

View from the Bridge

Friends' Newsletter – July 2016

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Knitted Bridge to go on Show



Friends will recall that the *Horncliffe Hookers*, a local craft group, had started an ambitious project to knit the Bridge. Now, some four months and very many knitting hours later, the Bridge is completed and ready to go on show to the public at the Watchtower Gallery, West End, Tweedmouth. Kate Stephenson, the Gallery owner, has very kindly agreed, as her contribution towards the Friends' efforts, to add the knitted Bridge to her forthcoming major exhibition, opening on the 23rd July. The *Hookers* will mount a small Bridge-themed exhibition in the entrance foyer of the Gallery, with the Bridge as its focal point, but also featuring the *Hookers'* wall-hanging, two oil paintings and an aerial drone photograph, all of the Bridge. The exhibition runs in the Watchtower Gallery for two weeks from 23rd July (Thursday to Sunday; 12 noon until 4pm). The Trustees are delighted that the *Horncliffe Hookers* have completed so ambitious and prestigious a project, which should result in a large tick in the relevant Heritage Lottery boxes; and they are also most grateful to Kate Stephenson for her generosity in making the exhibition facility available.

The Bridge in the limelight

The Bridge, and plans for its restoration in advance of its bicentenary in July 2020, continue to receive publicity nationally and locally. *BBC Music Day* on June 3rd featured a live broadcast of Northumbrian and Scottish pipes from the Bridge on Radio Newcastle and slots on Radio 4's *Today* programme and BBC1's *Look North*; a short but incisive article with a photograph was published in *Country Life* on June 8th, (coincidentally, in the week that the Berwick historian, Francis Cowe, who had contributed a masterly article on the Bridge to the same magazine in July 1961, died); and *Jeremy Paxman* is expected to refer to the Bridge in a forthcoming programme on the River Tweed on Channel 4, to be screened later this year.

Lord-Lieutenants' Visit

Harking back, possibly, to the Wardens of the Marches' occasional meetings in the debatable lands some 500 years ago, but in a much more conciliatory and progressive atmosphere, the Lord-Lieutenants of Berwickshire (Mrs Jeanna Swan) and Northumberland (The Duchess of Northumberland) met on the Bridge



on May 25th to see for themselves the nature of the project. They are pictured here with the Chairman (Robbie Hunter, right) and Honorary Secretary (Edward Cawthorn).

AGM 2016

Advance diary date: The Friends' 3rd AGM will be held in Hutton Hall on **Wednesday 26th October at 7pm**



Bicentenary progress report

We are sorry to report a further delay in lodging the Stage 1 bid for Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF); Historic England have asked NCC for a report on the number of hangers to be replaced and the manner of their replacement, and also for further work to be done on the stone towers before the bid is submitted. We are assured that the project remains on course for completion by the 2020 Bicentenary and that this work will obviate the need for such a report at a later stage in the process.



TWO NATIONS INTERNATIONAL

7k RUN (and a 1.8k too!)

Wednesday 27th July at Paxton House

The Friends are organising two cross-country runs at Paxton House on Wednesday evening, 27th July.

The main run, open to runners aged 15 and above, is over a challenging 7k (approx.) course, which crosses the Union Bridge twice and thereby qualifies as an "international"! Starting at Paxton House at 7.30pm, it heads along the riverside to the Bridge and then over farmland and country lanes in England before returning by the Bridge to Paxton.

The more leisurely 1.8k (approx.) run starts at Paxton House a few minutes later and follows a delightful route along Paxton estate wooded glades and the riverside; it is an ideal run for those who enjoyed the *Berwick Curfew Run* earlier in the month and for younger runners, perhaps with parents – those under eight must be accompanied by an adult.

Medals and other run souvenirs will be awarded to all participants and those first home in various categories will also receive a prize. Paxton House refreshments will be available during the evening. Fasttrack registration forms are available from unionbridgefriends@gmail.com and registration on the evening starts at 6pm. The entry fee is £5 for adults and £3 for U-16s for either run.

Route marshals are required for various points along the courses – if you could help, please ring 01289 382541 or e-mail unionbridgefriends@gmail.com

A Swinging Bridge

In 1393, King Richard II decreed that all pubs must have signs – "whosoever shall brew ale in the town for the intention of selling it, must hang out a sign, otherwise he shall forfeit his ale".

Taking no chances, mine host of the Fisher's Arms at Horncliffe, Paul O'Toole, has commissioned a very fine hanging sign for his premises in Main Street, depicting not only fishers' arms hauling in a



bulging net, but also the Union Bridge prominently presiding over the scene. Paul is delighted with the new sign, which has attracted several favourable comments; and it is particularly fitting that this excellent example of the age-old English tradition of inn-sign art has been painted by a resident of the village, William Hamilton, other examples of

whose work are on display within the premises.

For Friends visiting the area:

On the English side, *The Fisher's Arms* is open daily for lunches and evening meals (except Tuesday lunchtime); and the bus café at *Chain Bridge Honey Farm* is open daily for coffees, lunch and teas.

On the Scottish side, the recently re-opened *Cross Inn at Paxton* is open daily for lunches and evening meals as well as coffees and cakes; and *the tea room at Paxton House* is open daily for coffees, lunches and teas.