learning from one another and sharing each other skills.

Membership is £25 per year.

**Please come along on Saturday  
12 July 1-5pm to see for yourself!**



**Ros Bilton invites you to visit the community garden as part of the Cockermouth Garden Trail**



## How to become a VP Goodwill Partner?

Just £10 a year from every household we distribute to would cover all our costs



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Email for VP form to [editor@villagepost.uk](mailto:editor@villagepost.uk)

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