

Development of Elwick Village since 1850

by Victoria Harrison and Sandra Leonard

Introduction:

Limestone Landscapes has been working with six communities around the East Durham Area to help us understand how our villages have developed. Elwick is very privileged to be one of the chosen villages. This project began in 2012 and at the end of January 2013 a workshop was held in the WI Hall to share the progress of the project and to see if anyone else wished to be part of the team exploring the various topics of interest.

The topics include:-

- Wildlife in and around Elwick
- Elwick in World War II
- Medieval Settlements
- Development of the Village since 1850
- Late Prehistoric & Roman Landscapes
- Changing Land Use
- Oral History

The chair person for this group is Brian Footitt and the secretary is Minna Ireland. After the workshop, people who had expressed an interest joined the project and then people volunteered to lead the different teams as above.

The group leaders are as follows:-

- Oral History - Sandra Leonard
- Development of Village - Victoria Harrison
- Elwick in World War II - David Self & Joe Jobson
- Medieval Settlements & Roman Settlements - Minna Ireland
- Changes in Farm Use - Penny Heslop
- Wildlife in Elwick - Barbara Irving & George Howe

The development of Elwick Village Group Chaired by Victoria Harrison

At our first meeting in early March at Village Farm, those who expressed an interest in researching the development of the village were as follows: Victoria Harrison (leader) Sandra Leonard, Joan Banks, Keith Shaw, Sylvia Jobson, Louise Parks, Margaret Ashton, Carole Bew, Chris Carter, Hilary Thompson,

Judy Higgs & Minna Ireland. Unfortunately Carole and Chris were unable to participate further and Minna and Hilary were able to volunteer only limited time.

- To begin with we identified all the 6 Ordnance Survey maps that we were to use. First Edition = 1850; 2nd Edition = 1890 - 1900; 3rd Edition = 1916 - 1922; 4th Edition = 1930 - 1950; 5th Edition = 1965; 6th Edition = 2005.
- Next we took the first map and identified 42 plots around the village green and divided the plots into 5 groups. We worked in pairs in our own time to identify what each plot comprised and then transferred the information onto the Tees Archaeology Site Record. Then we followed the same format for each of the other edition maps and noted any changes on the record.
- Monthly meetings have been held to report on the progress of the site records. The aim was to have these completed by the end of September and this we achieved.

To help us with the report we have identified various headings within the development of the village. They are:

- Transport
- Education
- Lifestyles & Communities
- Housing development and amenities.

The completed site records for each of the 42 plots within the report are now used as case studies within the report.

Alongside the Development of the Village Group Sandra Leonard has been leading the Oral History group where she has interviewed a number of residents from the village and surrounding areas. They had lived in the village for a long time and had many stories to tell.

Eleven interviews have been completed and then transcribed by Diane Marlborough at Hartlepool Central Library. The information from the interviews has been used in the report to add interest and character to it.

Development of Elwick Village since 1850

The village of Elwick is situated approximately 200m east of the A19 trunk road from which there are 2 entrances/exits. Church Bank (the South end) is the older entrance with two very steep banks, (one up one down) a bridge over Char Beck and sharp bends at each end. The other entrance at North Lane (the North end) is level in comparison.

Both roads converge at the east of the village green and continue through the village climbing to the outskirts of Hartlepool (formerly West Hartlepool) approximately 2 miles away.

The following information has been gathered from numerous sources including Ordnance Survey maps dating back to 1850 up to present day, interviews from local residents from the village and surrounding areas and library resources.

Chapter 1:

According to the 1850 Ordnance Survey map the village was located around what is known as the village green. This consists of approximately 66 properties which ranged from tiny single storey cottages, farm outbuildings, farm houses and larger dwellings. We noted that many properties had shared yards and gardens. Could they also have had shared privies? Most of the properties were terraced.

The most substantial property is Elwick Hall which stands to the west of the village and its current entrance is at the bottom of Church Bank. However in the past it was always accessed via the A19. Between the Hall and the A19 are the fish ponds which are historic points of interest. At this point in time it was the Parish Rectory which later was relocated to Hart in 1916.

Serving the village at this time we understand there were two public inns called "the Fox & Hounds" currently "The McOrville" (see case study 29) and "The Dun Cow" which is now known as "The Spotted Cow". (See case study 27)

There were two public water pumps (one located on the middle of the village green and the other at the bottom end of the village opposite case study 41) and several private pumps including a trough for horses and cattle in front of

case study 4 Martindale Farm. There was a butchers shop (case study 8) a joiners (case study 8) and a blacksmiths (case study 24) and 7 working farms .The farms were named as follows:-

Village Farm (case study 1 & 2) Martindale Farm (case study 3, 4 & 5) Manor Farm (case study 6,7 &8) Potters Farm (case study 10 & 11) North Farm (case study 17) Home Farm (case study 18 & 19) Dovecote Farm (entrance opposite the Church). The Glebe consisted of two farms linked with Elwick Hall.

At this time there were no roads as we know them today linking us with West Hartlepool, only farm tracks which were gated at each end of the village. It was not until 1925 when the road was 'made up' between Elwick and West Hartlepool. Three years later in 1928 the first bus service was introduced. We understand this could have been Alton's Buses.

Chapter 2:

On the 1890 OS map there were very few changes except for the field numbers and the two public inns which by then were renamed to what they are today. Also to the very east of the village The Villa appears which we know as either "The Homes" or "Elwick House". The village now has a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. (See case study 21).which is today's Women's Institute Hall. In 1897 Parish Council minutes state that trees were planted on the village green to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Some of these have survived for our benefit today.

In March 1915 the deeds of Village Farm tell us that the total acreage was 107.7 consisting of 16 fields of arable and grass land and by 1925 it was sold for £2500.

Chapter 3

During the First World War years 1916 onwards the Village seems to be static and no major changes have appeared except that The Villa is now a Children's Holiday Home which was used for children with physical and learning disabilities to have a holiday/respice care (formerly these children were referred to as 'crippled' or 'spastic'). This is shown on the map as the last large building to the East. In 1914 the telegraph office was changed to the telephone office offering the very first telephone service to the village. In 1919 the Peace Committee planted 5 trees on the village green to mark the end of The Great War.

Chapter 4

During the years 1930 - 1950 many of the cottages, particularly on the High Street (which we now know as the Terrace), have been reconfigured (either split into two or made into one) with most of them now having their own gardens (see case studies 24 - 39). The field numbers have also changed.

In case study 32 (no 37 the green now) this property (known as Galilees house) & land was known as Whollow Moor (a site of $1 \frac{1}{2}$ acres.) Evidence taken from the deeds of the original house state that in 1764 the land consisted of houses, shops, ways, paths and water courses of Mofsuage house and a parcel of ground. In 1843 it changed hands for a sum of £200. By 1880 the property had changed to consist of Whalley Moor House with a yard and stable, and two dwelling houses that were tenanted.

In the 1930's Mr Harry Fenner (who lived in Hartlepool) owned the above site and used it as a holiday home until there was a fire and the house had to be demolished and replaced with what we see on the terrace today.

Case study 21 ceased to exist as the Methodist Chapel and in 1930 was taken over by the Elwick Women's Institute committee.

Information taken from the deeds of case study 1 & 2 reveals that on New Year's Eve 1947 James Octavius Brewis (owner of Village Farm) finally agreed that the North East Electric Board could build a substation on his land for an annual rent of £2 for 21 years and this can be seen on the left as one enters The Walk/ Greenlea. It was built and completed in 1948 to provide electricity to the village. By 28th Feb 1955 Robert Walker (the next owner of Village Farm) agreed that 2 pylons be erected on his land for an annual rent of £1 16 shillings.

Further research reveals that the electricity from this substation was sporadic and unreliable causing many blackouts to householders until the mid-1980s when a permanent line was installed. Street Lighting was brought into the village in February 1986 after approval was sought in November 1985. Mains Gas was installed into the village in 1991. Also in 1985 yellow lines were introduced to the village green and the path to the church (previously mud) was cemented.

Between the dates of Chapter 1 and 4 Village Farm has been greatly reduced to 53 acres with some of the land (totalling approx. 52 acres) west of the A19 sold

to the neighbouring Middleton House Farm in 1962/63. By 1965 John Linton the present owner then added some of village farm land onto his other farm, the adjoining Whelly Hill.

Chapter 5 - OS 1965 onwards.

In recent years prior to this map there have been numerous alterations to properties and considerable new development. The field numbers have been changed again. It is noted that The Terrace replaced the High Street and St Hilda's Terrace (case study 22 & 23). Also many more paths and roads are located across the village green and the bus shelter makes an appearance.

In 1960 the orchard of Martindale Farm (behind the bus shelter) was sold privately and a detached house was built on the site, (Longdale, 6, The Green)

Also in the 60's Martindale Farmhouse, (now 4&5, The Green) was sold and divided into 2 dwellings. The most easterly part had one room converted to a general dealer's shop. This continued as a shop until 1978 when it reverted to a private house.

One major area of development was on both sides of North Lane.

Travelling out of the village along North Lane (from case study 42) two detached bungalows were built (Midbec & Swinburne House) then 12 semi-detached council houses were built to house local workers. They were mainly tenanted by farmers' sons, farm workers and two ICI workers.

North Close was built in 1963, a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ acre site comprising 14 dwellings. Across the road on a slightly larger site Hillcrest Avenue was developed with 16 dormer bungalows, now known as Hillcrest Grove. This land reduced the size of Village Farm which was no longer a working farm.

Returning to the village along North Lane, Elwick Hall C of E (controlled) school was built and opened in 1959 to replace the Old School which was situated next to St Peter's Church and then the large police house was built before 1959 with our resident policeman Mr Frank Chapman. Following this, 6 semi-detached houses were built in 1960/61 (Barrens; Gerrans; Green Ingle; Samarkand; Lamorna and The Cedars) a bungalow and 2 semi-detached houses (Devondell/10 North Lane) (next to entrance of The Walk/Greenlea). Other development included a prefab for the tenants of Martindale Farm. A wooden hut known as Greencroft was also built on Holmlea land.

Further development leaving the village towards Hartlepool reveals High Garth on the right, Carlton Bungalow on the left, 4 properties on the right (Shindells, Windy Lea, All Winds and Windy Ridge)

The sewerage works appears on this map and is situated close to Char Beck and on Home Farm land south of the village. There have been numerous alterations to properties and considerable new development.

Chapter 6 - 2005 map

After the 1970 map and before the 2005 map there were many developments throughout the village. The first development on North Lane (north of Village Farm) was completed in 1965 and is known as 'E-wing'. It consists of 4 split level linked houses.

In 1972 plans were passed for Leech Homes to build 14 houses (known as 'The Walk'). When Yuills took over the site they developed the plot further by adding 'Greenlea' which consists of 7 detached and 4 semi-detached houses. In 1973 the building of 'The Paddock' estate commenced which consists of 7 town houses, 6 detached and 2 semi-detached houses. Further north of this there was a detached bungalow built for the use of Martindale Farm land. The prefab in The Paddock was demolished and replaced by a large detached house in the late 1980's called Martindale Lodge.

In the late 1960's Manor Close was built on the land of Manor Farm which was no longer a working farm by this time. This comprises 8 semi-detached council houses and 15 old people's bungalows. These bungalows were warden controlled and the first warden was Mrs Jenny Lewis. As a condition of her job she lived in one of the council houses. In the early 1980's another nine bungalows for the elderly (Martindale Close) were built, situated behind and north of Manor Close. These bungalows won an award for their design.

North Close was increased by 8 houses totalling 22 and Hillcrest increased by 2 totalling 18 and Village Farm bungalow was sited where North Lane meets Hillcrest.

After 1965 map opposite 'E-wing' a further two bungalows were built called 1A North Lane and Ashgill 3 North Lane. At the end of The Terrace heading towards the cinder path a large bungalow was built which was later turned into a house.

Behind the Forge heading towards the Ghyll we have now 5 properties whereas the 1965 map shows only 2 and to the left of the Forge another bungalow has been added.

In 1982 the old cow byre and barns of Village Farm were sold off and demolished and a dormer bungalow 'White Barns' was built in their place.

Home Farm built a further 4 properties within their stack yard. Between High Garth and Shindells a large detached bungalow was built and on the opposite side of the road a bungalow and two houses were built twelve years ago. Behind Holmlea, Greencroft was built in 1976 and this large brick built house replaced the wooden one.

Education.

The history of the school(s) in Elwick between 1850 and 1950 was well documented in the book which was printed for the Millennium. Much of the following information came from residents of Elwick who went to school in the village from 1930 onwards. The school then was close to the church and it was called 'Elwick C. Of E (voluntary controlled) School. It is now a private house.

The school had 3 teachers including the Head Teacher. The latter was greatly feared by the children for being very strict and using the cane to correct bad behaviour. Children started school at 5 years of age and stayed there till age 14. Children wrote on slates with a slate pencil. During the war all the children, boys and girls were taught to knit. They made things for the troops, squares for blankets, also tea cosies and socks.

The building itself had no sanitation or lighting and was heated by one stove. At the beginning of the 20th Century it is reported that a caretaker was appointed at a wage of 15/- per annum (75p) and she had to provide the fuel for lights and fire!!!

The male interviewees recall that they "did not learn much" but spent most time on gardening, bee keeping and animal husbandry. They would be sent down the Ghyll to find Hazel twigs to be used as canes!

Reading, Writing and Arithmetic obviously did figure in the curriculum as an exam at 11 selected children for the grammar school.

Lunches were delivered from a kitchen in Stockton (Elwick was part of Stockton Rural then) or children brought sandwiches.

The old school closed, and the present school opened in September 1959. Miss Lottie Coward was the Head Teacher. There were only 2 classrooms, 2 teachers and 23 children. The number of children increased in the early 60's when the new houses in Hillcrest and North Close were build, followed by 'E wing'.

During the 60 and 70's school numbers fluctuated, dropping towards the end of the 60's, then rising again when the new houses in The Paddock, The Walk and Greenlea were built in 1972-74. This increase led to a temporary classroom being installed in the playground. This happened on more than one occasion. The children (and teachers) had to cross the yard to use the toilets and take part in lessons.

When numbers reached the 100 mark an additional teacher was required.

There were several extensions to the building. The first being the addition of a hall and an extension to the kitchen. The meals were cooked on site. The children ate in 2 sittings and 2 "nannies" were employed to supervise them, both in the dining room and in the yard during lunchtime.

In 1974 Miss Coward retired and Mr Paddy Burke was appointed Head with 2 full time and 1 part time teachers. Later this became 3 full time staff.

Children from Dalton Piercy and outlying areas were bussed to school. Everyone else walked - A change from today when the road near school is "blocked with parked vehicles!"

In 1987 corporal punishment was abolished in state schools. A retired member of staff (1970-1990) recalls that while she was at school, a cane was always kept above the blackboard in the top classroom. All the children knew it was there but, to her recollection, it was never used while she was at the school.

Mr Burke retired in 1986 and was succeeded by Mr Adrian Fraiss as Headmaster. In May 1996 a brand new, purpose built nursery opened and admitted its full complement of children. In 1999 a fully equipped computer suite was provided, partly funded by parental contribution.

Since the Millennium there have been several Head teachers and changes of staff, also the introduction of teaching assistants. Currently the total number of staff and support staff has risen to a total of 15. Further major extensions to the school were completed 2011/2012.

In 2013 the school was renamed 'St. Peter's Elwick, Primary School'

Transport

There were no roads linking the village to West Hartlepool, only farm tracks which were gated at each end. In 1925 the road was "made up" between village and town and in 1928 the first bus service was introduced.

The first bus service Mr Jack Smurthwaite remembers was run by Bloomers Buses, which ran once an hour. Alton's Bus Service took over from Bloomers and then Trimdon Motor Service (TMS), which ran through Elwick to Sedgely area on its way to Hartlepool. This was a fantastic service - you could set your clock by it as it ran regularly every hour. If you were going down to town the bus left the village at ten minutes past the hour and would leave Hartlepool at twenty five to the hour to return via the village. Mrs Sonia Dobbie, who used the bus every morning before catching the train to The Cerebos at Greatham where she worked, remembers an excellent service which was only disrupted a couple of times, due to snow, in all the years she used it.

Miss Ann Raw travelled to Henry Smith's School; she remembers leaving the village by bus at eight in the morning then catching the trolley bus to the Headland. All in all it took about an hour to get there; they were supposed to get to school at five to nine for assembly but usually managed to miss it. She finished school at five minutes to four and the first bus out of Hartlepool was twenty-five minutes to six - at least an hour to hang around and get into mischief! This lasted for two years, then eventually Mr Rowell, who was headmaster at Elwick and whose son Hugh went to the Grammar School managed to get a bus for them at twenty-five minutes to five, which meant instead of getting home after six o'clock they arrived back in the village just before five.

Various companies followed the TMS bus but due to the bus having to cross the A19 dual carriageway the service ceased. These days the village has only a mini-bus three days per week, Monday, Thursday and Friday, with a reduced service which is run by Paul's Travel and subsidised by the Parish Council.

There was also another bus service, which ran down the A19 from Sunderland to Stockton on Tees and was used by residents who worked at ICI Billingham and by older village children who attended school in Billingham.

Mr Ingram Hutchinson remembers his first year at Elwick School walking up the A19 from their farm, as there was no bus service. Then the Triumph Company started a service, which took him to Elwick crossroads, charging tuppence for a ticket. Mr Eddie Moses remembers using the Triumph Buses to get to school in

Billingham and having to walk home on a Wednesday because it was the day Stockton on Tees held its market and the bus was full.

Mr David Lewis also travelled to school in Billingham. He remembers having fun on the bus and also the day they had a crash. They were picking the children from Dalton up at the Red Lion pub, it was an icy winter's day, and there was a Shell tanker coming down Red Lion bank. As he came to overtake, (and you have to remember it was a single carriageway in those days) he must have seen something coming the other way because he braked, slewed round and crashed into the bus while the children watched out of the bus back window. No-one was hurt so the bus carried onto school.

Mr Bill Raw remembers having a special bus with a pass provided to take him and other children to school in Billingham. The United Bus Company took over from Triumph and ran a regular service until it was deemed too dangerous to stop on the extremely busy A19, which by now had become a dual carriageway.

Lifestyles & Communities

The lifestyle of a housewife was very different to what we know today. The morning work started at dawn with the lighting of the brick boiler which heated the water for washing day which tended to be the beginning of the week - a Monday.

Once the water was boiled to correct temperature, it was transferred into the poss tub. The clothes were put into the tub and often before school the children would be given the job of "passing the clothes". This was very hard work for anybody involved never mind a child of a young age.

A woman found it very hard work using tongs to push the hot washing through a mangle and sometimes she had to multi task turning the handle at the same time. Many accidents were caused on a wash day due to scalds and fingers being caught in the rollers.

The introduction of Electricity in 1948 revolutionised the village in many ways especially wash days for the house wife as the hours were shortened when water was heated by electricity.

The new washing machine consisted of a top loader with a scully handle attached to the lid. This was much safer for anyone to use. Some of these washers had electric rollers and some had manual rollers.

To keep clothes nice and white various people remember "Dolly Blue" and "Reckit Blue", products that bleached things white, especially nappies.

The housewife had a strict routine to her week and was always very proud of keeping a "clean step" (bleaching it clean often on a daily basis) and "lily white" sheets etc.

Mary Grieves remembers that her number one priority to make life easier ,was to own an electric cooker. This meant that the working day became more of a pleasure both in the kitchen and out.

The old radios allowed the menfolk to keep in touch with weather forecasts and news bulletins. Bill Raw remembers that 'our radios had accumulators which had to be charged up to run our radio. Once a week I was sent off with the accumulator in a bag to take it to the A19 garage at Sheraton crossroads for Mr Howe to put on charge. I had to go back the next week to collect it - we had two so one overlapped the other. And it cost four pence to get your accumulator charged up.'

This was a regular occurrence in every household. If you didn't have a second accumulator you were without news bulletins so neighbours kept you in touch with what was going on at the time.

A new era began with the introduction of the electric radio. Gone were the days of crackling voices, and much clearer sound was achieved. Music was introduced from a wind up gramophone moving on to a "radiogram".

The Queen's Coronation in 1953 prompted the introduction of 'Television', a rare treat for those that could afford it and amazing that living pictures were brought into your own living room!

Before that, people went to town to visit the Picture Houses to escape the realities of everyday life. This was a magical time for many, seeing their idols on screen such as Clarke Gable, Alan Ladd and the like.

On the farm electricity made life easier for milking the cows. Gone were the days of the hurricane lamp and milking by hand and using generators. Milking machines were installed.

Entertainment in the village

In the early days the village people had to make their own entertainment. As David Lewis remembers, the children of the village all played together on the village green and amused themselves, often playing games such as 'Jack Shine the Maggy'. The Maggy was the torch and the others had to find the person with the torch. Other games included playing 'bows and arrows' and making kids camps on the building sites.

Mary Grieves remembers attending the weekly village dances in the WI Hall and Bill Raw remembers how there were dances in the granary at Martindale Farm and that was how his mum and dad met.

Eddie Moses can also remember dances being held in the upstairs room of the McOrville at the time when his maternal grandfather (Harry Horsley) was landlord.

Ingram and Evelyn Hutchinson recall how they went to dances in the Carlton Rooms in Hartlepool where Miss Tucker used to hold the dances. "The boys used to have their hobnailed boots on - the poor lasses if they got stood on!" Often they used to go to the Empire in Hartlepool every Saturday night.

Both public houses 'The Spotted Cow' and 'The McOrville' in the early days were mainly frequented by the locals. However with better transport now, people come from far and wide to eat and drink at the pubs. The McOrville in the 1960s was run by the Warrand Family and consisted of two rooms, a small room with a bar for workmen to come in and have a drink in their work gear and a bigger lounge for people to sit back and enjoy a night out with friends. Eventually in time the McOrville has been turned into one big lounge with a bar and it serves food and real ales. The Spotted Cow still has a small bar to the left of the front door and the main lounge for eating is to the right of the front door. The current dining room in The Spotted Cow is where the old village shop once stood. Sonia Dobbie remembers a singing room with a piano on the right hand side.

Over the years both public houses have had many landlords and managers to bring them into the 21st century.

Ivydene Café

Mary Grieves remembers the café in North Lane known as Ivydene. It was run by Mrs Smith Known as 'Lady Smith' and her husband Alf. The café was run from the garage and she used to carry everything round. You could buy

homemade cakes and tea. Customers were people visiting Elwick from the town and day trippers out for a run.

Elwick Young Farmers Club

This club was formerly known as West Hartlepool Young Farmers and was formed in 1933. They met on a weekly basis in Birks Café in West Hartlepool at the entrance to the railway station.

The club's name was changed to Elwick Young Farmers in 1967 and started meeting at the WI Hall, Elwick on a Tuesday night on a weekly basis.

In the 1970's membership was at an all-time high with over 45 members ranging from 10 years old to 26 years old. Durham Federation Rally was held in May at Houghall Durham, where clubs within the county competed against each other. There were all kind of competitions such as cookery, brick laying, boys icing a gateau, beef, sheep and pig judging as well as public speaking, quizzes, drama, tug of war and many more.

The club at present consists of 20 members. They are a very strong team within competitions and have often won best club at the rally overall in previous years. Many members are away at university. However, they often return to compete in various competitions. In September this year the club was recognised as the best club in the country overall. What an achievement!!

Over the years the club have won many prestigious awards and trophies at the rallies such as being named Club of the Year and often best Efficient Club of the County. Many of our club members represented the county at National competitions, returning with awards and certificates.

Within the village the club have frequently undertaken painting the stones (round the village green) gathering the litter, planting trees and daffodils and a major clearing of the beck at the bottom of Church Bank.

Members have taken part in exchange visit going to places such as Morocco, Canada and others and visitors coming from far and wide.

Three members won the cookery competition entitled "Best of British" at both county and northern area this year. They then went on to represent us at national level in Malvern with other teams from all over the UK. They were placed 4th overall. They had an hour to make a three course meal on two gas rings. In October the team demonstrated their 3 course meal for us all to sample. It was a delight.

The club is 80 years and celebrated its anniversary at Bowburn Hall on October 26th for present and past members. It was lovely to meet up with people not seen for years.

South Durham Hunt

Historically the hunt would meet at Elwick Hall on an odd occasion by invitation of the owner. The hunt would meet on the village green with the landlord of the public house providing the stirrup cup to the Master of the Hunt and followers of the hunt. The school children were escorted to the green to enjoy the sights and sounds of the horses and hounds. Many of the residents turned out for this village event.

Motorbike trials

Hartlepool & District Motor Club was formed before the war organising sprints, grass tracks and scrambles. One particular event on Monday 22 April 1946 was a grass track event, followed by a motorbike scramble on Monday 24 June 1946 at Elwick.

Events were also organised at Carlton Bank, Whitehorse Bank and Great Ayton where a number of races were held. Sand racing events took place at Seaton Carew and Redcar.

In 1963 Hartlepool & District Motorcycle Club was formed, organising trials at Home Farm, Elwick in the years 1966, 1967 & 1968. Other trials were held in Hart, Throston, Rookhope and The Old Quarry, Wingate.

Elwick Over Sixties Club

The over sixties club was formed in the late 1960's and held on a Tuesday afternoon in the WI Hall. Speakers often came to the meeting and bingo was the 'none gambling enjoyment' of the members. Tea and biscuits and putting the world to rights was always a must.

Regular mystery trips and days out were organised throughout the summer and a week away to places like Bournemouth became the annual holiday for many older residents. Without this, they would never have had chance of a holiday.

Competitions like the 'Best Easter Bonnet' and 'prettiest tea cup' and 'prettiest scarf' were often held. The club started in 1974 by Janet Wilson when she retired and the club disbanded in 2010.

Elwick Playing Field

In the late 1970's the Parish Council initiated the idea of having a playing field at the bottom of Church Bank in Church Bridge Field. The site development and construction was led by Cllrs. Jack Harrison and Fred Claughan with funds from the Parish Council. Children organising fund raising events and local donations were received from local farmers amongst others.

A great amount of work was required which was all voluntary. The stream running across the field was eventually piped underground. The field was then levelled, rotovated, fenced and seeded.

Unfortunately, at the beginning the field had no equipment since the Parish Council had insufficient funds and could not access grants because it was a Local Authority. Consequently, in 1996, the Elwick Villagers Association was formed run by Cllr. Joan Banks with Isobel Rawlings as Treasurer. Many thousands of pounds were raised from many sources and the field equipped to a very high standard for those days.

In 1997 Mr & Mrs F. Grieves donated the field to the village in memory of their son James. The following year the first set of play equipment was installed. Subsequently other equipment has been added including the football pitch.

Local maintenance of this field is undertaken by the Parish Council. Two awards for this venture have been received from Hartlepool Borough Council in 2002 and the Civic Society in 2012.

Local achievements

In 1972 Elwick entered the Tidy Village Competition and won it in 1973. The houses were renumbered in 1973 by the Post Office and the front of the bus shelter was removed. The shelter was refurbished in 2001 back to the original design.

The fountain, once the village pump was turned off permanently in 1973. In 1975 Elwick Village Green was designated a Conservation Area.

In August 1976 a meals on wheel voluntary service for senior citizens was introduced by Amelia Shaw and Joan Banks and local car owners. They were delivered twice a week.

The village also received awards in the 'Pride in Your Neighbourhood' competition run annually (given by Hartlepool Borough Council) for Elwick Parish

Council, Elwick Millennium Association and the Environmental Group from 1999 - 2001.

The 'Old Folk Bungalows' in Martindale Close won an award for the architecture. A plaque can be seen in the walled garden area. The rebuilt wall running from Norse Cottage to the road won an award from the Civic Society.

In 1978 the tradition of singing carols around the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve was introduced. In 1990 a real Christmas tree was planted on the green to replace those purchased annually. With the tradition continuing this event grows in popularity.

China mugs have been handed out by the Parish Council on several memorable occasions e.g. silver jubilee, golden jubilee, millennium and others.

In 1978 Christine Jobson formed a playgroup in the WI hall on a Tuesday and Thursday morning. This ran for many years and continued with other local leaders. The playgroup continued for many years to come until it recently.

Elwick Show

Elwick Show was a popular event in the village, a fantastic opportunity for farmers and villagers to get together with people visiting from miles around. This was held on August Bank Holiday Monday. Initially it was held in North Lane and then moved to a field at the top of Craggen Bank on Youngers Farm owned by Victor Younger.

Fred Grieves born in 1926 can remember coming to the show when it was held in North Lane. Fred used to show calves at the show and recalls winning the prize of a chiming clock for his efforts. He also remembers fattened bulls and a tent with pigeons.

Fred's favourite part of the show was watching the horses. There was always a high number of Clydesdales in each class. He said "It was very hard to win a prize at this event in those days. You'd have to go to Scotland now to get the same standard."

"There were about 50 pit ponies at the show that were the pride of the pit men. Each man brought his own pony to the show".

Jack Smurthwaite remembers the old village fairground on the village green on show day, saying of the fairground, "When that went we used to be scratting on the grass for pennies that had been dropped through the boards of the roundabout."

Sonia Dobbie, who was born in 1932 and moved to Elwick with her parents in 1953 can remember coming to Elwick show as a child.

"There were vegetables, flowers and cake stalls held in large marquees which took over quite a large area. We had country dancing going on in the corner. I can see them now, Circassian circle dancing round."

Sonia recalls having her photograph taken sitting on a car bonnet taken with Ada Bailes when she was 14.

Sandra Leonard recalls that 'there were a lot of children's events and competitions which were well supported and included collections of wild flowers, fruit and birds' eggs.'

"For quite a number of years we were lucky and the weather was really good but for a couple of years we had a lot of rain on show day."

Elwick Show ran well until about 1955 (even during World War 2).

Unfortunately, after that it ran at a loss and despite many fundraising efforts, had to stop in 1965 due to lack of funds.

Peter Wolfe recalls Hartlepool District Motorcycle Club holding their motorbike trials at Home Farm to coincide with the show.

Elwick & District Ploughing Association

In the 1970's a group of local farmers led by Mr Jack Harrison decided to bring back to life the local and annual ploughing match. A committee was formed of six members and the president Mr Leslie Dixon, who was a local British Ploughing Champion from Billingham.

The ploughing match was held every first Sunday in November with competitors coming from far afield as Scotland, Doncaster and West Yorkshire. Local firms sponsored the event and prizes included a bottle of whisky for the oldest competitor, always won by Mr Bainbridge who was in his eighties.

Judges came from far and wide to judge the four classes of 2 & 3 furrow ploughing, reversible ploughing, vintage ploughing and one of their highlights was being provided with a full Sunday dinner. The last ploughing match held by the society was in 1996.

The WI Hall

In early 1900 a Wesleyan Chapel stood on this site and in 1930 The Women's Institute formed a committee to purchase the hall and make it their home. It is available for other functions and classes within the village.

In July 1976 a planning application to double the size of the hall was granted. The idea was for Job Creation to be involved in the build. This was successful and Mrs Hoggarth, the liaison officer, worked with the Chairman of the Parish Council Mr Jack Harrison & Vice Chairman Mr Fred Claughan. The Chairman took a 6 month sabbatical from his business.

The overall cost was £11,000 and over £4,000 was raised locally by holding coffee mornings, bingo, bring and buy etc. Also local farmers and businesses gave generous donations.

The project was completed after many ups and downs. One particular low was a group of lads who were not pulling their weight and were replaced forthwith. The Grand opening on Saturday 14th January 1978 was attended by mainly local people. Also in attendance with special permission by its owners Prestons of Potto was the magnificent Golden Ruth Fairground Organ.

The WI Hall is a warm welcoming hall used for many village events and private functions.

Silver Jubilee Feast

This was held to celebrate the Queen's 25 year reign on the throne. It was a full week of entertainment organised by a committee formed from Elwick Parish Council and local residents.

Events began at the beginning of June 1977. Every evening something was happening on the village green and in the local pubs. The Darts final was won by Sandra Leonard. Quoits and bowls tournaments were held every evening with the grand final on the Sunday morning. Mr Jack Smurthwaite was the overall winner.

Other events included, tug of war between the pubs, whelly hoying, pillow fights and greasy pole, sheaf tossing (near the bus shelter for H & S reasons) best dressed bicycle/ pram won by Victoria Harrison with a teddy bears picnic in the dolls pram. Mandy Cowan won the bonny baby competition.

Fancy Dress Football caused many laughs and bruises. E.g. ghosts not knowing where they were going and even Little Bo -Peep had lost her sheep!

The grand finale for the children was the sports events held on the afternoon. In the WI Hall between 9.00 and 12.00 the children queued to enter the various races such as sack race, egg & spoon race, three-legged race and many more.

Elwick Millennium Association

In 1998, a group of village residents led by Hilary Thompson, formed Elwick Millennium Association to celebrate the new millennium. The pupils of Elwick School were invited to design a logo for EMA. The whole village was circulated and consulted on how it wished to commemorate this once-in-a-lifetime event which was to take place over a four-day New Year's holiday. The consensus was to have a memorable New Year party, place a commemorative item in the Village, produce a history of Elwick and to reinstate the Village Fete.

Over the weekend, EMA organised a marquee, a party with live music on New Year's Eve, lunch in the Spotted Cow for the elderly, an ecumenical service in the Marquee on the Sunday and a craft fair on the Monday. The Millennium stone with a commemorative plaque was placed on the Green and the clock above the Village Shop and Post Office a little later in the year 2000. EMA applied for and was successful in obtaining a Lottery Grant to reinstate the traditional Village Fete with a hog roast, and to produce a history of Elwick.

The Village Fete had become an annual event albeit in a different form from the early days. The history book "Elwick, a Thousand Years in the Life of a Village" was produced by a group of residents and a copy given free of charge to every household in Elwick. Sales since have benefited Elwick institutions e.g. the church and the school.

In 1999 EMA entered Elwick in "Northumbria in Bloom", small village category, and very surprisingly for a first entry was runner-up to the winners! With a lot of hard work from the committee and all residents who kept their patches neat and tidy, entries continued and Elwick won Northumbria in Bloom in 2001 and was entered into the National Britain in Bloom competition! We were not placed, but what an accolade to have got so far in such a short time! We ceased to be part of this competition a few years later when, despite all efforts and the village looking spectacular, an East Cleveland village won after flooding and EMA Britain in Bloom sub group felt this was a sympathy vote and not the fairest way!

Elwick Millennium Association continues to organise the Village Summer Fete and other social events throughout the year such as Children's Christmas Party, Annual Scarecrow Competition, Open Gardens, Christmas or Summer Balls and the occasional outing. Any money raised is ploughed back into the village; for instance oak tubs were bought for the Greens, the children's party is provided free of charge as was the bus for the trip to Blackpool Illuminations.

The Conclusion

In 1850 there were 66 properties in the village, St. Peter's Church, 7 working farms and 2 Public Houses and one school which catered for pupils up to the age of 14. By 2005 there were 217 houses, St. Peter's Church, 5 working farms, 2 Public Houses, 1 Women's Institute Hall and one primary school.

Still going strong at this present time are St. Peter's Church, St. Peter's School, the Women's Institute, Elwick Young Farmers, Elwick Art Club, Elwick Whist Drive, Craft Class, 2 public houses serving food and ale, Playing Field, Elwick Millennium Association and finally the Post Office with a general dealers attached.

Since 1850 we have been part of a number of borough councils. These consist of Durham County Council, Stockton Rural District Council and Hartlepool and West Hartlepool Council, Cleveland County Council and finally Hartlepool Borough Council.