

JANUARY 2021

NEWSLETTER

NORTHUMBERLAND

FEDERATION



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

The Young Farmer year may not have started the way we wanted it to but it's been great to see members get involved in the competitions we have managed to hold virtually. The speaking competitions were well supported by clubs and it was fantastic to see members who would usually not get involved giving it a go.

I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas Rally. Although this isn't something we usually do it was well supported by every club and the entries were such a high standard and it made the judging very difficult. Well done to Alnwick and Whitley Chapel for winning.

Over the last few months we have posted a lot on our Facebook page. This has ranged from meeting the team, past members and present members. It has been lovely to read about everyone else's Young Farmers experiences and I hope you have all enjoyed reading them as much as I have. Please keep them coming in as well as any throw-back photos.

Although we may not be able to go out and socialise with our friends it is still important to catch up with each other. Always find time to check in with your friends and other members, even if it is a quick text, phone call or a zoom call with a quiz or a couple of drinks. It is important that as a county we look after each other.

At county we are trying our best to think of things for clubs to do virtually. If anyone has any other ideas of things clubs can do then please do let us know.

Finally a huge shoutout to all the members in our county who are key workers and working hard throughout all this. All your hard work is appreciated by everyone in these difficult times. Hope you and all your families are staying safe.

Leanne



Christmas Rally

Joint 1st Alnwick and Whitley Chapel

3rd Bellingham

4th Berwick



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

It was probably around 1984 at one of Coquetdale's numerous disco's, held at Thropton village Hall. The music was inducing short term deafness and tinnitus on all those in the room, whilst a group at the front pogoed madly to Van Halen. Having exhausted my repertoire of chat up lines without success, I returned to the bar to endure another pint of Heavy. Well actually it was a Heavy touch, it needed a touch of lemonade to make the stuff drinkable. The TV advert for it was the picture of a North Sea oil rig with a Male Voice Choir singing "Strike it rich with Drybroughs' Keg Heavy"; and it certainly tasted like it had been pumped out of the North Sea.

Just then, Maurice Graham who was clearly having a better night than I was, leant on the bar and exclaimed, "Mac, I wish I was your age and know what I know now". He then scooped up an armful of drinks, (mostly pints of Heavy) and vanished into the throng. Now this made an impression on me for two reasons, one: he never did tell me what it was that he knew, but the second made me stop and think that there may be more to life than Beer and rather dodgy dancing.

It all became a bit of a revelation and instead of hanging back I started having a go at things. I found that doing something outside your comfort zone was a bit of a buzz. Trying some of the public speaking competitions was down right scary, but the feeling of achieving something became addictive. So rather than turning down opportunities, I took them up and as a result got so much more out of Young Farmers than ever I could have imagined when I first joined.

Reading the excellent "meet the team, spotlight Saturday and welcome Wednesday" pieces on the Northumberland YFC Facebook page, struck me, how many of those featured recognised what Young Farmers had done for them. It's often not easy to stand up and have a go. Mates can be ruthless if you make a fool of yourself, but the ability to make your point, have self confidence and try new things will be of benefit, long after leaving Young Farmers.

Hopefully as the vaccination programme continues to gain momentum, we can start and look forward to the light at the end of the tunnel. But in the meantime things are still happening in YFC. Zoom may not be everyone's cup of tea, but it has given us the opportunity to run quiz nights and speaking competitions, and at least that has kept us in contact. So if you want a New Years' resolution, forget about dry January, under the current lockdown I think we deserve the odd treat. Going to the gym is also a non starter, but instead, have a go at something this year, that is a bit scary, a bit of a challenge and I guarantee it'll give you a buzz.

If it doesn't, I'll buy you a pint of Heavy!

Mac Young

President

NORTHUMBERLAND YFC HOST THE VIRTUAL NORTHERN AREA WEEKEND 2021

WITH MANY THANKS TO OUR FANTASTIC SPONSORS

27TH AND 28TH
FEBRUARY
2021



BESPOKE
FINANCIAL GROUP NEWCASTLE
A G R I C U L T U R E

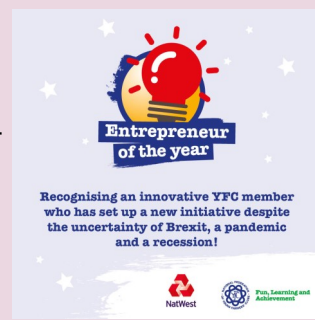


NORTHERN AREA WEEKEND 2021 EVENT FOR ALL THE LATEST UPDATES ON THE WEEKEND



ACHIEVERS AWARDS

Despite a challenging year for YFCs across the UK, the first ever YFC Achiever Awards, sponsored by NatWest, has shown the amazing generosity, creativity and fortitude of the YFC community. The YFC Achiever Awards were launched to recognise the great and the good within the YFC community. Kicking off National Young Farmers Week back in October 2020, the winners of the Achievers Awards were presented. Northumberland YFC had not one but two members who had been shortlisted for the Entrepreneur of the Year Award finalists. This is an amazing achievement for our two members from the North of Northumberland. You can read more about our finalists below.



Andrew Smith, Alnwick YFC

Bespoke Joinery business
Shortlisted for Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2020

Hard graft, quality craftsmanship and reliability have been key to Andrew Smith's success in the development of his joinery business. After investing in equipment and setting up a workshop in a disused farm building, he has grown his enterprise to a position where he now employs others from the local community to assist with the workload.

Using his YFC connections and through local advertising, Andrew has quickly become known for being a top class joiner.

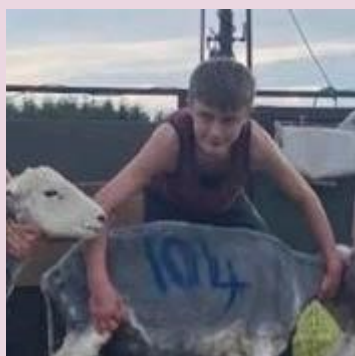


Members of his club, Alnwick YFC, have all visited Andrew's premises to see some of his finished work and to find out more about his trade. These sessions have encouraged members to learn more about these skills and associated trades and to consider setting up their own enterprises.

Work continues to be in high demand for Andrew and he is credited with being a trustworthy business and an inspiration to others.

Thomas Watson, Berwick YFC

Shortlisted for Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2020



An avid interest in clipping led Thomas to be a great support during lockdown when local smallholders struggled to find contract clippers. A determination to succeed and an eagerness to learn has ensured Thomas has progressed his clipping skills and invested in the correct equipment.

After learning how to clip from another contract clipper who was helping on his family farm, he earned his first wage after clipping 50 sheep. He invested his money in clipping trousers, moccasins and a new vest, and watched YouTube videos and welded his clipping frame to enable

him to start a mobile business.

Thanks to a local vet spreading the word, within a few days Thomas had bookings from local smallholders who were delighted to support a young entrepreneur.

A highlight for Thomas was when he pushed to be on a clipping team at Hownam Grange in the Scottish borders, working on multi-award winning North Country Cheviots. Thomas was complimented for his ability, care and willingness to take advice. Rather than being paid, he negotiated to buy a second-hand handpiece and earned a job where he clipped 100 Herdwicks in a day!

As a new member to YFC he has received the support of his club with his new skills and grown in confidence as a result of their recognition. Thomas' 100 sheep day video was liked by 234 followers on Facebook along with 46 comments of support. It was also shared by Shear Pro NZ, Shearing World and many others who complimented him on his achievement.

Thomas' own initiative, determination and skills have enabled him to reach his goals. He has overcome obstacles and negotiated his own path. Age, size, strength, lack of equipment, skill and even a global pandemic have not defeated him.

COMPETITIONS REPORT:

If we think back to around this time last year, the drama competition at the Queens hall was taking center stage with many sporting events planned for the coming months. Who would have thought this would have been our last face to face county competition! After Boris' announcement a few weeks later, all competitions came to a gruelling halt as we entered a national lockdown.

It wasn't until late August that we were able to hold a meeting to discuss our plans for the new YFC year as normality seemed to be returning but unfortunately this plan was short lived when restrictions were once again imposed. However, in the spirit of young farmers we decided to make the best of a bad situation and using the power of technology held our first ever county competitions over Zoom.

It was the end of October when members from Bellingham, Stamfordham and Whitley Chapel signed in from the comfort of their own home to take part in the Junior and Senior member of the year. As always, the judges were extremely impressed with the quality of the entries making it difficult to select a winner. After much deliberation Jess from Whitley and Vic from Stamfordham came out on top. A fortnight later we were back online for situations vacant which was kindly judged by our sponsors Youngs RPS.

The annual YFC quiz is always a popular competition and a really good way to get members involved. This year we came up with the idea of giving each club their own quiz night meaning they could have as many members take part as they wanted. Every team was read the same questions with some clubs having around 15-20 members join in. Trusting no one to just Google the answers it ran extremely well with only a few questionable incorrect guesses along the way. Well done Cambo for the highest score.

Our last competitions we held before the Christmas break was the speaking with our juniors getting us underway in early December. A lot of the participants had never competed in this competition before but the nerves were short lived once everyone was in full flow with some fantastic performances all round. The intermediate Brainstrust was next which this year saw five teams enter, one of the highest turn outs for this competition we have had for a while. The year was then concluded with the seniors debating a variety of topics from the Covid vaccine to veganism. The level of preparation and research members put in is fantastic to see and really shows how passionate they are about their club and the organisation as a whole.

So here we are in 2021 and unfortunately again in another national lockdown meaning face to face competitions don't look like they will be returning anytime soon, but once restrictions are lifted and it's safe to do so we have some exciting plans for you all to look forward to. In the meantime, we have the Junior reading on February 2nd which I'm sure will be a good night.

Junior Member of the Year

1st Jess Henderson, Whitley Chapel
2nd Isobel Roberts, Bellingham
3rd Molly Pigg, Stamfordham

Senior Member of the Year

1st Vicky Harrison, Stamfordham
2nd Harry Tunstall, Alnwick
3rd Kate Spottiswood, Bellingham

James, Competitions Secretary.

Quiz

1st Cambo
2nd Whitley Chapel
3rd Bellingham

Speaking Competition Results**Junior Public Speaking**

1st Bellingham
2nd Cambo
3rd Whitley Chapel
4th Stamfordham

Intermediate Brainstrust

1st Bellingham and Whitley Chapel
3rd Alnwick
4th Cambo
5th Stamfordham

Senior Debating

1st Cambo
2nd Tritlington
3rd Bellingham

Situations Vacant

1st Harriet Robinson, Bellingham
2nd Louise Tulip, Alnwick
3rd Danny Wilkinson, Stamfordham

COUNTY STAFF REPORT

Firstly we would like to wish you all a Happy New Year! As we are now in another lockdown, Northumberland YFC aim to run a programme of activities and competitions online instead of in person. We would like to thank all clubs and their office bearers for moving online so successfully over the past few months.

We have some informative and exciting events planned for the upcoming months as well as more competitions. Please send us any ideas you may have our way.

Please keep your membership forms and pictures coming into the county office. Membership forms can be found on our website or by contacting your office bearers.

We have both been keeping in touch with National over the past few months as well as other county organizer's with our weekly National Workshops which is keeping us both busy. We are also enjoying hearing what other counties have been up to.

It's crucial that you continue to keep in touch with members of your club and 'check in' with them, a quick message could have a massive impact on someone else's day to make sure they are okay.

Caroline and Claire



GIVE IT SOME YFC WELLY RELAY 2020

YFCs are only too aware of the impact of Coronavirus, following lockdown and social distancing restrictions. Counties and the National budgets are affected, therefore, the support County Federations receive is under threat as well as the survival of some YFCs.

The overall deficit is estimated at around £1m across the whole organisation.

We know how incredible YFC members are at raising funds for other charities but there is now an urgent need for them to fundraise for their clubs and counties to help them get through this difficult time. For the first time ever, NFYFC has launched a campaign to raise funds for YFC and is developing fundraising activities throughout the year.

Northumberland kicked the "Give it Some YFC Welly Relay" off, in October 2020 to give YFC members the chance to help secure their club and county's future.

DATES FOR THE DIARY**February**

Tuesday 2nd: Junior Reading Competition

Tuesday 9th: Finance Meeting

Wednesday 10th: Northern Area Meeting

Thursday 11th: Zoom talk with Bespoke Finance

Monday 15th: Valentines competitions

Tuesday 16th: Treasurer Training

Thursday 18th: Zoom talk with RABI

Tuesday 23rd: Zoom Talk with Ed Ford

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th: Northern Area Weekend via Zoom



Thank you to everyone who supported our duck race in aid of Northern Area Weekend.

The ducks went quackers and the results are in:

1st Hannah and Molly Pigg

2nd Di Harrison

3rd Phil Adamson

Last duck Anne Dodd

