

Wheatley Hill History Club

Volume 16 Issue 2

April 2013

WHEATLEY HILL
ROYALTY
SUNDAY (15th August) For One Day—EDWARD ARNOLD in THE HIDDEN EYE. Also BLONDE FEVER.
MONDAY (16th August) For Three Days—LAUREL and HARDY in BONNIE SCOTLAND. Also Full Supporting Programme.
THURSDAY (19th August) For Three Days—CLARK GABLE and DEBORAH KERR in THE HUCKSTERS. Also Full Supp. Programme.

EMBASSY BALLROOM
WHEATLEY HILL

FRIDAY (18th August)—LEN PARKER AND HIS BAND, Dancing 8—12. Admission 2s.
SATURDAY — DANCING 7.30—11 p.m. Admission 2s.
MONDAY—THE DANCE OF THE WEEK. REG. BUSHBY AND HIS BAND. Dancing 8.0—11.30. Admission 2s.
THURSDAY—LEARN TO DANCE. DORN SCHOOL OF DANCING CLASS. 8.0 p.m. 2s.

Advert from 1923

THORNLEY PARISH COUNCIL

The History Club has been awarded £100 to support holding meetings in Thornley. We have held three up to now, with a fourth planned for June.

LOCAL HISTORY DAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2013

For this year's Local History Day, the History Club have had 12 roll-up banners produced charting the history of our village from before Roman times until the present day. The banners are similar to the one that advertises our presence at events we attend.

We have been able to chart our history as a result of the research carried out by the archaeologists involved in the Limestone Landscape research, and by having the information produced on these banners, it will be available to future generations and hopefully they will be able to add to the banners with developments in the future.

A press conference to launch these banners will be held in Wheatley House the week before the Local History Day and History Club members are very welcome to attend.



This photo has been donated by Mary Walker. Unfortunately there are no details regarding its date or even location, although it is thought to be Wheatley Hill. The children and staff are extremely well-turned-out - notice their shoes etc and the dress of the adult on the left is lovely. If you've come across this image before and know any details, please contact us.

RETIREMENT OF TRAFFIC MANAGER AT WHEATLEY HILL

With the close of the year, Mr Peter Brandling, who is well known around the Wheatley Hill and District, retired from the position of traffic manager at Wheatley Hill Colliery, after having held the post for over 25 years.

He was born at South Hetton 69 years ago. His parents removed to Byers Green and then to Spennymoor. When Mr Brandling was only ten years old, his father died and Peter commenced work in the pit at Byers Green, remaining with the Whitworth Company until he was 20.

He was married in 1877 at St Paul's Church, Spennymoor. Later he spent 13 years as pit heap weighman at Middridge Colliery afterwards being promoted to Traffic Manager at the same company's Wheatley Hill Pit.

Though rapidly nearing the allotted span, he is still hale and hearty and carries with him into retirement the good wishes of a good circle of friends.
(Article from the Auckland Chronicle, 1920)



Mr and Mrs Brandling

CONTACT DETAILS

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

24 April	Forensics
18 May	Yesterday Belongs 2U 2013 County Hall
29 May	Stan Laurel - The Early Years
26 June	The Great North Air Ambulance
31 July	The Story of the Graf Spee

We continue the Memories of Herbert Marks, originally from Ludworth:

The entertaining went smoothly enough and the usual 'book' way was best. Animals were paraded by sections, and the simultaneous loading of a troop at a time. No shouting or other noise keep them moving, and 4 men at the doorway to assist the doubters by linking hands round the quarters. The breast bar fittings were ready, and as soon as one side was loaded, in with the breast bar and 'feed up', the very sight of the feed bag kept them quiet. As soon as both sides were loaded, mangers for fodder were attached by the saddlers who had made them from 2 maund sized bags. These were suspended from the bars and filled with bhoosa (grass/hay). In addition salt licks were fixed and the animals played with these to while away the tedium of the journey. No gear was placed in the centre of the trucks - it was all loaded by the troops in baggage wagons, as there were enough of these available.

The daily scale of feed was fixed at 5 lbs for all animals, 2½ of bran and the same of Barley, and fed five times daily. A number of animals were scouring, and these were given an all Bran diet for 2 days, which had the desired effect. Fodder was kept in front of the animals all the time.

All watering had to be done from buckets, and this was a long and tedious business which had to be carefully supervised. Animals were watered by Troops under all Officers. This ensured that shy drinkers were given every chance and slow drinkers had time to quench their thirst. Every effort was made at Lucknow to have those galvanised troughs put in the trucks, but none were available. It is, most essential, that some such means of watering animals when travelling in trucks be made, as using buckets took so much time and caused delay to the train. The Railway Authorities do have these troughs and sometimes have produced them, but they are as essential a fitting as a breast bar - yet they are not seen now. The same thing applies to such things as rakes for cleaning out the trucks - these were improvised by the unit, but it is considered that they should be provided with the truck.

The men were by now getting to know each other, and getting a troop spirit. There was much speculation as to their destination and the office orderly was much in demand as a source of knowledge. Guards were 'cut' at every halt to keep away information seekers, and to prevent men from leaving the train. 2 men were left at Lucknow, they were stated to have gone to the tea stall and missed the train. (it was thought that they had deserted but they were put on the Mail Train by my MC and joined at Parbatipur. Section Commanders were then told that they were responsible for their men at all times, and would be held to account.

13 days after leaving Lucknow we reached AMINGAON on the Brahmaputra River. I at once contacted the Station Master, only to be told he had gone for lunch. He turned up after an hour and proved to be the usual type. When asked what the procedure was he said that personnel would tranship and be ferried across - and that the animals and baggage would remain in the trucks and taken across on barges, and he estimated that it would take 2 hours. Men were detrained, ie all kit was taken out of each coach and stacked in front of it and checked, then carried down to the wharf and placed on the steamer in the same order.

It was impressed on the Station Master that in NO CIRCUMSTANCES was the "ORDER" of the train to be broken up, and he assured me that it would not. When I returned from the steamer, I found that his minions had gleefully started loading the flats, and on the first one was a miscellaneous collection of 12 trucks, one of them being the unit reserve supplies, and the others all belonged to the civil traders

The mode of transporting personnel, animals and baggage across, was for an engine to be attached to 4 trucks, and shunt them down to a special wharf at which flats (barges) were moored, and with a special railway fitting, the 4 trucks were placed on the 'flat'. Each of these flats held 12 wagons - 3 lines each holding 4 wagons and when the flat was ready a steamer was brought alongside, and attached to the 'flat', which alongside the steamer was taken across the river, moored to a wharf, and an engine is then hooked onto the flats and takes them into a siding at PANDU where the train is re-martialled.

MEMORIES OF MR T W THOMPSON

Mr Thompson was a resident of Wheatley Hill who passionately believed in progress and science. He started to jot things down that were of interest to himself in 1900. Reproduced here are his Wheatley Hill jottings:

- 12 Oct 1928 New road at Wheatley Hill near to the Colliery shops and pit yard, and new coal depots for the workmens firecoal opened
- 8 Dec 1928 New winding engine and pithead gear at No 1 shaft Wheatley Hill and new high pressed boilers
- Feb 1929 The winter of 1928. Very severe and cold. January and February 1929, snow and frost all the two months and one of the severest frosts known for many years occurred from 10th till 20th of February. Fires were lit at Wheatley Hill Colliery down East Shaft at bank to keep the front from doing damage to the electric cables. Also High Force Waterfalls and all the lakes in the west of Durham frozen
- 28 May 1929 Winding Engine at Wheatley Hill Colliery removed and altered to high pressed boilers of 150lb pressure - commenced to work on this day
- 29 Jun 1929 Mr Alex Clark, on hearing the cries of four persons trapped in a house fire at Sunderland, went to their rescue and was lost. Great sums of money were collected for his widow and three children and 100,000 people were at his funeral at Sunderland
- 26 Sept 1929 The Meadow Dairy Company Ltd opened at No 6 Granville Terrace, Wheatley Hill Colliery, transferred to the Front Street, Wheatley Hill and opened for business
A record year for potatoes, extra large stocks on the market selling at the low price of 2/- per 8 stone bag, free delivery
- 21 Oct 1929 The Aerial flight erected at Wheatley Hill Colliery for the tipping of stone and refuse from the pit at the south side of the colliery
- 1 Dec 1930 7½ hours Act for coal miners, plus one winding time, not to exceed one hour per day or the alternative of the spread over of 5 days at 8 hours per day and a 5 hour day on Saturday, making a total of 45 hours per week came into operation
- 31 Jan 1931 The Miners Welfare Hall & Pavillion in the recreation ground at Wheatley Hill opened
- March 1931 Washaway closets and improved sanitary conditions at Wheatley Hill colliery houses
- Summer '31 One of the most unsettled summer months for rain and cold weather and especially at the weekend causing great loss to the carnival and sports
- 29 Aug 1931 One of the worst weeks for the coal trade for many years at Thornley and Wheatley Hill Colliery Wheatley Hill Colliery working 2 days and Thornley Colliery working one day a week
- 22 Sept 1931 Shaft accident at Wheatley Hill Colliery No 2 Pit during coal work. The ascending cage split a guide and came into collision with the descending cage at meetings, doing great damage to the cages and caused the No 2 Pit to be idle for a week to repair the damage
- 30 Jan 1932 Durham County Junior Challenge Cup competition. A remarkable match between Coxhoe Juniors and Wheatley Hill Juniors, the game played six times before it was decided, Wheatley Hill winning
- March 1932 After a 30-year controversy in the House of Commons, a general tariff on certain imported goods came into operation, thus ending free trade in the British Isles. The Conservative Government in power. A few goods that are remarkably cheap are: Flour ½ d per stone, Tea 1/- per lb Bacon 8d per lb
- 9 Sept 1932 The new coal face and conveying machine called 'the skip' began working at Wheatley Hill Colliery at the No 1 pit and after the pit being idle for two days and a good many scores of coal standing, the no 1 pit broke the record in scores on the board. The scores were:
No 1 pit: 13910 No 2 pit: 11100 Low Main: 5600
- Sept 1932 The Wesleyan Chapel and Primitive Methodist Chapel united to be one chapel and will be called the Methodist Church
- Oct 1932 A remarkable fine summer, with a large amount of sunshine, especially the first two weeks in the month of August, when 90° of heat was registered in the shade in London and the north at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Garden crops was a record and in Ireland, the potato crop was an extra large crop
- 10 Jan 1933 Thornley Colliery pit head baths opened for general use
- 14 Jan 1933 The winter of 1932/33 was noted for such mild weather until Jan 1933 when a severe storm of snow and frost came. The rivers of Tyne, Wear and Tees were frozen and the frost resembled the same as the frost in the year 1929. Fires had to be lit at Wheatley Hill Colliery down the East shaft, the frost lasting 14 days. Great sport on the ice all over the north of England
- 17 Feb 1933 One of the worst storms of snow and frost for 25 years. The snow falling till the roads were several feet high with snow drifts and all passenger buses etc were unable to travel, the storm lasting about 10 days. Storm commenced 17 February

ADVERTISING

Wheatley Hill Community Association T: 01429 820214

Wheatley Hill Community Association

Greenhills Centre

For the Community

CAFE

OPENING HOURS
 Mon-Thurs 8.30am-8.45pm
 Fri 8.30am-7.45pm
 Sat 9.30am-11.30am
 Sun (Church only) 9am-12

Meals on Wheels Service

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County Durham History & Heritage Forum

YESTERDAY BELONGS TO YOU 2013

Where our history comes home

The Biggest Local & Family History Event
Between Tyne and Tees

Saturday 18 May 10.00am - 4.00pm
Durham County Hall DH1 5UT

FREE PARKING

ADMISSION £1.00

ACQUISITIONS

BOOK - The Stained Glass of Durham Cathedral
UNVEILING of the Thornley War Memorial 2005 - Commemoration booklet
PHOTOGRAPHS - unveiling of the Wheatley Hill War Memorial
PHOTOGRAPHS & LETTER re moving of the Wheatley Hill War Memorial
OUTLOOK Magazines 2003(2) and 2005(1)
PARISH MAGAZINE - November 1937
HANDWRITTEN NOTES - History of the Workingmens Club Union
3 PHOTOGRAPHS of Wheatley Hill Colliery Band
2 PHOTOGRAPHS of Wheatley Hill Primary School