CONSETT MAGAZINE

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Consett's Independent Magazine

ISSUE 20/ March 2014



MOTOCROSS MAYHEM

Arena Cross visits the North East.

MYSTERIOUS MUGGLESWICK

Ghostly goings on in Muggleswick Common.

TRANSATLANTIC TRADE

Find out more about the TTIP.

MUSICAL MADNESS

West End hits at the Empire.



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WELCOME

To Issue 20 of Consett Magazine!

FROM THE EDITOR:



Hello and welcome this month's edition of the Consett Magazine. Moving into March things are getting brighter, Spring is just around the corner and you will all no doubt be looking forward to some warmer weather as much as I am.

One of the big events this March is the return of the national charity campaign Sport Relief. Since starting back in 2002, the charity has helped to raise over £140,000,000 to help venerable people across the UK and around the World.

You can find out more about how you can get involved in Sport Relief alongside a whole host of other great stories right here in this month's edition of the Consett Magazine.

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Memories of Steel

by Peter Brabban





Consett Library has recently been the host of a fantastic photography exhibition from local photographer Peter Brabban depicting the final years of the Consett Steel Works and the social unrest which accompanied the closure. For many, these memories will still be vividly etched into the minds of those who were there to witness the protests and marches through the streets but for another large group of younger residents, this is vital imagery to help depict the mood of the times for those who were not there to experience it.

The exhibit had a number of different photographs from Peter Brabban which help to piece together an image of Consett's past. Landmarks which can be seen in a number of the photographs provide reference points to compare how different things today truly are. Seeing the steel workers marching down Victoria Road with the signage of the Forster's Butchers clearly in view of the background really helps clarify the fact that this all happened in our small town in North West County Durham.

Whilst the time surrounding the closure of the Consett Steel Works was arguably one of the biggest and most important times in the history of Consett, there are very few landmarks left to really depict the sheer size and scale of what the plant meant to the local people. This exhibition was a great reminder for the people involved alongside those who wanted to know more about Consett's heritage.

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> "THESE MEMORIES WILL STILL BE VIVIDLY ETCHED INTO THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO WERE THERE TO WITNESS THE PROTESTS AND MARCHES THROUGH THE STREETS

The Busker Factor in Aid of Bright Red

by Chris Brown

On Saturday the 29th of March Spotlight Community Theatre Productions will be hosting The Busker Factor at The Demi. This event looks to find the latest and greatest names on the Consett music scene all for the aid of blood cancer charity Bright Red. Running from 7pm until late, The Dust Town Dogs will be hosting the amazing night which will hopefully raise a whole load of cash for a noble cause.

A range of musicians and groups will be facing off against each other all for a good cause with the added sweetener of the winner going through to play at this year's Consett Festival in April. The audience will be the judges and the winner will be decided by how much money each act has in their own bucket. Bring your penny jar and get ready to make your vote and support a worthwhile charity in the process.



Consett Stroke Club

by Chris Brown

Consett Stroke Club is a newly formed organisation looking to provide vital services for people who have suffered from a stroke in the local area. Over 5,500 people each year in the North East unfortunately fall victim to strokes and more needs to be done to help people who are recovering from this serious illness. It's not only the victims of strokes who have a hard time; carers of stroke patients can have a difficult time and also need support.

The club has been set up to offer support, friendship, advice and fun for stroke sufferers in Consett by organising social events and campaigning for better services for stroke sufferers in the area. Members of the club all have experience in the process of recovering from a stroke so who better to help on the long road to recovery.

If you want to know more about Consett Stroke Club then don't hesitate to get in touch via email to consettstroke@hotmail.com or by phone to 07511278056

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Rotary Schools Programme

by Ian Forster

The Rotary Club of Consett was formed in 1942 and from its earliest days has shown great interest in the local schools and educational developments. Initially it established a Rotary Prize in the then Consett Grammar School, which was academic achievement based and continued until the school changed.

In addition, during those years individual Rotary awards have been made on the basis of requests by individuals to finance their further education.

In 2006 The Rotary Club of Consett decided to extend its educational links to schools both Primary and Secondary in Derwentside and a new and more comprehensive programme was launched.

Called The Rotary Award, it is not academic based but is aimed at recognition of an achievement or contribution by an individual or group within the school in community or school activities.

The school, Headteacher and staff make selection of recipients. Awards range from School Councils, charitable collections to individual cases of coping with serious health problems. The awards are presented by the current Rotary President at a school assembly.

The response and involvement has been most encouraging and now all the 17 Primary and 3 Secondary are participating. In addition a number of schools in the wider Rotary community are involved in schemes such as Eco-Schools dealing with the environment and Rota Kids with community issues.

The link between schools and the community is vitally important and The Rotary Award is providing a way of enhancing this process.

AWARDS RANGE FROM SCHOOL COUNCILS, CHARITABLE COLLECTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL CASES OF COPING WITH SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS.

Consett Festival

Excitement is mounting in our little town for 2014s Consett Festival. The event will be held in the grounds of Consett Rugby Club on Friday April 25th and Saturday April 26th. Tickets are £4 for Friday and £7 for Saturday. A child's ticket for Saturday is £4. Log on to consettfestival.co.uk or check out the Consett Festival page on Facebook for more information.



Stonham home group

by Ben Mullen

Tesco Extra Consett in the Community Room	Every Tuesday	12.00-15.00 PM
Citizen House Station Road Consett	Every Wednesday	12.30 -13.30 PM
Salvation Army Sherburn Terrace Consett	Every Other Thursday Starting 13th February 2014	13.00-15.00 PM
The Hut Bridgehill (Next to SPAR)	Every Wednesday	9:30am-10:30 AM

Stonham is a great charity organisation that works with anyone over the age of 16 that may be in need of assistance with regards to tenancy issues, including; homelessness, finding new accommodation, or maintaining current accommodation. The group can help with financial aspects of tenancy issues and provide personal advice to avoid eviction, access furniture, and other basic items needed for a home. In addition, Stonham supports individuals to access activities, training, and employment to help them wherever possible. The service is free and can last for up to 2 years depending on an individual's needs; it covers the whole of County Durham and other Derwentside areas, including Consett. For more information or to receive help and guidance you can contact Stonham by freephone at 08000731837 or visit one of the drop in centres:

Consett & District Heritage Initiative

The "Consett & District Heritage Initiative" facebook page is brimming with history, photographs, and interesting people from all over the world who are contributing to one of Consett's most active and interesting online communities. Simply log into Facebook and search "Consett & District Heritage Initiative" to get involved.



Women's Institute Meeting Announcement

The Ebchester and District WI are changing their meeting dates to the 3rd Thursday of every month from 13:00 – 15:30 at Ebchester Village Hall. If you would like to attend, don't hesitate as all ladies are invited to come along and learn more about the WI.



Games Night

by Lorraine Weightman



The Rotary Club of Consett held its annual indoor games night recently in Consett Golf Club. The event is a fun evening where members and guests compete for The Rotary Club of Consett Games Night Trophy.

There are 15 indoor games to complete ranging from dominoes, quoits, darts to mini golf, pool, and tiddlywinks. The winners of each game add two points to their score sheet with one point for a draw and of course no points if you lose. The pair with the most points after playing the games are declared winners and are presented with the Trophy at the end of the evening. This year's winners were Jo Bresnen and Elaine Walls.



The Rotary Club of Consett who are a registered charity work as part of an international organisation to help support their community by raising funds to help worthwhile causes. They gather each Tuesday at Consett Golf Club for their weekly meeting where they organise events, fund raising activities and fellowship evenings to raise money for charity.

A Geordie Night is organised for Saturday March 22nd at Castleside Community Centre from 7.30 till 11pm, Tickets are £8.00 and include a pie, peas and chips supper followed by 'posh' Geordie trifle! There will be a brown ale raffle among other fundraising activities.

Entertainment is provided comedian by Bert Draycott and folk singer Ann Lamb. Rotarian Joyce Shaw will be singing Geordie songs and leading community singing. It will be a great community event. Tickets are available from the contacts below.

If you are interested in the work of the Rotary organisation and wish to find out more about The Rotary Club of Consett and the work they do please visit their website www.rotaryconsett.freeuk.com or contact lorraine7556@gmail.com

Time to Change

by Lorraine Weightman

Do you want to learn more about 'speaking out' about mental health stigma and discrimination and develop your confidence to tell your story?

Derwentside Mind are looking for volunteers to speak out at an event in Stanley. They are offering free training to develop these skills. You will be given information to build your confidence, enhance your ability to speak out about your experience of mental health problems and understand why a campaign to break the stigma is important.

If you would like to participate on Monday March 3rd 2014 at 22 Nelson Street Consett please contact Tel: 01207 591705. Registration is at 9.30am for a 10am start, concluding at 3pm. There are limited spaces. A free buffet will be provided.

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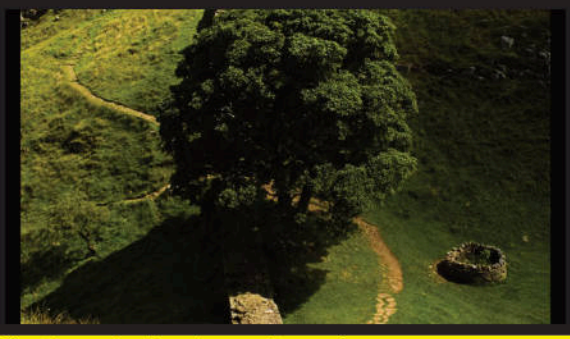
My New Home

by Thomas Jones

My new home's lofty position above the Derwent Valley gives me a God like view of the clouds that silently attach themselves to the treetops like sticky buds to a dog's coat. Despite this being a Friday morning in late August the air has a chill to it that one would imagine only present in a more autumnal month. What a wonderful time to be alive; I'm setting out on a new photographic journey in what is to me, a new country.

Northumberland is a different land indeed to my native West Yorkshire; a land of such sterile beauty, far less tread than the cow and calf et al of my youth. There's something to discover here; something that I can call mine. I jump into my car, camera stowed safely in the back, sat nav busily directing me on my route. I'm heading to the ancient wonder that is Hadrian's Wall; a structure that, for me has always had an element of mystical wonder about it. In particular, one specific spot of this seventy-odd mile long buttress of the Roman Empire – Sycamore Gap.

This single, lonesome tree stands in the sharp trough between the peaks of two hills, barely a couple of hundred feet high or apart, yet proves to be such a magical site, it draws visitors from all corners of this earth. It may still be summer, but today feels very much like autumn. I stride out, although my target isn't more than a mile away, I know with a fully laden camera bag and the hop-scotch of steep drops and climbs, this one isn't going to as easy as I first thought. I arrive at the ruins of a mile castle, the remains of a Roman dwelling where the centurions will have lived, eaten and died defending what must have felt like a very distant corner of the empire. Their legacy is woven into the very fabric of these ancient stones, almost as if something of those people still survives here.



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The Oldies Club Dog Show

by Ivan Laidler

On the 4th of August at 1pm the Consett Fun Dog Show will be taking place at Consett Academy to help raise money for The Oldies Club, a charity centred on helping older dogs find new homes. Older dogs often have a harder time finding a new home than puppies and many can't find new homes at all. The Oldies Club can be found out and about at a number of events ranging from country fairs to dog shows, collecting money for the charity and raising awareness of all the older dogs without a home.

The event on the 4th of August will be run and organised by the six local volunteers who support the charity looking to raise money for this great cause. Whilst entry to the dog show will be free, businesses are invited to set up shop at the event for a fixed fee of £5. This way business people from around the region can help support the cause whilst selling their wares at the event. There is also an entrance fee for any dogs who will be competing and all money taken will go straight to The Oldies Club.

Be sure not to miss The Oldies Club fun family dog show this year to help older dogs find a loving home of their own. This is a great opportunity for anyone to get involved with the charity and support them.

If you're interested in sponsoring The Oldies Club, please get in contact on 07812 769143.





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Stanley Cancer Research Uk Fundraisers Celebrate 30 Years Of Fundraising

by Bill Burgess

Stanley Local Committee are this year celebrating dedicating 30 years to raising vital funds and awareness for Cancer Research UK. In this time, the group have raised a fantastic £250,000 for life-saving research.

Stanley Local Committee began fundraising for Cancer Research UK in 1984 after the chair of the group was touched several times by cancer. In 1981 Bill Burgess' mother was diagnosed with cancer. While going through her treatment, the family was once again rocked by cancer when Bill's dad was diagnosed with skin cancer. Thanks to the work of Cancer Research UK, Bill's father survived, but his mother sadly died, just three months after his wedding to Anne, who is also a member of the committee. Just a few years later, tragedy struck again when Bill's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer, which spread to her chest and lungs. Tragically, she too lost her battle with cancer.

Bill formed the group along with his wife, friends and neighbours shortly afterwards to try to stop cancer destroying families in the future.

To celebrate their dedication and success, the group are putting on a 30th Anniversary Ball at Beamish Hall Hotel on Saturday 21st June 2014. Guests will be welcomed with a drinks and canapé reception followed by a 3 course meal and entertainment by The Funk Collective. There will also be an auction and guest speakers Peter Howe, a local cancer survivor who has raised £1.5 million by cycling 300,000 miles across the world, and Professor Herbie Newell from the Northern Institute for Cancer Research. For tickets, please call 0843 523 6633 or email info@cancerresearchstanley.co.uk

Abby Robinson, Cancer Research UK's Local Fundraising Manager for Durham, Darlington and Teesside said "I would like to thank the members of Stanley Local Committee for the fantastic amount they have raised and the massive contribution they have made to our vital work over the past 30 years.

"CANCER RESEARCH UK HAS MADE ENORMOUS PROGRESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER AND CONTINUES TO DO SO. HOWEVER, WE HAVE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO DO THIS THANKS TO THE DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT OF OUR VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS WITHOUT WHOM WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO FUND OUR VITAL RESEARCH."

To support the work of Stanley Local Committee and Cancer Research UK, please text STAN93 with your donation amount e.g. £5 to 70070.

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The Ghost of Muggleswick Common

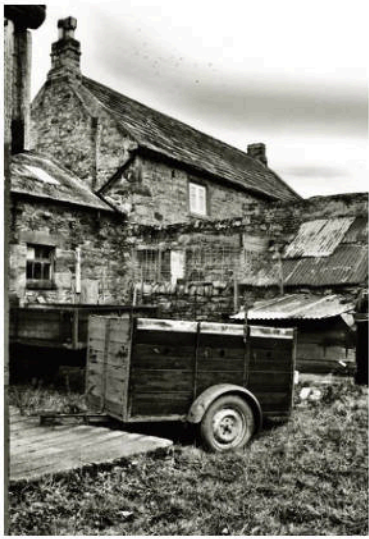
by Angela Tempest

Muggleswick Common is an area of moorland dominated by heather and used for grouse rearing and sheep grazing. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to the different types of plant and bird species that live there. It is south-west of the village of Muggleswick, itself a few miles west of Consett.

It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to the different types of plant and bird species that live there. It is south-west of the village of Muggleswick, itself a few miles west of Consett.

As well as the birds and the plants, the common is said to be haunted by a ghost whose name is recorded as Rowley Harrison who appears on moonlight nights. He rides his horse, shouting 'Ride Rowley, ride" and swinging his sword. But why?

The legend tells that Rowley was a mosstrooper, bandits who operated in Scotland during and after the period of English Commonwealth in the middle of the 17th century. They had been soldiers in one of the armies during the War of the Three Kingdoms and were disbanded or deserted and kept their weapons, during to banditry. They attacked civilians and soldiers alike during the Royalist rising of 1651-54 when the English Parliamentarian troops occupied Scotland. At the end of the conflicts, Rowley Harrison returned to Muggleswick, his birth place, where he plundered local farms and gained such as reputation that after his death at Christmas 1712, no-one would go near his farm.





Some time later, a man name George Proud came to live near the village and soon heard the ghost stories around the mosstrooper on the common and his haunted home. He was not a believer in such things so he boasted he would visit Rowley's farm, at midnight on Christmas day no less. He took supplies for anyone he might meet and set off.

He entered the farm and a feeling of dread settled over him. He stopped still when he heard a cry "Ride Rowley, ride! The houghs in the pot!" This had been the rallying call of Rowley's widow. He followed the voice up the stairs and was shocked to see an old woman in a dirty rag covered bed staring wide eyed at him.

Head over to consettmagazine.com to read the full story!

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Donation That Bridged the Gap

by Brian Harrison

A few months ago I was contacted by a lovely lady who had some items to donate to the Heritage Initiative, a number of local books, some photo's and a small silver salver. She told me the story of how her father had found the salver in an attic and at the time no one was able to locate its origin. It even appeared in the local Newspaper and still drew a blank. The writing on it stated "With the Compliments of Smart & Todd, Royal Picture House, Consett". So we decided to take up the challenge and began our research.

The information on the salver helped us bridge a gap of use of one of Consett's most beloved and esteemed Theatres, The Globe.



Opened on 21 December 1896 as the New Theatre Consett it was purpose built by Richard Murray. It was leased to Mr Hugh Robertson who had already proved his experience in the running of such establishments. Mr Harry Sharp was named as Acting-Manager and the New Theatre was hailed as an instant success. However, Mr Sharp was not the best choice and some of the acts he brought were not up to scratch and he was replaced 17 May 1897 by Mr Lloyd Clarence.

Born as John William Hunt he took on the stage name of Lloyd Clarence in the early 1870's during his performing days. Before taking on the manager's position in the New Theatre Consett, Clarence had been the lessee of the Old Theatre Royal, Stockton for 11 years.

In 1911 Mr Hugh Robertson's lease expired and was taken up by Smart & Todd who were engaged in the business of Cinematograph Exhibitors. Unfortunately the partnership was dissolved on 18th Aug 1913 and went into the sole ownership of Mr Todd.



During this period the New Theatre became The Royal Picture House. With Clarence still as manager the business plodded on, but unfortunately not at a great profit and by 1916 it closed its doors. Clarence then took over and renamed it the Globe Theatre taking it back to its theatrical roots. Unfortunately with the introduction of talking pictures in the start of the 1920's and the reduction of audiences the Globe's days were numbered. Clarence retired in 1924 and the Globe closed 2 years later in 1926.





The TTIP Deal and the Likely Consequences for the NHS

by Gerard Barrie

Negotiations have been going on for some time to put together an EU/ US trade agreement called the Transatlantic Trade and investment Partnership (TTIP) or Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA) in the US which will create the biggest trade block in the world.

This trade agreement which parallels a Trans Pacific Partnership agreement which has similar aims and inclusions to the TTIP will impact on areas such as consumer safety, sustainable agriculture, environmental protection,digital rights,banking, the growth of GM crops, labour rights, privatisation of services such as the NHS, etc.

To find out more on the Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement head over to consettmagazine.com for the full story.

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Just What the Doctor Ordered

by Rob Grinter

We are in a recession, aren't we?

Oh yes we really are. For a minute I thought the last six years had just been a bad dream.

Anyway back in the real world it has been hard enough for many employers to make ends meet during one of the longest economic recessions on record without the government adding more employment legislation.

So what does this supposedly business friendly government do?

You guessed correctly. It imposes even more employment legislation.

From April 2014 an Employment Tribunal will have the power to order an employer who has lost a case to pay a financial penalty to the Secretary of State of between £100 and £5,000. The penalty will be imposed where the employer has breached any of the worker's rights and the breach has one or more aggravating features.

Anyone who has attended an Employment Tribunal will know how complicated and stressful the experience is. It is also true that even if an employer wins the case it costs a lot of time, effort and money just to defend the claim. Now they face additional financial penalties if they lose.

But just to even things up the Government also intends to impose new conditions on employees or ex-employees who intend to lodge a claim with an employment tribunal. From April 2014 before lodging a claim to a Tribunal all claimants will need to notify ACAS first, where conciliation will be offered. If conciliation is unsuccessful within the set period the claimant can proceed to lodge a tribunal claim.

At least this last initiative attempts to settle cases amicably before both parties rush headlong into the abyss. Take my word for it, a Tribunal is not a fun place to be for either party. Conciliation offers both sides a chance to reach agreement in a less confrontational and intimidating setting.

For employers though the stakes just got higher. Make sure you get your act together before you go to Tribunal or it could be very costly. Never mind, as D:Ream sang in 1993 "Things can only get better". Twenty one years later they will, won't they?



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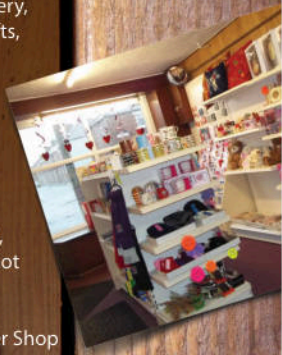
The Paper Shop Leadgate



As of February 1st, The Paper Shop has been through a transformation. Instead of being a traditional Newsagents it has become a card and gift shop, still selling newspapers but also a range of greetings cards, gifts, haberdashery and knitting yarn.



The current owners bought the shop 18 months ago and have been updating the fittings and putting in a new shop window. Now they have been updating the stock and have a large range of different gifts with something for everyone. There are scarves, jewellery, candles, mugs, signs, money boxes, children's crafts, cushions, door stops, teddies, clocks and much more. The knitting yarn is proving to be very successful alongside the haberdashery which was previously unavailable in Leadgate.



The stock is evolving all of the time and if you want a present for someone, a greetings card, some knitting yarn or even a reel of cotton, why not go along and take a look?

Alongside the gifts and craft equipment The Paper Shop also stock some household items like tea, coffee, sugar, kitchen roll, toilet roll, washing up liquid and stationery too. You never know what you may find in their shop! Drop in and have a browse, you will be very welcome.

now a card and gift shop!

Still selling newspapers but also cards, gifts, haberdashery, knitting yarn, jewellery, clocks, stationery, household goods, clocks, children's craft, cross stitch and much much more!

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National Astronomy Week

by Chris Brown

From the 1st to the 8th of March 2014, it's time to celebrate National Astronomy Week and marvel in the stars above us. Eyes will definitely be in the skies as this year's celebration targets the largest planet of them all, Jupiter. This celestial gas giant will be appearing in view at its highest point in the sky for a number of years giving amateur and experienced astronomers the chance to see the planet in its best light.

All over the UK, people will be getting out the telescopes and joining in with the sensational stargazing throughout National Astronomy Week. There are a number of events being held across the UK for avid stargazers to go out, meet one another and get some amazing views of the heavens. Across County Durham there are a number of these events going on in National Astronomy Week.

You can get involved between 7pm and 9pm at any of the following events;
Tuesday 4th March at Hardwick Park, Sedgefield, TS21 2DN
Thursday 6th March at Harehope Quarry near Frosterley, DL13 2SG
Saturday 8th March at Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve, East Rainton, DH4 6PU

Here you can bring your own telescope or use one set up by avid volunteers who have a passion for the stars and beyond.

If you want to get involved but don't know where to start, why not get in touch with the Durham Astronomical Society through their website to find out more.

www.durhamastronomy.org

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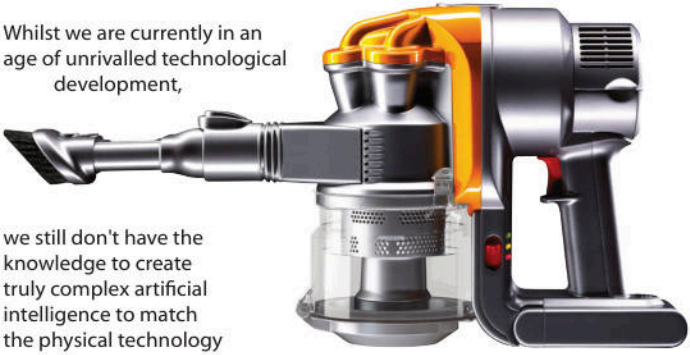
Dyson Domestic Robots in Development

by Chris Brown

Designer of the Dyson cyclone vacuum cleaner Sir James Dyson has recently invested a sum of around £5 million pounds to help develop intelligent domestic cleaning robots to take over the time consuming task of cleaning the family home. Whilst automated vacuum cleaners can be bought, non of the current crop have impressed the famous inventor leading him to embark on a quest to create intelligent cleaning solutions using advanced AI to speed up the process.

Whilst the Roomba is currently one of the most popular automated vacuum cleaners in the world today, there are a number of inherent problems which have lead to lower sales than initially expected. They are expensive, suffer from battery life problems and are sometimes oblivious to obstructions. Dyson are looking to change this with the help of the robotics unit at Imperial College London and their talented students.

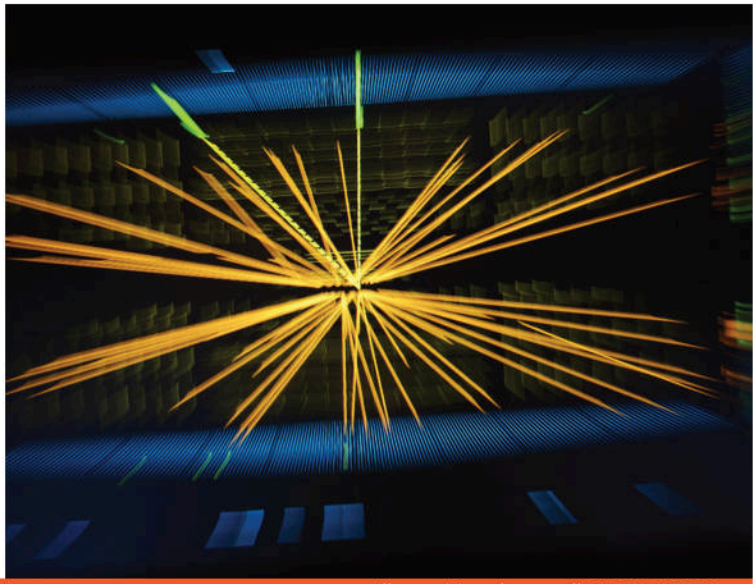
Whilst we are currently in an age of unrivalled technological development,



we still don't have the knowledge to create truly complex artificial intelligence to match the physical technology we have available. This cash injection from Sir Dyson and the technological expertise of the Imperial College London will no doubt be able to take the robotic vacuum cleaner to the next level.

God Particle Course

Over 10,000 people have signed up for a free online course to study the work of Newcastle born Nobel Prize-winning physicist Peter Higgs. The course is being run by the University of Edinburgh where Higgs famously worked on "God particle" theory.



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England's Earliest Artefact

by Chris Brown

Whilst we know a lot about the beginnings of human life on planet Earth, there are still huge gaps in our knowledge to explain the migration of people from the cradle of life in Africa to Europe, Asia and the Americas. Recently, the oldest footprints outside of Africa have been found here in the UK. Happisburgh village in Norfolk is now the home of the oldest human footprints outside of Africa and archaeologists are on the case trying to find more about these ancient impressions.

This is earth shattering news for ancient historians and scientists tracking the origins of man in Europe. These footprints are estimated to be anywhere from 850,000 to 950,000 years old and alongside were tracks from various mammals which were indigenous to the UK. This paints an interesting picture of life in the UK way back before the first ice age.

Now on display at the National History Museum in London, these footprints are the first of their kind to be found in Europe and have big implications for finding out more about life in ancient Britain.

THESE FOOTPRINTS ARE ESTIMATED TO BE ANYWHERE FROM 850,000 TO 950,000 YEARS OLD "

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BUGSY MALONE

Prepare to be SPLURGED!

by Wendy Simmons

React! Youth Theatre are presenting Bugsy Malone at Consett Academy North Campus. This will be the last ever production performed at Consett Academy North Campus as a New Academy is currently being built.

The show will be a true experience and all our young people involved will have an opportunity to develop their own character within the production.

Ian Mordue, Bugsy Malone's Executive Producer said, "We were delighted with the auditions from our entire group and the talent we saw made the casting very difficult. We believe it is important to offer all our group members an opportunity to engage in such an exciting and entertaining show. "

Bugsy Malone will be performed on Tuesday 25th, Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th March 2014 at Consett Academy North Campus each show starts at 7pm doors open at 6.30pm.

Bugsy Malone is based on Alan Parker's fantastic film. Join Fat Sam at the liveliest joint in town as he fights to stop his 'business rival' Dandy Dan from closing his speakeasy down. Enter baby-faced Bugsy Malone, a killer with the ladies and a definite asset to Fat Sam. Unfortunately, Bugsy has also caught the eye of Sam's girlfriend Tallulah – though he's set his designs on the showgirl Blousey Brown. A joy to watch, 1930's style comes to Consett Academy with dance routines and lots of splurge!

Tickets for the performances of Bugsy Malone are priced at £6 each and are available by calling 07852 578622 or in person from Consett Academy North Campus between 3pm and 5.30pm every Sunday.

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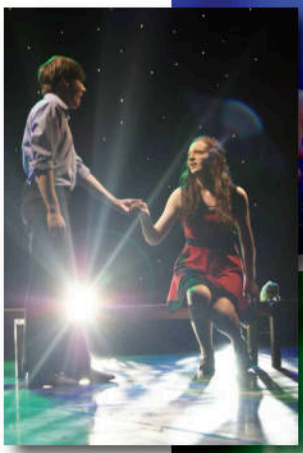
Act On Theatre Group Present Musical Madness

by Chris Brown

On Saturday the 1st of February Consett's very own Empire Theatre played host to the Act On Theatre Group and their top variety show Musical Madness. A packed theatre was treat with a great show of musical prowess from a number of popular musicals which are currently running in the West End of London today. These young performers with the guidance of director Jenn Rogan didn't put a foot wrong throughout this spectacular showing of talent in the local area.







The two act show contained a variety of songs from a number of musicals which have stood the test of time in the West End and delighted audiences the world over. Musical hits from plays such as Miss Saigon, the story of the seedy underground in Vietnam and a girl's journey away from the horrors. Originally visiting the West End in 1989, this play is currently experiencing a revival as of 2014 so made the perfect choice for Musical Madness.

> "THESE YOUNG PERFORMERS WITH THE GUIDANCE OF DIRECTOR JENN ROGAN DIDN'T PUT A FOOT WRONG THROUGHOUT THIS SPECTACULAR SHOWING OF TALENT IN THE LOCAL AREA."

It wasn't all serious as the audience sang along to the famous words of Hakuna Matata from the Lion King amongst many other upbeat numbers. This feel good classic was a great choice alongside numbers from Moulin Rouge and other darker and mature numbers.

Overall, the Act On Theatre Group once again showed the people of Consett what they were capable of in this entertaining variety show showcasing the best of the West End. Be prepared as the Act on Theatre Group are currently in the process of preparing their big Summer musical, Phantom of the Opera.

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by Bethany Cunningham

Running the Sport Relief Mile

Yet again, County Durham will be hosting one of the biggest fund raising schemes in the UK. The Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile will take place all across the UK on Sunday 23 March. This year Durham County Council is organising the event at Barnard Castle and they are trying to encourage as many people as possible to take part and give their support. Participants can dress in whatever feels comfortable - fancy dress is also an option.

There are three stages in the mile so participants have a choice of completing, one, three or six miles. This challenge is suitable for all from families (of 4, 2 adults, 2 children - under 16) to small children, so you don't have to be a sporty person to run the mile. It's fun and at the same time it's helping transform people's lives, so you don't have to necessarily run, you could hop, skip or even jump the mile, it is entirely up to you how you complete it.

To give people time to complete the challenge, those who are running six miles will start at 10am, whereas those who are running one or three miles will start their mile at 10:30am, at Teesdale School, Barnard Castle. To make your mile count, you will need a good number of sponsors to help you raise as much money as possible to help change lives of people poverty-stricken in the UK and around the world.

To take part in the event go to the Sports Relief website and enter yourself by following the simple steps - www.sportrelief.com.

England Coaching Role for Paul Collingwood

by Rob Grinter

It is always good to see a local lad do well in any sport. When it's a Shotley Bridge lad it's even better. Paul Collingwood has just about done it all when it comes to lifting trophies as a player. Now he has been recognised for his outstanding leadership and motivational qualities and has been drafted into the England coaching setup for the forthcoming tour to the Caribbean and the ICC World Twenty20 in Bangladesh.

He brings with him a wealth of experience having played in 68 Test matches, 197 One Day Internationals and 35 Twenty20 Internationals. Paul has lifted the Ashes three times and was captain when England won the ICC World Twenty20 in the Caribbean in 2010.

Collingwood led England to ICC Twenty20 glory in 2010. Source: ECB

With Paul as captain Durham County Cricket Club lifted the LV County Championship last year. This was a remarkable achievement with such a young squad and few predicted that Durham would be serious title contenders at the start of the campaign.



All enquiries please call: 01207 438292



by Malcolm Clarke

Bright Times Ahead for Consett Ladies AFC

The popularity of women's football is growing with increasing amounts of national media coverage of results, transfers and news. Locally, women's football is very much alive and well in Consett with the Consett Ladies AFC team playing competitively in the Durham FA Women's League Division 1, led by coach and local resident, Phillip Dodd. The team was founded in 2007 and play their home matches at Belle View Stadium. They are very proud to be sponsored by local Chartered Accountancy firm Rona Kerr Accountants.

To strengthen their squad for the upcoming 2014/2015 season, any woman footballer aged 16 or above who wishes to get involved is encouraged to come along to their training sessions and no matter what your current level is, you will be guaranteed a warm welcome. You will also receive all the help and coaching you need to improve. The squad trains every Thursday between 8pm and 9pm.

For those of you who would prefer to cheer the team on from the sidelines, any support on match days is greatly appreciated. Matches are played on Sundays, with kick off usually at 2pm in the afternoon. So far this season Consett Ladies have played twelve league matches and they are currently sitting in seventh position out of eight teams, with a record of two wins, two draws and eight defeats.

Despite their mixed start to the season, Coach Phillip Dodd is confident that brighter times are ahead for Consett Ladies AFC.

He said:

"The brand new state of the art facilities are exceptional. We recently welcomed a few new additions to the squad as well as a new level 2 coach and I'm sure with the mix of talent we have, mixed with some quality coaching and these facilities, the sky is the limit for this team going forward."

You can follow Consett Ladies AFC by searching for them on Facebook and following their Twitter account @ConsettLAFC. For further information, or if you have any questions, email Consettladies@hotmail.co.uk



"TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SQUAD FOR THE UPCOMING 2014/2015 SEASON, ANY WOMAN FOOTBALLER AGED 16 OR ABOVE WHO WISHES TO GET INVOLVED IS ENCOURAGED TO COME ALONG TO THEIR TRAINING SESSIONS"

Europe's Best Provide a First for the Region's Arena Cross Fans

by Jim Callan

In a first for the region, the Metro Radio Arena was transformed into a massive indoor dirt bike racing track as the spectacular Arena Cross UK Championships took place for the first time in the north east.

The Garmin Arena Cross Tour arrived on Tyneside with the task of transporting and installing 10,000 tons of dirt for a single three-hour show featuring twenty-four international pro-riders, 48 youth racers and five freestyle motorcross heroes from ten different countries.

Having already visited Belfast for rounds one and two, and Birmingham and Liverpool for rounds three and four respectively, the tour touched down for a highly competitive and exciting fifth round. And, of course, bought with it the logistics involved in transporting the unique track.

Best described as a hand crafted BMX track on steroids, boasting a killer mix of family-friendly, all-action indoor dirt bike racing and gravity-defying Freestyle Motocross set to a pumping soundtrack, lights and laser show.

The show also takes the most spectacular elements of outdoor motocross racing, boils them down into a concentrated cocktail and then shoehorns them into arenas on purpose-built dirt tracks that take 24 hours to build using tractors, rollers and diggers.

Riders hit purpose-built ramps and then attempt to out-do each other as they whip and back-flip 100kg motorcycles in a jaw-dropping display of aerial gymnastics. Including, Freestyle Motocross, which took place 40 feet above the track.

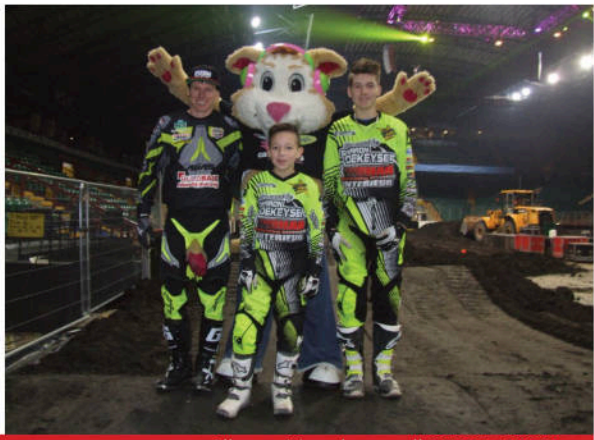
Round five provided local interest in the forms of multiple British Champion, 32 year old North Eastern pro rider Brad Anderson from Tow Law in Durham.

He was joined by Wallsend based rising star, 10 year old Buster Hart and his brother, Joele Hart, all of whom provided the local interest and received strong home support as they raced in front of their families, friends and supporters.

The event featured a number of categories ranging from the Junior 65cc and other youth sections, to the professional riders. With each rider qualifying via four scheduled heats that saw every rider racing against one another with the top ten point scoring riders transferring to the main event.

There were also head to head races, knockout events and a Promoter's Choice which was decided at the discretion of e22 Sports.

This is an event not only for fans of the sport, but has a wider appeal to those who enjoy thrills and spills and, perhaps, the bit of danger and excitement.



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Consett AFC - March Fixtures

by Chris Brown

March is set to be a great month for league football at the new Belle Vue Stadium at Crookhall. 3 league matches are scheduled throughout March and will no doubt be fantastic viewing for all of the local fans out to support the Steelmen.

On the Saturday 8th of March Consett square up to Newton Aycliffe for the second time this season after managing a 1-1 draw in the away fixture this season. Consett are currently 8 points ahead of Newton Aycliffe in the Ebac Northern League One so this should be a close match for both sides.

The next match at Belle Vue this March is the game against Whitley Bay on the 22nd of the month. The current gap in the league between Consett and Whitley Bay is the same as Newton Aycliffe and once again will be a great match for spectators of both sides.

The final match of March features Team Northumbria coming to Consett. Currently 21st in the league, Consett will be looking to pick up all 3 points as the definite favourites to come out on top. Make sure you don't miss this match on the 29th of March. The last time these two clubs met in the league Consett walked out 5-2 winners with Sullivan picking up a solid hatrick.

Make sure you get along to the Belle Vue Stadium to support your local team this month!

Consett Steelers Netball Club have opened a junior section at Belle Vue Leisure Centre in Consett.



The sessions are aimed at 7-14 year olds and due to popular demand we are looking to run two one hour sessions on Mondays between 4:30pm and 6:30pm.

For anyone interested in joining us please get in touch via our Consett Steelers Facebook page or email us: helenmmac@live.com

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