

PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Wednesday 1 June 2022

TICKETS £3.00

Display of Coronation Memorabilia

Local History Exhibition

1950's singer

Rock 'n' Roll Display

Buffet

ALL WELCOME

The History Club will be acknowledging the Jubilee in a small way at our meeting on Wednesday 25 May but our main contribution will be on Wednesday 1 June when we join forces with the Mothers' Club to celebrate the longest-reigning British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, a record previously held by her great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria.

Everyone is welcome at this unique event and tickets will be available at History Club meetings between now and 1 June.

If you have Coronation memorabilia that you would like us to put on display, please bring it to a History Club meeting marked with your name, and we will make sure it is returned to you.

LOCAL HISTORY MONTH

1 - 31 MAY 2022

*Check our Facebook Page
every day for a different
image of something related
to our village.*

Polly's



You will have noticed that Polly's of Wingate has advertised in our newsletter for five years. Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic, Polly's business has not recovered and they have been forced to close down with effect from the end of March. This is not a decision that they have taken lightly and are disappointed that they have had to close.

We wish them well for the future and thank them for their very generous donation to the History Club funds.

UKRAINE

On Sunday 13 March the History Club were represented at a gathering organised by The Parish Council in Wheatley Hill Cemetery. Over 60 people of all ages attended. Jake, Chair of the Parish Council, said a few words along with two County Councillors. This was followed by a one-minute silence so that we could reflect on the atrocities. The event ended with the playing of the Ukrainian national anthem by a young musician from Trimdon Brass Band. It was a very fitting event that took up no longer than 20 minutes of our time.



CONTACT DETAILS

CHAIR: 01429 820813
TREASURER: 01429 823198

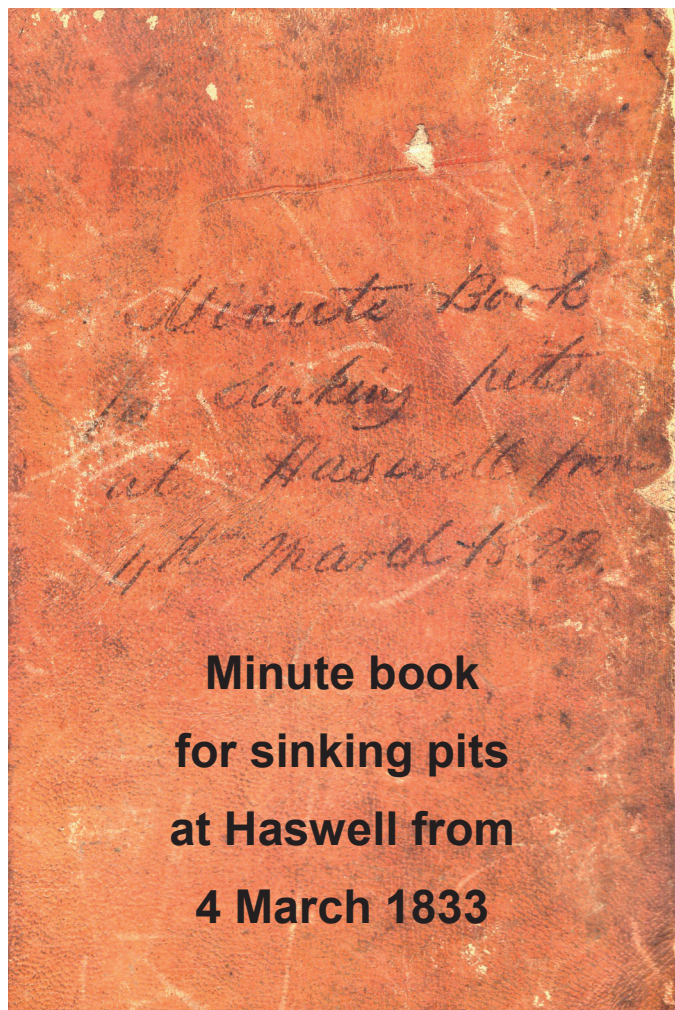


E: history.club2@btinternet.com
W: wheatley-hill.org.uk

MEETINGS IN WHEATLEY HOUSE

All Meetings Start at 11.00am

- 27 Apr Intro to DNA for Family Historians
- 25 May Georgians & Geordies
With Platinum Jubilee Cupcakes
- 29 Jun Affairs of the Heart—Part 3 of the
Secrets of the Attic by Tony
Nicholson
- 27 Jul Wynyard Hall and the Londonderrys



Minute book for sinking pits at Haswell from 4 March 1833

This unique book has been acquired by one of our members and gives a fascinating account of the day to day activities associated with sinking Haswell pit.

It is hand-written in diary form and therefore the only one of its kind. The entries are probably boring to most people but they give an excellent insight into how difficult it was to undertake the sinking process.

This is an extract from 22nd March 1833:

Six o'clock this morning went down engine lift and found the water had lowered 8 feet down from top of sand. Examined the hole on the north east side of the pit where the sand formerly rested whilst we were sinking last year. It is no worse but will require filling up and I have fixed to do so with straw and whins upon which is to be laid limestone. The timber so far as can be seen is all standing good and just as it was left when we stopped in August. Ten o'clock this morning the top spear in the middle pit staple broke and of course had to begin immediately to take it out and put another one in. At two o'clock got it finished and set the engine away again and discovered there was a broken pump in the staple so bad that it could not be repaired therefore commenced drawing the pumps to get the broken one out.

What is immediately obvious when flicking through this volume is the excellent hand-writing and spelling. Every word is legible and every incident recorded in great detail.

As the book above has always been in private ownership, it is unlikely that anyone carrying out research into Haswell pit, were aware of the work being done in 1833. This makes it a valuable piece of our coal mining history.

Many of you will remember our member Arthur Dodds who sadly passed away a couple of years ago. Arthur originated from Haswell and would have been delighted to see the number of Dodds men working at the pit in 1833.



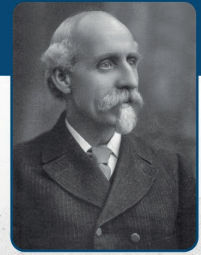
Names of Miners at Haswell working on the 1833 sinking from the above book

Philip Hunter	Ralph ?	Ralph Harrison
G Pheatonby	J Bates	Wm Harrison
G Robison	J Friar	Ralph Friar
G Harmison	A Harmison	M Preston
W Brown	John Dodds	? Kennedy
Matthew Dodds	James Dove	G Heatherington
Ed Wilson	M Clark	Wm Stones
Wm Coulson	E Coulson	James Coxon
Richard Dodds	Thomas Dodds	Wm Hunter
Ralph Urwin	John Miller	Wardle Steele
James Wallace	M Thompson	Lancelot Jopling
John Rawlin	Wm Routledge	T Routledge
Ralph Dacres	J Carr	Wm Crummy
Thomas Cook	Thomas Porter	Robert Miller
G Bewick	J Black	G Stones

NEW INFORMATION BOARD FOR PETER LEE'S GRAVE

PETER LEE (1864 – 1935)

"Peter Lee gave all, asking for nothing in return, little dreaming that a great new town would bear his name"
 – Rt Hon Jack Lawson, Lord Lawson of Beamish



"That grand old man of Durham County – Peter Lee. He led his county through lean and half-starved years. He showed by example the highest form of public service and idealism. He kept the spirit of the miners loyal, clean and wholesome through a poverty such as, please God, the other counties in England will never know."

– Rt Hon Thomas Johnstone MP, 1934

"He typified the courage, integrity and humanity of the mining community which he served so well."

– Clement Attlee, Leader of the Labour Party, 1935

"There is a general agreement that Peter Lee was the most outstanding figure of the North East never to become an MP, preferring to serve among his own people"

– Rt Hon Jack Lawson, Lord Lawson of Beamish

"A local man who, during his lifetime, went fearlessly and courageously forward for the good and uplift of the people of this district. A man who was a power both in bodily physique and mental ability, a man who had the courage of his own convictions, a man whose presence commanded respect and attention. A man who worked to improve the living conditions of the people of the Easington District. A man whose memory could be perpetuated by the naming of a new town after him"

– C W Clarke, Easington Rural District Council in "Farewell Squalor", 1947



The Colliery, Wheatley Hill, 1900



- 1864** Born at Duff Heap Row, Trimdon to coal miner Tom Lee and his wife, Hannah. Left school without any skills of reading and writing, quickly realising what a disadvantage this was.
- 1884** Returned to the classroom (night school) to learn skills of literacy and numeracy. He could see that pitmen needed representation at work by someone who knew the industry.
- 1886** Travelled to Philadelphia, USA and worked in coalmines there, realising that conditions for the working man were no different than they were in England.
- 1887** Returned home. Started work at Wingate Colliery and was elected as delegate to the Miners' Council where he enjoyed the good fellowship and debate.
- 1888** Married dressmaker, Alice Thompson from Thornley at Haswell Wesleyan Chapel.
- 1892** Worked as a checkweighman at Wingate Colliery.
- 1896** Travelled (alone) to Capetown, South Africa, once again in order to broaden his horizons.
- 1897** Travelled home from South Africa after incorporating The Grand Tour into his homeward journey.
- 1898** Worked at Thornley Colliery and then Sacriston Colliery.
- 1902** Offered the job of checkweighman at Wheatley Hill.

- 1903** Elected as the Wheatley Hill representative on Wingate Parish Council.
- 1903 – 1907** Used his influence on the Parish Council to bring about changes in Wheatley Hill including a road to Thornley, a cemetery, a tap in every house, a sewage system and street lighting.
- 1907** Elected to Easington Rural District Council. Elected Chairman of the local Co-operative Society. Local lay Preacher.
- 1909** Elected to Durham County Council (continued working as a coal miner).
- 1914 – 1919** District Food Controller.
- 1919** First Chairman of the first labour-controlled County Council in England - Durham.
- 1919** Chairman of the Durham County Water Board.
- 1930** General Secretary of the Durham Miners' Association.
- 1934** President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.
- 1934** Chairman of the International Miners' Conference in France.
- 1935** Died and was buried in Wheatley Hill Cemetery.



The Heritage Society and Parish Council have paid for a new information board for the grave in Wheatley Hill cemetery after the print on the old one just faded away. The artwork for the new board was created by White's Printers of Ludworth and I'm sure you'll agree that it's a great reminder to us all of the important work carried out by Peter Lee in our area in the early 1900's. It's amazing how many people visiting Wheatley Hill, from the local area and farther afield, who don't know that the town of Peterlee was named after a man, and those that still ask, "what did he do?" The new sign gives a timeline of his achievements throughout his life together with some quotes from people of his time, showing how highly thought of he was at all levels of society. A quote from Farewell Squalor, the planning document for Peterlee new town, is perhaps worthy of reproducing here:

"A local man who, throughout his lifetime went fearlessly and courageously forward for the good and uplift of the people of this district. A man who was a power in both bodily physique and mental ability, a man who had the courage of his own convictions, a man whose presence commanded respect and attention. A man who worked to improve the living conditions of the people of the Easington District. A man whose memory could be perpetuated by the naming of new town after him".

C W Clarke, Easington Rural District Council, in Farewell Squalor, 1947



Wheatley Hill Community Association T: 01429 820214



OPENING HOURS

Mon - Thurs: 8.30am - 8.45pm
Fri: 8.30am - 7.45pm

Available for functions outside of these hours - please ask for details

OUR FACILITIES INCLUDE:

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CAFÉ OPEN DAILY



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