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Consett's Independent Magazine

ISSUE 10/ May 2013



SPACE JUNK

The growing problem of space waste around our planet

THE DEVIL AND THE GIANTS

Myths and legends in the North East

BACK TO THE FUTURE

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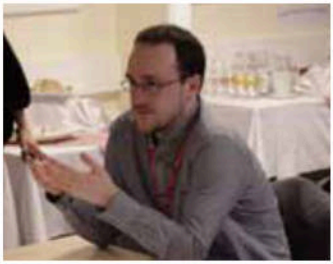
CONSETT MAGAZINE

Welcome

To issue 10 of the **Consett Magazine**



The month of May has finally rolled in for the year 2013. With it the snowy weather is finally subsiding and Spring is genuinely settled in. Speaking of Spring, the Consett Magazine team here at Firefly New Media has been doing a little cleaning throughout the magazine. We've been working hard to place our varied content into proper sections for easier reading and navigation between pages. In general, the whole magazine has had a visual overhaul, including this page (which is my favourite, surprisingly enough). The new sections are divided up into the following distinct categories: news, lifestyle, business, science and technology, entertainment and sports. The broad range of stories should cater to every reader in some way. This is something we continuously work towards with each new edition.

I can genuinely say that this is our best edition yet! We start with the once-only opportunity we had to become a part of Consett's history in the Consett Academy time capsule; some magazines of ours are in there amongst many other memorable items from contributors. Throughout the sections there are stories on gardening, eating out, local myths and legends, business edeavours, scientific breakthroughs, musical delights, local sports news and much more.

In addition, I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed and given feedback this month, both online and offline. The emails, comments and letters we get here at the Firefly New Media offices are ever increasing in volume. The views of our readers are quite varied and help to shed some light on what people want to read about, with some readers even opting to take on the role of journalist to help us out!

I hope everyone enjoys reading issue 10 of Consett Magazine!



Ivan J. Laidler,
Editor-in-chief

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CAPTURING THE MEMORIES

by Chris Brown

To mark the year which the two main secondary schools in our area became one, Consett Academy are marking this momentous occasion by commissioning a unique and interesting take on a time capsule.

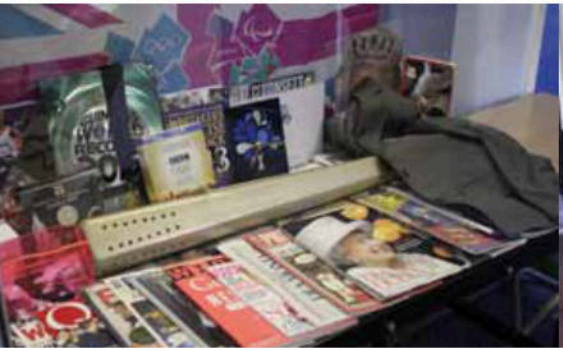
2012 was a big year for the area of Consett with a large number of events which defined this memorable period in our history. This installation is designed to give someone 50 years into the future an idea of what life was like in Consett in 2012.

A traditional time capsule is usually buried in the ground and left for people in the future to discover and then marvel at life in the past. Consett Academy have taken a different view on the usual capsule theme by creating what has been affectionately nicknamed "The Shark Tank". The 80 kilogram UV glass enclosure will be installed into the walls of the new Consett Academy building which will be situated at Belle Vue. This will be visible from both the inside and the outside creating a feature within the building for generations of school children will be able to check out.

After getting some inspiration for the project from the Get Set Olympic School project which gave the suggestion of saving the special memories of the greatest sporting event of 2012. The time capsule contains a number of significant items and magazines which give a summation of the sort of year 2012 was. We went to meet the project organiser Mr Ben Crowder at the Academy's South Campus and submitted the first 5 issues of Consett Magazine to be included into the capsule to let the people of our town in 2062 see and read what was going on in Consett all of those years ago.

The school are still looking for more significant pieces from 2012 to be included into the capsule. If you have anything you would like to share and place into the capsule the academy is still open for any suggestions or submissions.

If you'd like to get involved in the time capsule, don't hesitate to send Mr Ben Crowder an email to bcrowder@consettacademy.org





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May is one of the best months of the year to be in the garden. Plenty of new growth and the promise of summer on its way. This is a busy month with much to do to ensure your garden looks its best. This can be a month of wildly fluctuating temperatures and frosts are still possible up to the end of the month, so beware.

After the difficult Winter and Spring, lawns will benefit from some TLC. Apply a weed & feed treatment to encourage healthy growth and improve drainage by raking out moss and aerating with a fork.

Spring bedding should be cleared out as flowers fade and planting of Summer bedding should be delayed until the risk of frost has passed.

Continue to deadhead Spring flowering bulbs as flowers fade but leave the foliage for a few weeks so that the bulbs get more goodness for next year.

Early flowering shrubs such as forsythia and ribes should be pruned into shape as their flowers fade to ensure a good show of flowers next year.

For a great display of berries this Autumn, this is the time to prune pyracanthas which have been trained against a wall or fence.

If trimming hedges remember to check for nesting birds and delay pruning if necessary.

Regular hoeing will help keep weeds down and beds and borders tidy.

For more information please check out our Monthly Garden Planner at www.briary.co.uk

BEETING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

by Chris Brown

Researchers from the Queen Mary University and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry have discovered that drinking one glass of beetroot juice is an effective way to lower blood pressure. By drinking one 250ml glass of the nitrate rich juice could reduce blood pressure by 10mm hg with the effects lasting for 24 hours after ingesting. This research also suggests that all nitrate rich vegetables such as lettuce, cabbage and fennel would also have a positive effect to your blood pressure.

Some research suggests that there are over 5 million people in the UK who currently suffer from high blood pressure and have not been diagnosed. If you are worried about your blood pressure, why not have a cool glass of beetroot juice each day and fight of high blood pressure the natural way.



Above: This vibrant beverage could be the key to bettering your health.

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

by Ivan Laidler

At the end of this month Mental Health Awareness week will be taking place to try and inform and educate the British public about the struggles of people with mental illness. This will try to remove the stigma which is often associated with suffering from mental health problems and help people sitting in silence to speak out. Whilst most people consider mental health problems to be a rare occurrence this couldn't be much further from the truth.



Over the course of a year 1 in every 4 people in the UK will suffer from some sort of mental health issue and will often go without help. This needs to change. Mental health issues are just as severe as physical health problems and need the correct treatment and diagnosis.

The main problem with the treatment of these conditions is the social stigma which is associated with being diagnosed with a mental disorder. This is stopping the treatment of people who are in serious need of help for conditions such as depression, stress and anxiety.

From the 23rd to the 30th of May, Mental Health Awareness Week will be a chance to educate and dispel common myths surrounding mental illness. This will hopefully go some way to helping those who suffer from various mental illnesses to get seek treatment with the support of those around them. If you know someone who may be suffering for a metal health problem it's important to tackle the situation carefully. Sufferers are not weak, they are stronger than you can imagine. Be sure to offer your full support and understanding to get them through the hard times ahead.

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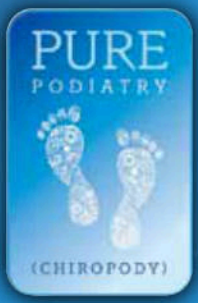

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SEASONAL RECIPE

Roast Lamb with Rosemary and Garlic

Now that Spring has well and truly arrived, now is a better time than ever to get one of the best seasonal ingredients on your plate. Lamb is a fantastic meat which is often overlooked as a meat for a Sunday roast when the ever popular chicken and beef are on the menu. With the spring lambs bouncing round the fields in our area why not have a try of something different for your weekly roast this month.

Many people believe lamb to be a hard meat to cook correctly in comparison to other roast choices but this isn't the case. With just a little bit of extra preparation you can make your lamb look and taste amazing. Two classic flavours which work in tandem with the unique taste of lamb are rosemary and garlic.

Follow these steps:



• Chop a few cloves of garlic into thin slices and prepare some sprigs of lamb ready for flavouring.

• Make some small incisions in the meat and then insert the garlic and rosemary into the holes.

• If your lamb is a lean piece of meat then it is best to cook it at a higher heat. Heat your oven to 230 degrees C and cook the lamb for 25 minutes per 500 grams. This will give your lamb the perfect medium rare meat with a great browned outer finish.

• If your lamb has a marbled finish with a large amount of fat then a different method of cooking is needed. You need to cook the meat at a lower heat to allow the fat to seep through the meat. Cook it at 160 degrees C for 30 minutes per 500 grams.

• Once your roast is properly cooked make sure to let the lamb rest for around 20 minutes. This allows for the meat to continue cooking with the residual heat left from the oven. This will allow the juices in the roast to move from the edges of the centre creating a beautiful roast that anyone would enjoy.

• Serve with the regular roast vegetables and gravy made from the juices of the lamb.

Enjoy!





PLACES TO EAT AND DRINK

THE OLD MILL, KNITSLEY



by B. Kirkham

Having not been to The Old Mill in some time, It was great to return to one of the best local pub/ restaurants in our area. The Old Mill had to close at the back end of June 2012 due to very extreme flooding, but has since re-opened. The food and drink has never been better!

There are 6 luxury en-suite rooms available with bed and breakfast, should you want to spend the night in this tranquil location. If you are looking for somewhere special to hold a wedding, party, seminar, or other special event then The Old Mill could be the ideal location.

The great thing about this restaurant and bar is the ability to get out into the countryside and enjoy a lovely real ale and some very tasty home cooked food. The Old Mill bar and restaurant is very welcoming to old and new customers alike. The atmosphere felt relaxed and the log fire burnt brightly at the end of the room giving The Old Mill a cosy feel.

On Monday and Wednesday from 6pm they have a steak night with some lovely homemade soup, a mouthwatering 10oz steak and a coffee for £14.95. There is a 2 course special with a coffee for only £12.95, this runs Monday to Saturday from 12pm to 6pm. On Sunday you can enjoy a lunch, but you might want to book in advance as the Old Mill can fill up fast.

For all the latest offers and events please visit facebook.com/knitsleymill or call 01207 581642 to book.

If you are looking for somewhere new to eat out then The Old Mill is the perfect choice.

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by Brian Harrison

BENFIELDSIDE, THE DEVIL AND THE GIANTS



Benfieldside is an ancient parish and has its origins right back into the dark ages. Benfieldside itself does not exist now as a village but incorporates the villages of Shotley Bridge, Blackhill and Bridgehill as an ecclesiastical Parish. It was also famous as having one of the first Quaker Meeting Houses, built back in the 1650's. The original Meeting house was replaced in 1700 and this building is still in existence today along "Benfieldside Road", the only place in which the name Benfieldside survives in the area, along with the infant and junior school and Church.

The Quaker House was also famous as the place where the devil was said to have appeared. In Turner upon Providence he relates "the devil in much wrath appeared to snatch the key which was to imprison him forever". It was also witnessed by one John Hunter from Medomsley who said that when he had attended a meeting of this new religious sect called the Quakers the devil appeared. Mr Hunter gave the date of 19th August 1654. There are numerous mention of this throughout the history books and books of the area dating from the 1700's to the 1900's.

Benfieldside along with Consett and Corbridge are all said to have been named after 3 mythical giants mentioned in the epic poem Ode to the River Derwent by John Carr 1732-1807:

In elder time giants uprear'd
Their heads, and affronted the skies;
Cor, Ben, Con, terrific appear'd,
With names of anomalous size.

A hammer in common they had,
And the use of it easy to all;
Each whistled, each brother was glad
To throw it three leagues at his call.

There are other versions of the Giants story which names Mug for Muggleswick instead of Cor.

Consett & District Heritage Initiative, along with a number of other local groups, will be holding an Exhibition of local interest on Wed 15th - Sat 18th May at St Patrick's Church Hall, Consett. Openning times will be 12pm - 4.30pm Wed & Thurs and 10.30 am - 4.30pm Fri & Sat. Entry is free to all. So why not pop along and have a look and a good chat.

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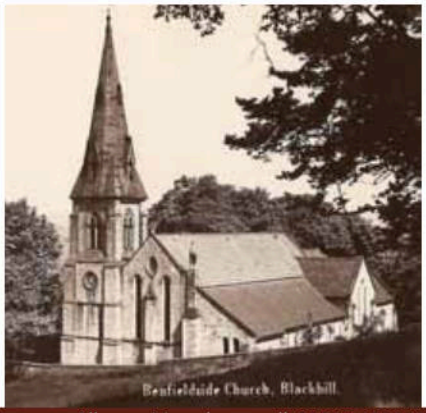

Benfieldside Church, Blackhill

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HOW SEO CAN BENEFIT YOUR COMPANY

by Ivan Laidler

Can you imagine what the world would be like without the internet? Things have changed significantly over the years since internet access has become readily available and accessible to the public. Whilst early internet services were somewhat slow and limited due to the technological infrastructure in place, now the internet is an easy to use and useful tool for almost anyone. The same is applicable to small businesses around the area.

One of the biggest challenges of getting your website noticed on the internet is ranking highly on popular search engines. First of all you may be asking yourself why you need to be high up the rankings and what difference will it make to your business. The answer is simple; if someone is looking for a service or tradesman they will often search for the job they need doing and the place which they are located, for example "Joinery Consett".

This will bring up a list of all of the related search results based on your terms. The important thing is that the majority of people will only look at the first page of search results. 96% of results on the first page will get clicked in comparison to 6% on the second page. If you don't get onto the first page there is a good chance your website won't be seen.

The process of search engine optimisation (SEO) is rapidly becoming one of the most important parts of any online marketing campaign. Ranking highly on search engines is now a vital part of any business who value their online presence. By making sure your website has been properly optimised for your desired search terms, you can help your site to increase through the ranking and get noticed online.

If you would like to know about SEO and what it can do for your business, why not contact Firefly New Media to find out more.



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MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND RESPONSIVE WEBSITES

by Ivan Laidler

Since the advent and popularisation of the modern smart phone, the way we use the internet has changed dramatically. No longer must you be in front of your home computer or at a laptop to access the internet. The mobile data revolution has given us the ability to surf the web wherever we may be without the restrictions which were once in place. Early WAP mobile web technology was simplistic and didn't function in the same way as regular broadband internet. Mobile sites were specifically designed for use on small low resolution screens and many normal websites were unavailable to view.



Now 3G and 4G wireless internet networks are available to most phone users across the UK it has created an online market where websites need to be viewable on a number of different devices not just PCs and laptops. Now that tablet computing is taking off in a big way websites need to be easily viewable on all three of the common mediums currently used. This can be a problem as many websites are not optimised for use on these new devices. This means it can often be hard to view a webpage in its entirety leaving you to scroll across the site to get the info you need to know. One of the best ways to get around this is to have a fully responsive website.

A responsive website is an intelligent web solution to resolve the problem of multiple screen resolutions. It allows your website to automatically detect the correct screen resolution of the device which is being used. This also works for different sized computer monitors creating the best experience for any visitor. Firefly New Media specialise in making fully responsive websites which work perfectly on PC, Tablet or Phone. This gives every user the best website experience every time without fail.

If you would like a responsive website for your business then why not get in touch with Firefly New Media and see what they can do for you.

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KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

by B. Kirkham

Keeping The Lights On
As energy prices soar, one of the biggest energy firms operating in the UK has admitted that it has not paid any corporation tax in the UK for three years. Npower has told the Energy and Climate Change select committee that it has invested billions of pounds in new power stations and technology such as wind power which was tax deductable and this is the reason that its tax bill was nil in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Like most energy firms in the UK Npower has increased its pricing by almost nine percent while its profits have soared to over 30 percent in 2013, up to an amazing £413 Million.

Npower has paid no corporation tax in 3 years.

The question which arises from the knowledge that Npower are paying no corporation tax while homes and small-to-medium sized businesses are being held to ransom with ever increasing energy prices is;

"Why are energy companies allowed to pay no corporation tax while they increase their rates to customers?"

Npower has denied it is using tax avoidance and has indeed said its investment into alternative power sources is a legitimate way of increasing the level of tax relief available.

What are your thoughts on energy prices? Have you or a family member been affected by the rise of energy costs at home?

Have your say on www.consettmagazine.com, leave a comment or get in touch.

SOCIAL MEDIA TAKEOVER

by Ivan Laidler

Did you know that in the UK, the USA and Australia on average we spend 16 minutes per hour updating our social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter on our computers? This is much more than the 9 minutes spent on entertainment sites and only six minutes online shopping. Research from Experian has been looking at what our internet activity consists of to get a better picture of the regular web user. Interestingly enough this figure has dropped from last year as now more users are switching to their smart phones and tablets to get their social media fix.

Of the three countries involved in the survey people in the UK spend more time using online shopping sites such as Amazon and Play. This is over a quarter higher than the average figure for the three territories which were studied. Interestingly enough, these figures may continue to drop as more and more people are using their mobiles to get online. In the first quarter of 2013, the most time on mobile internet use was spent sending and receiving emails.

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VIDEO NORTH EAST

by Ivan Laidler

Consett is a hive of local business with an amazing number of self employed people pushing their trade around our town on a daily basis. One new company is looking to bring a video revolution to Consett is Video North East. Based in Middle Street, they aim to show the benefits of professional video services to the people in the area.

For a business a website is a great way to get new customers, but adding a high quality video on your web page can have a huge impact. Video can be a great tool which can be used to grab people's attention. A well produced video will help draw in potential customers as soon as they land on your website. It can be likened to having your own virtual salesman on your website working for you 24/7. A slick video describing your services will help give your online visitors a clearer view of what services your company is capable of providing.

Videos are also a great way to increase rankings on search engines such as Google. Using a variety of media gives you more scope due to links being placed across the net in different locations. This will increase your search engine ranking and increase the likelihood of people finding your site.

Video production and editing isn't only useful for businesses. Recording events and occasions can help create an eternal record of your special day. Are you an amateur videographer who'd like your footage professionally edited? This is another service which the guys at Video North East can do for you. Have you ever wanted a single collection of all of your child's school plays? This sort of video editing work is exactly what Video North East specialise in.

Video can be an excellent tool for business as well as one of the best ways of preserving your favourite family moments for generations to come. Why not see what professional video production from Video North East can do for you.

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BECOME A MODEL

By Nathan Southward

Chasing a dream is something few people actually do. But 29 year old Sally Smallwood, who graduated from Northumbria University with a degree in Fashion, is working hard to turn her dreams into reality and is soon launching her own fashion label, Wreckreation.

Even as a young girl, Sally made her own clothes and after working in fashion houses in New York and receiving many requests to make her garments for others, she is bringing her designs to the world.

Wreckreation, whose slogan is "Life is your creation" is inspired by fast cars & loud music and is a highly energized, brightly coloured, luxury label with a sporty image for both men and women.

Speaking to Sally she said, "I want to create something that is more than just another label, Wreckreation means to wreck all traditions which stifle creativity and to create your own world for yourself. This philosophy stems from Nietzsche's Ubermensch, the Superman - man in control of his own world by bulldozing his limitations and creating his own realities."

So in true Wreckreation style, Sally wants to prove that you do not need to be in London to create a successful fashion label. "All production will be in-house with the aim of providing local people with new jobs and skills." She added, "It's not about mass-production, it's about timeless quality which contrasts with the disposable fashions of today."

Her 1st collection will launch this September, entitled TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS and she is looking for a 'tribe' of superhero models who can help spread this message.

"Wreckreation is about becoming a creator; not the created. We are looking for models who posses this raw energy."
As well as a photoshoot, there is a short film planned and they're looking for determined, energetic people to collaborate with.



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Have you ever wondered about the best ways to advertise your business? With a myriad of marketing options available to businesses it can often be hard to decide on the best way to promote your business. One of the most tried and tested methods of local advertising are the use of free local newspapers and magazines which are distributed around the area you wish to find business. These publications will get distributed around the local area and more often than not work out much cheaper than a leaflet drop across the area.



With a number of magazines going around in the local area, picking the right one can be a challenge. Different publications have different ways of working and a variety of marketing strategies. We here at Consett Magazine believe that intelligent marketing solutions are key to getting a good response from magazine advertising. This includes creating an emotional connection with the reader to make them relate to your advert and remember your business. By including your advertisement next to a good piece of relevant content, this helps for a solid impression of your business.

Other publications in our local area lack engaging content and interesting articles only focusing on pushing out as many advertisements as they physically can. This strategy of marketing strategy may work to an extent but being surrounded by your competitors is never good. Consett Magazine will never place competitors on the same page to give every advertiser a fair chance of making the best impression to prospective customers. Repetition is another vital part of advertising as the more times your advert is seen the bigger impression will be made. The study of psychological attraction has pointed to familiarity as a factor which increases levels of attraction. This is both applicable to people and inanimate objects. To create the best impression it is best to advertise for at least 3 month. We offer competitive rates with a discount if you are willing to advertise for a longer period of time.

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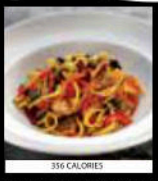
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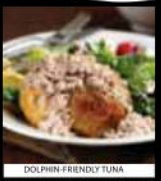
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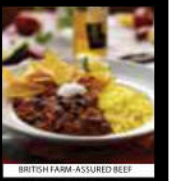
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See Menu For Further Details

SPACE SPRING CLEAN

by Ivan Laidler

We all imagine space to be a desolate and empty place with nothing but your thoughts to keep you company whilst orbiting the earth. This couldn't be further from the truth. The space around our planet is now filled with rubbish. It's hard to imagine that our local space is starting to look like a landfill site but this is actually the case. A combination of defunct satellites, rubbish jettisoned from the International Space Station and rocket boosters used to get the shuttle into space all float around in our orbit without a place or purpose.

Whilst this doesn't seem like much of a problem, the area around planet Earth is becoming congested with large amounts of space junk which poses some serious problems for current and future space missions. These pieces which are left in space are held in the Earth's orbit and float around on their own accord posing a threat to working satellites and the ISS itself. If a large enough piece of space junk was to knock a satellite out of its planned orbit this would render this expensive piece of equipment effectively useless.

British scientists are currently working on a way to clean up space and create a safe environment for future missions into the space in our planet's orbit. By using specially designed satellites armed with laser guided harpoons, space junk could be intercepted then dragged into earth's atmosphere to be burned up on re-entry. Many of the risks of space junk had been completely theoretical until 2009 when an unused Russian satellite collided with an operational weather satellite causing tens of millions of dollars damage.

Space waste disposal is now becoming a real concern as with an average speed of 25,000kph even a nut or bolt can have serious consequences if it were to collide with other space equipment. With over 4,900 rocket launches since the beginning of the space race, this has left over 23,000 pieces of space debris in Earth's orbital space. With only a finite area to dispose of waste when in space now is the time for inventive solutions from our brightest minds to help keep space safe and clean.



Above: An interpretation of the amount of space debris currently surrounding our planet.

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KIDNEY GROWTH BREAKTHROUGH

by Chris Brown

For the first time ever a kidney which has been grown in a lab has been transplanted into a living rat. This breakthrough coming from Massachusetts is a huge step forward in the treatment of kidney disease which has such a large impact on the way over 51,000 people in the UK with end stage kidney disease. 90% of the patients on the transplant waiting list in the UK have kidney conditions which leave them making regular hospital trips for dialysis treatment. The idea of growing organs in a lab for transplant has always been something of science fiction but now this may well become a reality.

Medical Scientist Harald Ott began the process by using a special detergent to strip the functional cells from the damaged kidney leaving only the collagen scaffolding which gives the kidney its shape. Once this was done the team behind the research then placed the kidney and blood vessel cells into the structure. This then developed over a period of 12 days into a working kidney which was surgically placed into a lab rat. Amazingly the kidney functioned as it should have and allowed the rat to produce urine.

This amazing development in regenerative medicine has brought hope to millions across the globe. If this process works for the kidney there is a good chance that other organs could be grown and then inserted into a sick person. Although this aspect of science is still very young, there is a lot of scope for development which could help a huge number of people across the globe in need of organ transplants.

One of the big issues with current transplant procedures is that the body rejects the kidney considering it a foreign body. This means immunosuppressant drugs are needed to make sure the kidney functions properly. A lab grown organ wouldn't have this issue removing one of the biggest risks of an organ transplant. Let's hope that this technology is further developed to improve the lives of transplant patients around the world.

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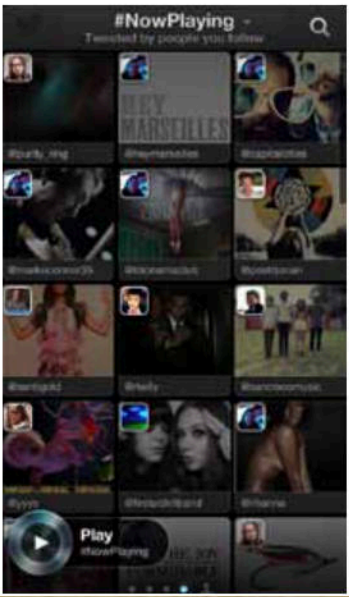
#MUSIC TO MY EARS

by Chris Brown

Have you ever wanted an easy way to keep in touch with what's going on with your favourite bands? If you do then get ready for Twitter's new #Music service which has recently been released for iPhone users in America, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and the UK. #Music is a music discovery service which recommends new music to listen to based on the artists you follow on your twitter account. Along with recommendations, the service will also allow you to stream tracks from iTunes, Spotify and Rdio to get a good idea of the bands you may like.

By using the hashtag system, the service can detect which bands are trending and find new and upcoming artists who you may have never heard of. It's amazing how the internet has changed the way we discover new music. When we had to buy CDs you often had to take a shot in the dark to find a new band which you may or may not like. With access to Youtube and other online services it's now so easy to discover something new. If you'd like to get involved with #Music, download the app from the iTunes store. A version of #Music will also be available for your web browser in the near future.



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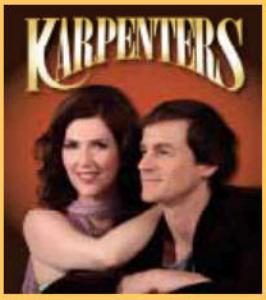

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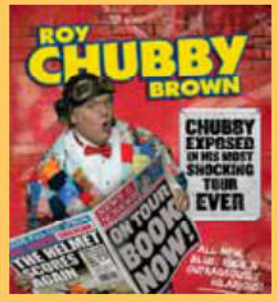

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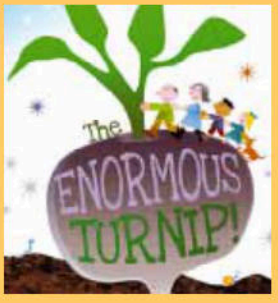

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Ska Mania

by Chris Brown

> "SKAMANIA INDUCE A SENSE OF NOSTALGIA FOR ANYONE WHO WAS AROUND AT THE TIME OF THE ORIGINAL TWO TONE REVIVAL"

Ska music has always had a special place in the hearts of millions of people across the UK. The uplifting beat and catchy rhythms which made Ska music so popular back in the 1970s when the British Two Tone revival saw Ska music becoming popular with Mods and Skinheads across the country. One band which is trying to bring about a revival of this classic British genre in our local area is the ever talented SkaMania. This 7 piece group have been bringing Ska back to the local stage since 2002 playing gigs across the region as far afield as North Yorkshire and Northern Northumberland.

Playing a selection of Ska hits from years go by, SkaMania induce a sense of nostalgia for anyone who was around at the time of the original Two Tone revival. It's easy to see how they could fill out a dance floor with skanking fans nodding to the ever present off-beat strum of the guitar. Their CD contains some classic hits from the past including "A Message to You Rudy" originally performed by The Specials and "Baggy Trousers" by the ever popular Madness. The list of classic covers on SkaManias CD will be enough to put a smile on even the saddest person's face as each track is upbeat, fun and extremely well recorded.

The skill of each band member is evident from the first moment you hear SkaMania. Vocalist Gus has a great voice which really suits the two tone style down to a tee. Bassist Andy and Drummer Mark provides a solid backing with a funky feel which really lays down a perfect foundation for the rest of the band to express themselves. The brass section, keys and guitar really add the colour to take the band to the next level. You can tell this band has been together for some time due to the technical ability of every band member which has resulted in some extremely polished recordings.



If you want to find out more about SkaMania be sure to check out their Facebook page which can be found at

facebook.com/skamaniaband

by Chris Brown

BIOSHOCK INFINITE REVIEW

The Bioshock games have always been aimed to make the player think whilst immersing them in a story which was designed to throw you into a new and somewhat frightening environment far removed from what we experience on a day to day basis. This new foray into the world of Bioshock Infinite takes you away from the dark and claustrophobic environment of the underwater city named Rapture into the light and colourful floating world of Columbia.

After being shot up into the sky you awaken in a city in the clouds baptised in the name of your new saviour, Father Comstock. Nothing seems real as you step out into this new world for the first time.

The bright light burns your eyes as you take your first glimpse of Columbia. This amazing world is a true triumph of video game design as I found myself scanning almost everything on screen, soaking up all of the beautiful detail which could be found wherever you look. Even with the now limited ability of the current generation consoles, the vibrant visuals of Bioshock Infinite are a sight to behold.

As the story progresses, your character, a private investigator named Booker Dewitt, becomes more and more powerful due to the various vigours which can be found across the world of Bioshock Infinite. These powers allow you to turn your body into a weapon using all sorts of elements. Fire, lightning, water, angry crows; all of these abilities can be used to your advantage whilst trying to fight your way though this thinking mans shooter.

Bioshock Infinite has pushed the FPS genre further forward just as the first title in the series did way back in 2007 with its engaging storyline and challenging gameplay. If you are looking for something different to the run of the mill shooter, this could well be for you.

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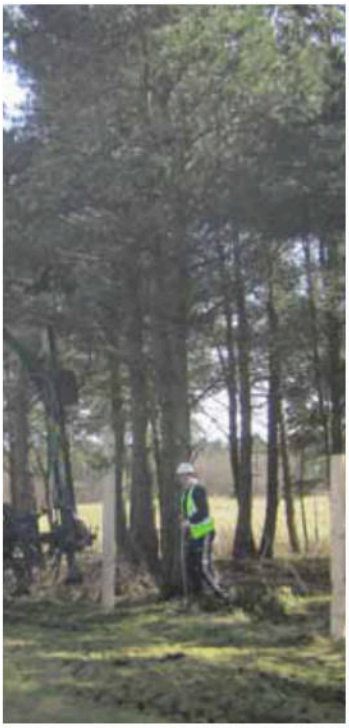
by Chris Brown

CONSETT AFC – THE END OF AN ERA





The Month of May will see our local football team Consett AFC play their last games in the historic Belle Vue Stadium. In the sixty-three years since the stadium was initially opened, people across the generations have enjoyed heading down to Belle Vue to see the Consett Steelmen play. Although somewhat modest in size and construction, the character of this Consett landmark has withstood the test of time.

After all these years of playing at the Belle Vue stadium, Consett AFC has decided to move to a new home. Due to the new Consett Academy being built on the Belle Vue site, Consett AFC is moving to their new home across town in an exciting development. To see out the last month of the Stadium which was originally opened in 1950, there are a lot of exciting fixtures to give the ground its last 'hurrah'.

Before the stadium officially closes on the 2nd of June there will be a number of special games being held at the stadium in the month of May. The old Belle Vue ground has been chosen as the venue for the prestigious Northern League Cup final which will be held on the 9th of May which will be the last cup game to be held at Belle Vue. Another big day before the move is the five Consett Sunday League cup finals which will also be played at the ground as part of the big send off before the closure. When the competitive season is officially over there will also be some special friendly matches with local teams Hartlepool Football Club and Sunderland AFC which are currently being arranged.

Although the move will see the end of one of Consett's biggest sporting landmarks, the future for Consett AFC looks bright. Chairman Frank Bell is allowing anyone to call him up and reserve a piece of the Belle Vue Stadium to take as a souvenir. A few die hard fans have already reserved their regular seats to take after the closure.

If you want to get yourself a little piece of Consett AFC don't hesitate to give Chairman Frank Bell a call on 07710133694.

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GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY WITH CONSETT RUGBY CLUB

by Richard Armitt

With the rugby union season now drawing to a close, we can look back on a season of success. The first team achieved their main objective of staying in division one after gaining promotion last season whilst also reaching the county cup final. The second team had an outstanding season with some good results from a group of great young fellas, many of who have also contributed to the first teams cause. The third team managed to turn out a team for every fixture except one, also displaying some great performances.

Junior rugby has seen some great success this year with the under 18s getting some fantastic results and making the final of the county cup. Alongside this all of the other age groups have been growing in numbers, skills and confidence throughout the season.

Well that was the season that was, now for what the future holds, and that starts with the transition from rugby union to rugby league. For the second summer we will be running an adult rugby league team on Saturday afternoons with training on Wednesday evening at 7:00. For the first time there will now be a junior team also playing rugby league. This will be for anyone aged under 14 which is anyone in year 9 at school or below.

As well as the rugby league, the club will also be running a seven a side union squad throughout the summer. This team will be competing in various completions throughout the whole of the North East.



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