



LAST STAGES – WE ARE GETTING CLOSE NOW!!!

Hoping this newsletter finds you well!

As advised in the last pages, we had hoped to have the Pele open to the public by Easter, but this was thwarted by lockdown, which had a knock-on effect to completion of the renovations.

This has also meant that proper recruitment and training has been delayed.

However, we are now working towards an opening date on.... (drum roll).....

17th JULY!!!!

So MUCH has happened already that its really exciting and promising more and more!!

Sneaky peak!

Knowing how keen people are to see the fantastic work that has been completed, here is a brilliant 360° image provided by Brian Cosgrove, who is also going to be helping us with updating our webpages.

Wow!! Is the usual response.....

<https://kuula.co/share/7zdLJ?fs=1&vr=0&gyr=0&autorotate=0.04&thumbs=1&info=1&logo=1>

Exploring Local Places

This is the theme for this year's Festival of Archaeology (17 July - 1 August 2021).

What better excuse is there for us to aim to get the site "operational" by then? In fact, lets go one further and state that this is

the planned date for the official opening!

Details will follow, but we hope to offer guided tours and we will also have some virtual presence, so have a look at the webpages of the CBA and our webpages for more details.



The Festival is a great opportunity to find out more about your local area and its past and last year, although held virtually, it was brilliant.

The Festival is run by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA).

We need YOU



Meet & Greet

We can now start recruiting helpers who can assist with "meeting and greeting" and sharing the information about the site. We are especially keen to hear from you if you can help over the opening weekend – there are rumours of cake.

This will be done via a rota and will, I am sure be great fun!

The aim is also to host planned visits, so guides would be welcome and if anyone has a



particular skill with school groups that will be especially welcome as this is a great place to learn in a fun way using the tower, grounds and the local countryside and beach.

We are also hoping to run indoor events as there is a nice space inside now. These could include all sorts of things including small craft fayres, ghost events, poetry evenings and storytelling!!

Gardening and landscaping

We have started with landscaping works as mentioned. Currently, this is with limited numbers around the Pele. A couple of spots are open on Thursday only. Plus, the walled garden work, of course!



There are other opportunities for involvement. These include:

- Education help
- Research and recording
- Making “dressing up” clothes for children

But if you have any time and are willing to help, we hope to find something for you to do. At this stage, I would be grateful if anyone interested could confirm that by dropping me an email outlining their particular interest. I will do my absolute best to respond promptly although I only work a couple of days per week.

Please don't let the current limits put you off!

If you are interested, I want to know and provided you are happy to stay on my mailing lists you will hear all news as soon as we do!

Covid 19

We continue to work to the best practice available for working with volunteers. This will include limiting numbers, record keeping etc, but please bear with us – working outdoors is one of the safest things to do!

Landscaping works

Once the site was handed over to CPR CIO (Us), we started work on the grounds around the building itself. Installation of pipes, electrics and even storing building materials has meant that a fair amount of work is needed to reclaim it and we chose to undertake this ourselves. A small grant has meant that we have been able to work with Groundwork to bring in a small group of their volunteers and the space is slowly being transformed. As you may imagine, a virtual drought has meant the ground has been rock-hard, but everyone has pitched in (and the sweat expended will help the wildflower seed grow).

A donation of native trees and shrubs from the Woodland Trust has meant we could plant a hedge along the boundary with the caravan site. We also found some wild pear trees in the grounds!

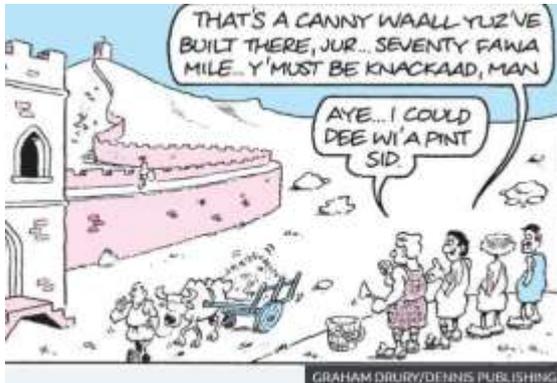


CRESSWELL PELE TOWER



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Manor House, South Side, Cresswell, Northumberland NE61 5LE
Registered Charity: 1176137

In addition to this, one of our regular helpers, Peter, has started to erect a dry-stone wall next to the bothy. Hadrian would have been proud!



There remain loads to do, but a good start has been made, especially working within the restrictions from Covid!

Heritage Open Days

I am pleased to say that we will also be taking part on the HOD's - England's largest festival of history and culture!

Every September thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate our fantastic history and culture. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – all of which are FREE to explore.

This year's theme is Heritage and Food, so if anyone has any ideas on how we could follow that theme, let me know!

I have already invested in a medieval cook book (but don't fancy cooking a swan or a hare).

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>

Space for Volunteers

Part of the restoration including taking the old "bothy" near the site entrance and renovating

it. I have to say - what a FANTASTIC job has been done on this!

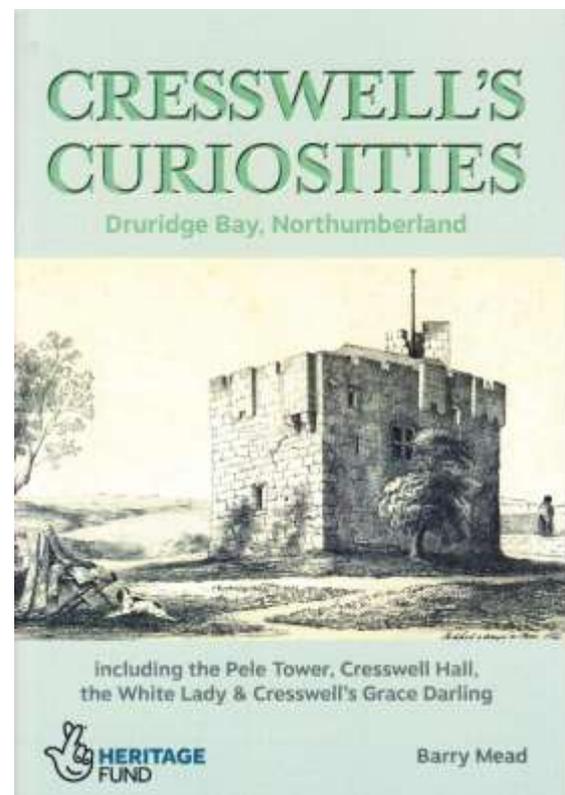
We now have a large space for volunteers to work from, with a small gallery kitchen, loo, storage and a place to relax, once we get some comfortable chairs! We also have a bat loft hosting our avian friends, built into the roof.

The Bothy is currently being kitted out and thanks are due to the kind donations of furniture already made. Space remains for some huge soft sofas though 😊.

Hopefully, we will also be able to use this as a space for storing local history research and we will develop a library of useful books etc.

Cresswell's Curiosities

This will be one of the titles adorning those shelves!



Written by our very own Barry Mead, (Multiple Award winner - apparently) this is



another landmark outcome from the funding via the Heritage Fund.

Packed with information, fully illustrated and well researched (would we expect anything less) this is a little gem for anyone interested in this section of Druridge Bay. It covers a range of subjects giving the reader a thirst for knowing more. And its only £5!!

Every penny of the proceeds from sales is going towards the future upkeep of the Pele Tower, making this a MUST HAVE.

More finds

We recently had a visit from our partners at **Archaeological Research Services**, who many will be aware undertook the original community digs. This time they were investigating a feature uncovered by Peter in his wall building. After initial excitement, it was determined to be a drain, probably of Victorian origin, but it's another piece of the past!

ARS have remained key supporters of the project and have also kindly donated some imaging of the site through the centuries. They are fantastic!



White lady update

Our first bookings for the building will see "Kindred Spirits" undertaking a paranormal event and checking on the welfare of the White Lady. We hope she approves of the fantastic renovations.

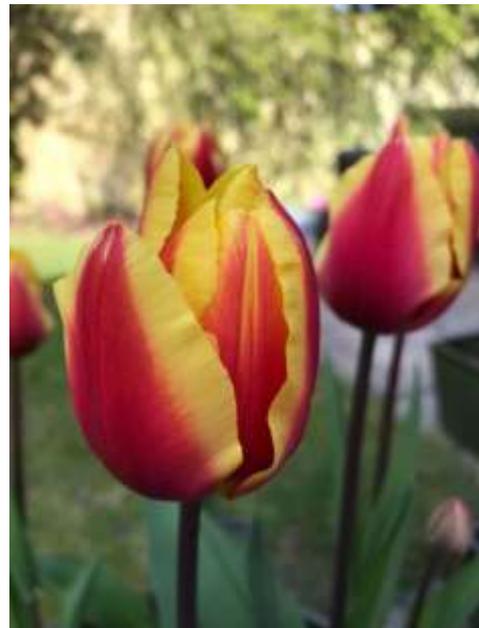
The Walled Garden

I cannot believe the ongoing change of the walled garden! We have a small group of dedicated volunteers every Thursday **BY APPOINTMENT** only.

This ensures we are able to work safely within current guidelines by adhering to a limit on numbers.

But anyone wanting to volunteer can let me know and I will ensure your interest is followed up.

There has been a great response to this element of the project, and we aim to share more information asap. Meanwhile donations of plants continue to arrive and add colour to the borders!



Nothing has gone to waste either! Every scrap we could salvage from the renovation works has been re-purposed. This includes pallets (compost bins and wildlife havens), hardcore (paths), slates (new roof for the tool store). We are always looking at ways to minimise environmental impact.



Education Work

This is one of the areas in which we hope to become engaged and have been planning for the production of resources.

We are pleased to be hosting two students, Emma and Jaydene, from Newcastle University's Dove Marine Laboratory, who are currently busily pulling together education pack on the marine and coastal environments. This will allow students to combine historic work as well as environmental work during any visit to the site.



Lynemouth Litter Pick

Councillor Liz Dunn organised a litter pick in the village and in the Lyne Dene, which we supported along with Northumberland Rivers Trust.



A great turn out and a truly awful amount of rubbish cleared from the Lyne.

New Sheriff in Town

A new High Sheriff of Northumberland has been appointed, maintaining a tradition which dates back to Saxon times when the role was to oversee and maintain law and order locally.



Nowadays, it's an independent non-political royal appointment and a new sheriff is nominated and installed each year with a duty is to support the charity and voluntary sector.

During her year in office, Joanna Riddell, from Stamfordham, aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people post-Covid with creative pursuits and opportunities.



In keeping with the heritage of the role, the high sheriff is also expected to be a champion for the emergency services and encourage crime reduction initiatives.

Northumbrian Magazine March/Apr 2021

Thanks to Ian Leech for producing an excellent little article in the current issue. Well worth a read and I also recommend the magazine for anyone interested in our outdoor spaces and heritage.

Hot off the Press

Thanks to Brian Cosgrove (again), we have just joined forces with Collingwood School, Morpeth and are very much looking forward to working with their pupils on a host of activities. The school boasts an amazing array of media and technology and this is such an exciting development for us! Woohoo!



Finally, keep your ears open for an article about the project with Lionheart Radio in the next few days. This will be on the **Week-ending Show – 2pm on Saturdays** in the delightful company of Carl Stiansen, Tom Pattinson and Tom Cadwallender and myself! A ramble through gardens, wildlife and local stuff that transforms to a later music-free podcast “**The Nature Garden**”

Why not subscribe for free at all hosting sites? And share with friends – they will love you for ever 😊.

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