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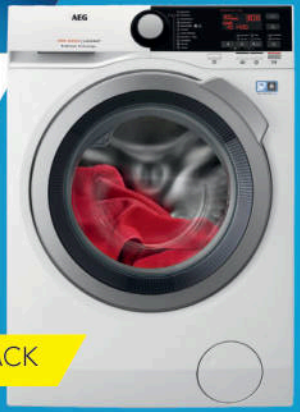

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Welcome

Welcome to the July edition of Consett Magazine!

Thanks for picking up your free July edition, please remember to pass this copy along to your friends and family when you're finished with it.

This month we bring you Lorraine's fashion blunder on a night out in Consett. Take a trip down memory lane on a horse drawn coach with Brian Harrison's history piece on page four. Consider a trip to Dumfries and Galloway on page ten. We follow up with Charlie and her 1st place in the IBFA bodybuilding show. Chunkcast hits the airwaves on page ten.

Got something to shout about this July? Get in touch, email editor@consettmagazine.com to speak to us about your idea for an article in print or online. And remember, we always aim to work with charities to help promote their good causes. So if you are a charity or community group, send your press releases to us and we'll help you to promote it in the Consett and DH8 area.
If you'd like to have your business included in Consett Magazine next month, you can call Barry or Marco on 01207 438 292 or email sales@consettmagazine.com.

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All the best,
Barry Kirkham
Marco Elsy,
and the everyone who contributes to Consett Magazine.

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The Front Cover

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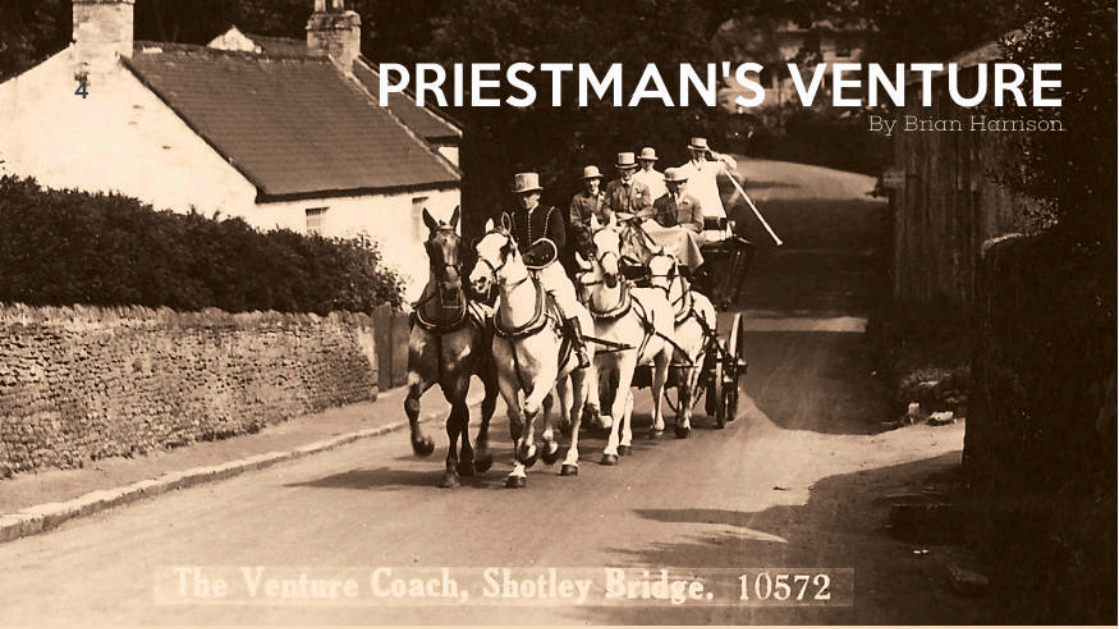
PRIESTMAN'S VENTURE

By Brian Harrison



In the latter years of the 1800's there was a a great revival of the classic Coach and Horses as a mode of transport for the hobbyist, moving away from the railways and getting back to the roads. Mr Lewis Priestman, a colliery owner and savvy businessman, saw a chance to take his love of driving the four horse teams for fun and turning it into a public transport business. He purchased his first Coach which he named Venture in 1891 and began to run a regular service between Shotley Bridge and Newcastle throughout that summer.

Lewis was born 22 Dec 1863 in Shotley Bridge, the son of Jonathan & Lucy Ann Priestman (nee Richardson). The family was quite well-to-do and owned numerous businesses, predominately Collieries. In 1907 Lewis married Miss Frances Willis on 28th November at Shotley Lodge, her place of abode at that time. Lewis himself became director of both the Ashington Coal Co Ltd and also Priestman Collieries Ltd. For the latter he used his long time home, Derwent Lodge, Shotley Bridge for all his correspondence.

It is unclear how long Lewis ran the Newcastle to Shotley Bridge service, but shortly after the first world war he once again took up the reigns and launched a four day service which he ran throughout the summer months. Commuting between Shotley Bridge and Blanchland via High Waskerley, Shotley Field, Unthank, Bullions Farm- Carterway Heads and Edmundbyers which took in the most beautiful scenery. In the later inter-war years the run reduced to only as far as Edmundbyers, the patrons stopping off at the Punch Bowl for afternoon tea.

However, all good things must come to an end and about 1930 the Coach made its last outing under Lewis. But he had now set the scene for what was soon to become one of the biggest independent bus operators in the North East England. His bus company Venture Transport operated numerous services in and around the Derwent Valley and regularly between Consett and Newcastle. The company was officially started just after world war one and lasted till 1 May 1970 when it was sold to the Northern General Transport Company.

Lewis died on 6 August 1945 at his home Derwent Lodge, Shotley Bridge, followed less than a month later on 3 September by his beloved wife Frances. At the time of Lewis' death his estate was worth a staggering £291,517 – 9s – 6d, equivalent to almost £10.7 million in today's money.

Lewis Priestman along with the rest of his family have left a lasting legacy within our area, from street names to lasting family memories and stories. Also some 100 years after Lewis originally named his coach, Go Ahead NE have honoured the man's memory by naming some of their Consett bus services VENTURE.

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HOKEY COKEY

With summer in full swing at the start of the six week holiday, everyone was in a buoyant mood. Those on factory fortnight were packed and ready to go, while others looked forward to lazy weekends in the July sun.

Some of us - restricted to stay at home holidays - anticipated a picnic at Allensford; maybe a trip to South Shields or even just a sit on the wooden benches next to the flower beds at the bottom of the market and bus station.
In the days before mobile phones it was always a favourite afternoon meeting point where folk passed the time of day and got the crack. We usually chatted about the Friday night before and exchanged stories, always hoping to outdo our peers with the best tale.



Television in 1979 was dominated by Charlie's Angels and Dallas.

With everyone wanting the big hair look, the profits in hairstyling products soared, as well as the sale of Carmen heated rollers!

Shoulder pads were just coming into play along with straight figure hugging skirts. A new fashion was emerging and some of my friends embraced it with enthusiasm.

I was perfectly happy going out in my jeans and striped t shirt so didn't really appreciate them projecting their fashion tips in my direction, while expressing their wish to dress me up!



One of my friends invited me to view her new wardrobe and said I was free to choose something 'nice' to wear for our Friday night out in Consett. Knowing nothing was my style I reluctantly let her dress me in a royal blue straight skirt, a long sleeved gold satin top that tied with a big bow and blue suede ankle strap platform shoes. Seeing her look of approval I went along with the charade and hobbled into the Masons Arms for my first drink while adjusting the pale blue silk rose peeping out of my non existent cleavage.

My other friends politely said I looked lovely but could see the look on my face and sniggered into their drinks. As usual we had a great night and unused to restrictive clothing I attempted to enjoy the dance floor in Bottos's. However the shoulder seams on the gold satin top and the little kick pleat in the back of the royal blue skirt were not prepared for the energetic moves and actions needed to dance to 'Ring My Bell' and 'Go West' by The Village People.



True to form at about midnight we were hungry, Forgetting about my borrowed unwalkable footwear I joined in the Hokey Cokey downstairs to the 'Chip Buttie' counter. Inevitably I tumbled and just as I bounced off the bottom step a cheer went up as I hadn't spilt a drop of my drink.

Unfortunately my clothing did not survive the fall as well. Apart from the obvious dirty marks and debris from the floor, the skirt had started to fray and and there were gaping holes under my arms as the sleeves attempted to hold on to a few dangling threads. Regardless there were still two hours till closing time so the dancing continued. As I met my friends the next day swinging a carrier bag of borrowed clothes, I apologised profusely for the damage. Luckily the lender saw the funny side and forgave me.

Needless to say the following Friday I was back in my jeans.

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Places to Go: Dumfries and Galloway

On the way to Glasgow I stopped over one night in Dumfries, a Scottish town which is a suitable day trip from the north-east, or a stopover for a short break. I enjoyed a sunny morning crossing the Tyne Valley line to Carlisle, where the station is undergoing a major roof refurbishment. I joined the slow train to Glasgow which entered Scotland at Gretna Green and arrived in Dumfries in time for lunch. On the recommendation of Fiona Forsythe, Community Rail Officer for the Newcastle to Carlisle line, I went to "The Usual Place", a friendly community café which provides training for people with learning difficulties. There were many fillings for rolls, sandwiches, jacket potatoes and, being in Scotland, I plumped for sugar-free Irn Bru and haggis. But that might be a bit dry, so I opted for brie and cranberry with haggis which raised not an eyebrow and proved very tasty.

After lunch I went for a walk on the disused railway line that used to go to Stranraer (now you have to go up to Kilmarnock and then south), and enjoyed the fine network of footpaths that run through the town. I ended up at the Old Bridge House Museum on the south side of the Devorgilla Bridge, then the Robert Burns Centre and the town museum, all free. The latter includes a Camera Obscura for which there is a charge of £3.20. I climbed to the top of the tower for a demonstration for just three of us and saw Dumfries laid out – in colour of course – on a giant white saucer.

Back to the hotel to check in at the Station Hotel. I asked very nicely if I could get up inside the lantern which tops the building but was politely refused. A shame, since I am sure many people would enjoy the view. But not of the camera obscura, which was obscured by trees. I had to content myself with the view over the station from the third floor, room 43, a pleasant double in the roof eaves. Amazingly I managed never to bump my head.

As it happened I had arrived in the midst of the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival so there was plenty of available entertainment. I was tempted by the ghost walk starting at St. Michael's Church, where the mausoleum of Robbie Burns is. But on a summer night at 19.00 it didn't seem particularly spooky and I went to the film theatre instead. But I could have gone to the Theatre Royal or the single screen Odeon cinema. I was under the impression that there were no one screen Odeons left, and this one shares a building with the Gala bingo which uses the former stalls, and the cinema uses the former circle.

Robert Burns is never far away in Dumfries, and I even discovered a volume of his English verses which are easier on the southern ear. The house where he died in 1796 at the age of 37 is still standing and can be visited, also for free. This simple red sandstone house gives a fascinating view of how the poet and his family lived and is now a place of pilgrimage for Burns enthusiasts from around the world.

Dumfries town centre is mostly pedestrianised and easy to walk around. The river occasionally bursts its banks and the buses have to move stops above the flood plain, but the railway line is on higher ground and a reliable way to reach this interesting town.

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OIL, BRONZE AND GOLD

Last month we reported on the inspirational story of Charlie, a single mum from Consett with a mission to loose weight and gain confidence. On the 27th of May Charlie took to the stage at the IBFA bodybuilding show and placed 1st in the 1st timers category and 3rd in toned figure, she also qualified to take part in the British finals to be held at the end of June 2017!
Here is what Charlie had to say "I'm heading home with not only 2 trophies for my hard work and determination but also a real sense of just how lucky I am to be surrounded by so many amazingly supportive people. There's so many people I want to thank for being so great the last few months,Aesthetics Matthew Bowd for coaching me and dealing with my endless questions and panics. Gary for just generally putting up with me while being on prep nd always being on my team. All of team cutting up for their endless support. Dawn, Gillian and Tracy-Ann for being amazing gym buddies and pushing me when I needed it. My parents, brothers and mostly my son Kaidyn for being so supportive of my dream to do this and how restrictive it made our lives at times. Faye for helping to prep me and make me pretty. Kelley for my lush tan, Kelli for being my pr person and helping me to find the words when needed and also everyone of you who has liked my posts or sent a message and generally encouraged me."

CONNY

A month long contemporary art festival will be happening in Consett this July. Based at the YMCA 'Conny' will be made up of an exciting month-long programme of exhibitions, events, workshops and film screenings. The project aims to provide a platform for local talent while inviting artists from all over the UK to exhibit.

Organisers of the festival are Elaine Robertson, 21 from Consett and Ellen Ranson, 21 from Tow law. They are both art students in the middle of their courses however this is the first time either of them have curated such a large project. They hope the festival will encourage an 'intergenerational conversation about Consett's and wider North East's identity, putting emphasis on the present and future, as well as celebrating and remembering the past'.

They also want there to be an emphasis on the importance of 'creative space' and 'hope the festival will inspire young people to take their creativity seriously'. Conny will be the first time for some young artists have exhibited allowing them to really see the potential of their work and what they are capable of!

Keep a look out for more information to come on workshops, exhibitions, events and volunteering opportunities.

Unfortunately, submissions have closed however if you would like to know more or get involved email the team, or follow the festival on social media.

connyartfestival@gmail.com



Durham County Council flew the flag for The Armed Forces.

The Armed Forces Day flag was raised at County Hall, in Durham, for Armed Forces Day that took place on Saturday, 24 June and Reserves Day on Wednesday, 21 June. Representatives from the armed forces, along with Durham County Council employees who are members of the reserve forces, also attended a reception with Cllr Bill Kellett, Chairman of Durham County Council. Cllr Lucy Hovvels MBE, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for adult and health services and the authority's Veterans Champion, said: "I am delighted that we are showing support for our armed forces community, serving personnel and their families, as well as recognising the essential role played by members of the reserve forces.

"Balancing full-time employment with a military career is no mean feat. We salute our employees who do this as they bring valuable skills, such as leadership and team building back into the workplace."

In November 2015, the council received the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award in acknowledgement of its work to support the armed forces community. The council also has a Reserves Forces Policy and offers up to 10 days of paid leave to enable employees who are reservists to attend their annual training camp.

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By Christina Stubbins
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Prevention is by far the best way when it comes to fly strike so ensure you check your rabbit (especially their rear end) at least twice a day, change their bedding at least once a week (or when soiled), use a product like Rearguard to prevent fly eggs hatching and see your vet if you have concerns about any of the problems listed above. If you see maggots on any animal you should seek immediate veterinary attention.

http://princebishopvets.co.uk/client-advice/



Consett's New Community Radio Show

Hi Everyone!! My name is Paul Owen Hunter (a.k.a. "Chunky"), I am the Producer and Host of the Chunkcast 54.8 Podcast.

"THE PODCAST IS ALL ABOUT CONSETT."

If you listen to the podcast / radio show I will introduce you to the most interesting and amazing people who live in our town. I want to discuss everything from the wonderful charity work happening locally to the inspiring spirit in our community.

I know many of you are incredibly busy with work, personal life and spending time with family and friends, but given this great opportunity, I would love to invite interesting local people like you to come on the podcast and share your thoughts with the community.

If you generously donate your time to a charity, we'd especially like to hear from you. So, I'd like to initiate thoughtful debate and conversation about issues and topics in Consett and surrounding area.

We'll be doing shout outs, announcements, birthdays, anniversaries, and any special mentions of remarkable members and event happening in our community.

We all have a voice, and the podcast allows everyone to state their opinions and personal preferences on topics and current affairs in a controlled manner. We hope the show will be available and enjoyed by everyone.

"...think of it as Consett's very own community radio show."

I hope you like this idea as much as I do. I urge you to get in touch if you'd like to discuss a certain topic on the show. I'd love to hear from you and discuss whatever it is that you have an opinion on.

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Thanks Everyone.
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