

Wheatley Hill History Club

Volume 16 Issue 1

January 2013

ST GODRIC'S MOSAIC PROJECT

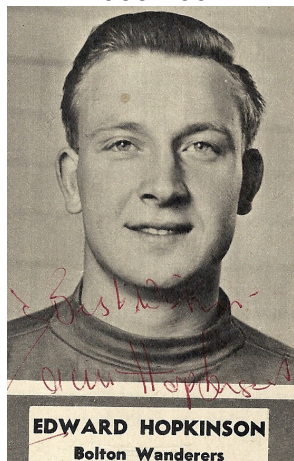
The above school is taking part in a project to make a mosaic that will represent life in Wheatley Hill over the years and is involving organisations within the village. The History Club has contributed financially to the work and will therefore have a tile on the finished mosaic.

The school have bid successfully for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund which has enabled them to employ the help of an artist who will work on the project with local people and the children.

The tiles will eventually be permanently housed in the entrance to the Heritage Centre.

Every group taking part was given the opportunity to help make their own mosaic at workshops held in the village. The History Club was represented by Joan Scott.

EDDIE HOPKINSON 1935-2004



Eddie Hopkinson was born in Wheatley Hill and moved to Lancashire with his family as a child. He played for Oldham and Bolton Wanderers and earned 14 caps for England.

We bought this signed photo off EBay.

30th anniversary
Sedgefield
Constituency

*Sedgefield Constituency 30th Anniversary
Celebration Dinner*

with special guest The Rt Hon Tony Blair

Date: Friday 16th November 2012 (from 7pm)

*Venue: The Xcel Centre, Long Tens Way, Aycliffe Business Park,
County Durham, DL5 6AP*

Dress Code: Lounge Suit/Cocktail Dress

Invitation Card strictly required for admittance

Margaret was invited to the 30th Anniversary of the Sedgefield Constituency by local MP, Phil Wilson, as a result of her work with The History Club since 1995. He offered two tickets, and as a result of her long service to the History Club committee, Joan Scott accompanied Margaret to the event held in Newton Aycliffe. The History Club received a donation from funds raised on the night.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TRIPS 1952

The following was received from Mr W Luke, ex Wheatley Hill, now living in Easingwold:

In 1952 after the War, petrol became more available and the Sunday School trip became possible once again. I had experience of RTO work on Indian Railways sending large numbers of men and materials across long distances, so the organisation for this trip would be special. All 'buses were numbered and tickets were issued for every seat. There were three children to every double seat. I contacted the Redcar Entertainments Officer in advance and booked tents and deck chairs to be erected before our arrival. Bee Line, a West Hartlepool company, provided the 16 'buses that were required!

We had a wonderful day and the weather was kind. A lot of weary passengers were queuing to go home at 6.00pm. By the time we had got the first three 'buses filled as per the tickets, we knew all 'buses were not coming back. We crammed bodies onto 'buses and cleared everyone by the eighth 'bus. Joe and Emma Scrafton and Audrey, my wife, and I had to wait in case any more 'buses came back or there were any late-comers for the return journey home. The four of us then had to go home on the slow service 'bus via changes at Middlesbrough and Stockton. Four tired people arrived at Wheatley Hill near midnight!

Another memory Mr Luke has of the Sunday School is a fund-raising campaign in 1960:

In 1960 the Sunday School children were provided with powdered baby milk tins. A slit was put in the lid, a string handle added and the tins were sealed with a label, "Ship Halfpennies" (an old coin as big as a 2p coin). The filled tins were returned to the chapel after six months, thousands of coins sticky with damp milk powder! I went to the bank with the first £10 and the bank refused to take them - the halfpennies in that amount were not legal tender - legal tender for halfpennies was in amounts up to two shillings!!

I think this proves that 50 years later the banks are still unreliable!

CONTACT DETAILS

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Treasurer: 01429 823198

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Web Site: wheatley-hill.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

30 Jan The Border Reivers

27 Feb Auckland Castle, A History with Humour

27 March The Titanic

24 April Forensics

18 May Yesterday Belongs 2U 2013 County Hall



Hugh and Margaret Marks, parents of Herbert Marks. They lived at No 19 Shop Street, Wheatley Hill in 1911, with their 6 children



The Wedding of Herbert Marks in India 1927. Also pictured are his wife's parents and her two brothers and two sisters. The name of the best man is unknown

The following is an outline of the military career of Herbert Marks, born in Ludworth but eventually living in Shop Street, Wheatley Hill

All the above were sanctioned on the spot, and I left to join the unit which was in Rawalpindi. On arrival there I found the unit which was 'Ready' and consisted of 1½ troops of mules, 2 troops of men, and that arrangements were in hand to complete the War Establishment from S & T sources within Northern Army.

The Unit should have moved in 2 more days, but it was obvious that this could not be done, so, I obtained 3 more days time. The regular CO was present, and it was agreed that I should get ready the War outfit and that he would clear up after the move, as he was to stay behind.

The 4 Troop Commanders joined (the Jemadars asked for) but the Risaldar Major did not, well those were hectic days - no sleep, as both clerks were unfit, and the replacement had until then been employed as the despatch clerk in the office of the STO. Every office was crowded out with energetic members of the staff of the LAO auditing the store accounts, then the members of the Regimental Board appeared in addition. Of course the Vet wanted to "vet" all the animals, the MO wanted to inoculate and vaccinate all the men, while all the men wanted to go home on leave!! The Comd wanted an inspection - in fact any kind of personnel who had any reason to inspect wanted to do so. I therefore went to the right person, produced my magic chit, and they were all called off.

However, with the unit finally entrained along came some men and animals already entrained and hooked - and again this process was repeated at JHELMUM and LAHORE. Train orders had been issued complete with itinerary, and at first feed time on the second day it became apparent that I had been loaded with a choice collection of elderly gentlemen as Naiks and L/Naiks (corporals). On checking feeds it was found that some mules had no "nosebags" or were not included when the feeds were made out - so all were paraded (that is all Naiks and L/Naiks) who had their stripes removed and were told that they would be watched, and if they were fit to hold their ranks they would get them back, but not until then. All ranks were informed that promotion was open to those considered fit, and this had a tremendous effect. The 4 Troop Commanders were of course new to their men, but we started as we meant to finish, and there was no more trouble about care of the animals.

It was only now that the Company could be checked, and from questioning and personal interrogation that Troops Rolls could be prepared, and finally a Company was prepared and accepted as correct. This helped to while away the tedium of the journey as the train seemed in no hurry. At LUCKNOW transshipment was necessary, but of course the siding into which we were put was the very furthest from that into which we were to move our baggage store, animals and equipment etc. Etc. Some of the men were very new, and we took off the animals first as we had the whole day to wait. After 4 days on the train the Mules were restive, and as about 2 and a half troops of them were unknown to us! Once out of the truck King Mule was in full control and possession of the station. However they knew their feed call, and once the nosebags were on they behaved themselves. Once they had been watered and fed they were sent on to exercise (1 man to 6 mules) and then began the really serious business of transshipping. I soon found plenty to admire in the men of my new command - to have to move 132 dismantled AT Carts from one truck to another smaller one 400 yards away through a crowded railway station was no mean feat. But it was done and the carts were loaded as they were unloaded. The correct wheels pole seat and raves being placed in the correct order so that the re-assembling would be easy. Altogether well over 3000 maunds of stores, supplies and baggage in addition to the carts were moved and loaded in under 14 hours, AND this included the entraining of the mules. (A maund = 80 lbs)

**This is the concluding part of Roger Richardson's interview as part of the
"People Past and Present" initiative**

Housing was bad at this time as almost no council houses existed then, eg Wheatley Hill Colliery owned two streets of houses in Shotton. Men had to move there and serve their time living in Shotton until a Wheatley Hill house cropped up. I believe that the Vincent family remained at Shotton all the time as apparently they liked School Row or Doctor's Row.

So many things of the past crowd my mind that I am uncertain which are relevant enough to recount.

As to sport, Wheatley Hill seemed always to have a cricket team. I recall Notty Oldham, whom I believe came from Nottingham, to be their pro and finally lived in Pyman Street. They seemed to have done themselves proud on football. One notable referee was Mr Ralph Soulsby, Colliery Official too, of Annie Street then Gowland Terrace. At this time there were nine teams which I trust I recall properly - The Primitive Methodists, The Wesleyans, Church Villa, The Ramblers, The Black Watch, The Discharged Soldiers, The Good Templars, The Wednesdays and the main team, The Athletic. Some players at the time were keepers - Alec Mason and Hird. Backs - Colby, Clish. Halves - Bertie Butler, Billy Hall, Frank Williams. Forwards - Richardson, Mather, Goyns and Redman.

The original 'bus service I believe was Barney Durkin whom the later big company tried to run off the road with unscheduled chaser 'buses, but failed. However the big feature was a stream of pony traps, whose bells and hooves I could hear as they came up and down steep Patton Street. This cavalcade met all trains between Sunderland and Hartlepool and plied between Thornley Station and Thornley Colliery, about two miles.

To finish on a bright note I am concluding by recounting how my gran caught hens in her kitchen picking at her rising loaves of bread. Running them into the street she caught a straggler and 'brayed' it. The bird died of shock and gran was horrified and wondered what to do. In those hungry days, her solution was to whip it under her pinny and it was just like Christmas as we had a chicken dinner the next day!!

Mr Richardson's memories of life in the 1920's colliery village have been fascinating.

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 which were of interest to himself in January 1900. Reproduced here are his Wheatley Hill Jottings:

- 6 Jan 1919 Surface Workers granted an 8½ hour day. National Coal Miners Strike to meet the high cost of living, for an advance of 2/- per day when the Labourers Wages an all wages were 14/6 per day and other classes of labour were very high
- 9 Dec 1919 The United Bus Company extended their routes from Durham to Easington Lane and bus company's began to cover all the outlying districts all over the county. Motor cars and buses becoming very popular
- 5 Nov 1920 Settled in favour of the Miners on condition of Output. Strike lasted 3 weeks.
- 7 Dec 1920 The Wingate Road, between Thornley Junction and the Fir Tree, lit by electric light by the Weardale Coal Company
- 19 June 1921 Mr J T Simpson, Chief Engineer to the Weardale Steel & Coal Company at Thornley and Wheatley Hill, was killed by a runaway horse and trap while he was with his motor car near Darlington
- 1 Jan 1924 Wheatley Hill ambulance commenced
- 9 Oct 1924 Wheatley Hill houses lit with electric light at the rate of 1/0 per week
- 1924 Wheatley Hill Aged Miners Homes, first block opened
- April 1925 Second block of Wheatley Hill Aged Miners homes opened
- April 1925 Wheatley Hill Colliery Scheme Houses opened
- June 1925 Mr J A Simpson appointed manager at Wheatley Hill Colliery
- 17 July 1926 Wheatley Hill Colliery Welfare and Recreation ground opened
- 31 July 1926 Wheatley Hill Colliery Nurses Homes opened
- 26 Nov 1926 Durham County Surface Workers working day extended from 46½ hours a week to 49 hours a week exclusive of mealtime
- 1926 Wheatley Hill Colliery chimney (built 1902) repaired 1926
- 23 Apr 1927 New road between Thornley, Ludworth and Haswell opened to the public. The Northern Bus Company was the first company to run passenger buses on this new road
- 10 Jul 1927 Mr J A Simpson, manager at Wheatley Hill Colliery removed from West House, Cemetery Road to Weardale House, Church Street
- 15 Sept 1927 Wheatley Hill Farm, old building on the Rock repaired and some of the old stables made into a private Blacksmith and horse shoeing shop

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

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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

Deeds of No 22 Wingate Lane, Wheatley Hill
 Original postcard of the beach at Crimdon c1953
 Transcription of the WW1 Diary of George Oswald of Thornley
 Slides of Thornley & Wheatley Hill Over 60's 1960's and 1970's
 Slides of Thornley Sports Day Parade 1960's
 Slides of the Queen's Silver Jubilee at Thornley

DEATH OF BILL CARTER

It is with regret that we learned of the death of our long-term member Bill Carter just before Christmas 2012. The History Club have sent a card to his family passing on our condolences.