

LOWCA

LOWDOWN

June 2016



Lowca year 5 and 6 pupils in Newcastle see p11

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A595 Up date

The 7th April seems a very long time ago now, but Highways England would have considered a good turnout being 80 folk turning up for their "drop in session." However, Lowca residents did the community proud, over 180 of you turned out to air your views and listen to the reasons for a possible new road due to the embankment slip.



Nothing has been decided yet, no route, or even fuller consideration of the options proposed by residents and other interested groups. There was a Howgate Partnership meeting Tuesday 21st June and an email from HE was read out again stressing that no decisions had been taken and that there would be further consultations with all interested parties. If you have chatted to the individuals who are taking soil samples and doing surveys and they told you a route, they are winding you up.

At the Howgate meeting most of the time was devoted to the NuGen Moorside discussion document and the drop in sessions being held across the area. If you have not attended one or called in to the display in Whitehaven perhaps you should consider it, because NuGen are also considering road junction options that could affect Lowca and Parton.

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A village shop for Lowca?

The various emails and phone conversations that cross your clerk's path during the course of an average month cover many topics, some are mundane business items and others are problems to be resolved, but one phone conversation a week ago quite took me by surprise. An individual who has a convenience shop premises in Maryport and is just opening another in Flimby, made contact and asked me to put before the parish council his proposal to open a convenience shop in Lowca.

The background to his thinking is that his researches using one of the larger business rating agencies would indicate that Lowca could be a suitable location to open such a store. He has then driven through the local area and thinks it may be a viable proposition so hence his enquiry to myself to sound out the parish council's thoughts.

A quick discussion with Mercia Oliver, Lowca's chairman and it was decided a good topic to put directly to the local residents in the Lowdown. So what do you the residents think of the idea? Would you like to have a community shop which would provide an alternative to nipping into Whitehaven by bus, or wherever by car? Do you have a premises that would be suitable for such a business which you would consider renting out? A shop can certainly provide a community hub for the elderly or single individual, a place to meet and communicate with others. Just to pick up a paper or magazine is an excuse to get out of the house.

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Therefore, Lowca residents, here is an opportunity to voice your opinion on a shop in Lowca. Someone is considering using their money to provide Lowca with a community shop. Do you think it would work, what would you expect it to stock? A full range of goods, newspapers and alcohol?

On page 2 you will find a full list of your local parish councillors, make contact with one and let them know your views, alternatively email or write to the clerk. You never know you may have a shop sooner than you think, probably if there is no response or feedback the person considering the project may look elsewhere. If it was busy enough and the owner is from outside the area, perhaps it could create a few job opportunities!!!

East Road Bus Shelter

The parish council are currently just tying up the legal paperwork necessary to place the bus stop physically on Copeland Borough land. Hopefully that should not take too long and then when it is installed the parish council will be inviting Cumbria County Councillor Gillian Troughton to come along and cut the ribbon to declare it useable, as it was her kind contribution from her member's fund that provided the monies for the shelter. The parish council have written and thanked her and invited her to attend the opening. It has apologised that the invitation is not quite of Buckingham Palace garden party status, but we think we can guarantee that East Road will be wet and windy as she cuts the tape.

Lowca of old and its folk remembered

The Lowdown likes to focus on what is happening in the village and every edition we try to get a contribution from Lowca school. It shows some of us older people that if our school days were blackboards, chalk dust, flying board rubbers and a skipping rope of old football, our youngsters get to do and experience lessons we could never have dreamt of. However perhaps these school children ought to be taught about Lowca as it was and how it has developed into the community it is today. Truly make them appreciate their local history and heritage. So please could some of you older residents with tales to tell and some pictorial history, if available, let us share your memories. If we don't, in time, the truth about the brick works, the pits, the railway and the tar works plus the pubs of Lowca will be lost. I hear that at one time every outbuilding and shed in Lowca was coated in a bucket of tar from the tar works to waterproof them. What about tales of numerous pints being lined up on the pub bars for the miners coming off shift to down before jumping on the buses to take them out of Lowca and home.

You don't have to write the tales up, we can do that, but we need to hear your stories first. So please let's make this a regular feature of the Lowdown and be part of creating a historical record of Lowca as recalled by Lowca folk. To start us off we are indebted to Neil Lister who has provided the story about his father and also the photograph. Who will be next? Please contact one of your councillors or the clerk all details on page 2.

A LOWCA WAR HERO.



Private Joseph Lister, 22, at Lowca medal presentation

75 years ago the inhabitants of Lowca and the home guard turned out to pay tribute to 22-year-old Private Joseph Lister whose heroism in the 2nd world war earned him the Military Medal. He was the only son of Mr & Mrs J Lister of Westcroft Terrace, Lowca. Joe was a Bren gunner at Manston aerodrome (Kent) when it was attacked by 12 Heinkel bombers, although shot through the ear, shoulder and with a shattered leg (which was later amputated) he stuck to his post.

Rather than go to London to receive the medal he asked for to be presented with it in his own village of Lowca, the presentation ceremony took place in the field opposite the front of the Miners Welfare building on Stamford Hill. Before the war Joe worked in the lamp cabin at Lowca No 10 pit, he was also in Lowca Brass Band where he played the euphonium and later became the bandmaster. *Continued overleaf*

When Lowca band finished he became Whitehaven Borough bandmaster. He was also secretary of the Derwent Valley League, a major football league, in its day. It was while secretary of that league he met and became big friends with Bill Shankly (he of Liverpool fame), Bill was at that time manager of Workington Reds. Joe was also a well-respected umpire on the Cumberland County Cricket circuit and umpired the County Cricket Final at Carlisle. Before retiring Joe was for many years the landlord of the Station Hotel, Parton. He died of Motor Neurone Disease on February 29th 1984.

A big thank you to Neil Lister, of Stamford Hill, for providing the details and the photo. Hopefully other Lowca residents will now come forward with some of their historical facts which can go back as far as you like, as long as it involves Lowca and its people.

Paul Todd of Solway Road joins the parish council.

The parish council welcomed a new member to its number at the May meeting. Paul Todd, who lives in Solway Road, and has been a long-time resident of Lowca, was co-opted to the council. He has an obvious enthusiasm for the community and will bring yet more fresh blood to the council.

Public Participation.

At every parish council meeting there is an agenda item, usually item 5, which means it is about 10 minutes into the meeting and is headed **Public participation**, and it is allocated a 15-minute time slot and allows any member of the public the opportunity to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes. You can answer a question of the parish council and if any councillor or the clerk can answer it, they will do. If not the chairman can decide that a written response is necessary and the clerk will seek to answer the question after the meeting and then let the questioner know the answer.

At Lowca in over 2 years we have only ever had one individual and one couple who have ever attended a parish council meeting. After the June meeting one of the councillors asked the question of what could be done to encourage public participation or attendance at parish council meetings.

Obviously the short answer is there is nothing that can be done, but through the Lowdown, as the council's clerk, I would ask Lowca residents to consider attending. You don't have to stay all evening; a meeting can take up to 2 hours, but it is your opportunity to see and listen to the business your council does transact, listen to your district and county councillors who attend and make reports. The meetings are every 3rd Wednesday of the month, but not August. I realise we probably clash with the soaps on TV, but TV has a catch up facility called iPlayer, council meetings are only minuted by yours truly in a basic format. Please come along and see what goes on.

Lowca School Activities.

Once again thank you to head teacher, Joanne Crawford, for photos and information on the recent fun and learning that her pupils have enjoyed. The front cover picture was taken over in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Newcastle Upper School Residential Trip

Years 5 & 6 had a wonderful time recently in Newcastle. On the first day they visited the Centre for Life where they visited the planetarium and took a trip on a 4D stunt ride. They also watched a science show about flight. In the evening they attended a performance of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. During the second day they visited the Baltic Art Gallery and met with a local artist for a screen printing workshop there. Mrs Cartner and Mrs Crawford, who accompanied the children, said the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and that it was an absolute pleasure to take them away on residential trip.

We were very fortunate to have 7 Stem ambassadors join us to talk about forces and magnetism. They brought an assortment of experiments and activities with them.

Addison Harris (Year 5) describes the day in his review. *"The Stem day was extremely exhilarating. They had so many fantastic experiments. They gave us all booklets. We experimented with magnets. We looked at how friction effects a magnet and a toy car. My favourite was the Galileo drop. We had to make aerodynamic shapes and see which fell the fastest through the water."*

For the benefit of Lowca residents I wondered what a STEM ambassador was, so I Googled it, they are Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics people, so now we are as wise as Addison Harris. Bet he knows how to tune a video recorder.



Bank Mill Trip – Dinosaur topic



The infants had a fantastic time on their trip to Bank Mill, Allonby. At the beach they found hermit crabs, shells, cuttle fish and identified rocks and fossils. They also visited dinosaurs! As well as the animals the Bank Mill team have rescued.