CONSETT MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2019

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Welcome

Dear Consett Magazine readers,

Tis' the season to enjoy time with friends and family, forget the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping and relax with your copy of the Consett Christmas Magazine in your hands.

I hope you'll have a nice break from working, going to school, and everyday life during this festive season. What are you having for Christmas dinner? Will you be enjoying it at home or at a friends or family home?

Being the last month of the year and indeed the final month of the decade, I think it's important to make the most of this time of year to reflect on all the good (and bad) things that have happened over the last 12 months and even over the last decade. What can you improve on? What would like to do or achieve over the next decade? Where will you be in 10 years time?

It is Consett Magazine's aim to continue providing all the positive content we've been publishing for over the last 8 years - but to also continue to evolve and publish even more interesting stories, helpful information and educational content to the good people of DH8.

If you have any good ideas for stories, have an amazing image to share, or would simply like to provide feedback on how Consett Magazine can further improve then we would really love to hear from you. We <3 Consett.

We hope you'll have a very merry Christmas, from all of the people and businesses who make this free magazine possible each and every month in print and (almost daily) online at consettmagazine.com

Warmest regards,

Barry Kirkham
& Marco Elsy

Fun Christmas Fact:
Most of Santa's reindeer have male-sounding names, such as Blitzen, Comet, and Cupid. However, male reindeer shed their antlers around Christmas, so the reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh are most likely not male, but female or castrated.

Contributors

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The Front Cover

The front cover this month is an illustration by John Bagnall - send any drawings or photographs to:
editor@consettmagazine.com

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Get your story, photograph, or adverts to us by the 15th December 2019!

Call 01207 438 292 or email
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A THAW AT CONSETT

By Sarah Harrison



The winter of 1866 came thick and fast, starting to set in the mid November with icy winds and snow flurries. The hardy people of the area got on with their daily lives, keeping warm and secure in the reasonably newly constructed houses supplied by the Consett Iron Company Ltd(CIC Ltd) and their predecessors . It had been 2 years since they had stepped up and purchased the failing Iron Works, which had been in receivership since 1857. Initially a number of shareholders had formed the Derwent & Consett Iron Company but unfortunately they simply couldn't complete the purchase. Some two years later saw the works back up for sale and the formation of the CIC Ltd with a capital of £40,000 in £10 shares stepped up and took the reigns. They officially launched the Company in 1864 and the rest is history. 1866 had been an important year in Consett's history, the CIC Ltd purchased the Shotley Bridge Iron Works (comprising 3 plate mills and 1 puddling mill) along with the old Tin Mill and Blackhill Colliery from J B Richardson and Company. This had made Consett Iron Company the biggest of its kind in the Country. It was also they year that Consett Christ Church was opened.

However, the CIC and the area was to see one of the worst winters on record which would bring the works to a close. From the 31 December hoar frosts and steadily heavier snowfall were being reported daily with only few hours break between. This lasted for 23 days without a break, bringing the area to a stand still. The wind was harsh throughout causing drifting across roads and the train tracks cutting off access to the area. Men came out daily to try and clear what they could but to no avail. The furnaces of the works fell silent only the sounds of the storms could be heard. An eerie reminder of the power of nature on this hill we call home. Carts and wagons were abandoned in the snow. Travelling of any kind become hard work and at times impossible. The roads and hedgerows at Pontop and High Stables were completely covered in drifts well over 12 feet.

In the final days of January gangs of steel men and miners had been requested by the CIC to help clear roads and train tracks to try and get things running again, the snow had stopped a few days earlier but its aftermath was still quite apparent. They worked against the freezing chill and high winds day after day. By the 27th January the trains which should have been arriving at Carr House Station at 6am were arriving nearer 4pm in the afternoon. Not the best but at least some success was had. However on 29th January the winds changed round to a South-Westerly direction bringing with it a major thaw. After a full month of being cut off from the outside things started to return to normal.

The papers of the day recorded the events and the older generations at that time spoke of how that was the weather they had experienced in their winters. Comments which take me back to the winter of 1979 when I was a young child, diving off roofs into snow drifts, making igloo's and for me most importantly, the days off school. We may all be separated over time but the same experiences have, it seems, been felt by each generation.

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YOUR BUSINESS COULD BE ENTITLED TO UP TO £3,200 BUT NOT FOR LONG!

The North East Business Support Fund (NEBSF) is giving EU money away to small and medium-sized Consett businesses, but this must end in 2020.

Firefly New Media UK has partnered with NEBSF to help ensure you **get your money.** Your business can claim back 40% (up to **£3,200**) on a range of business developments that cost between £2,500 and £8,000.

Funding is provided through NBSL by the European Regional Development Fund 2014-20. It doesn't matter what happens with Brexit: this fund will end in 2020.

Firefly New Media UK is waiting to help you claim your cash back for website design and development services, as well as marketing, so give us a call on **0191 394 1266**, or **01207 438 292**, or visit the NBSL website: **nbsl.org.uk**

Is your business eligible for funding?

You must employ under 250 people, and turnover less than 50 million Euros.

You must be based in County Durham for the 40% back grant*, i.e. you pay your business rates there, or your council tax if you work from home.

You must not start the development project until you have your signed contract pack from NEBSF.

What type of projects can be funded?

Firefly New Media UK has partnered with the **NEBSF** for our website design and development services, as well as marketing projects of all kinds.

If you have something else in mind, get in touch with the fund directly about other providers for different development projects.

How do you get started?

First, if you have any kind of website design/development or marketing drive in mind for your business, give us a call on **0191 394 1266** or **01207 438 292**.

Alternatively, read more and fill out a simple online application to find out if you qualify here: **nbsl.org.uk**

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* (A similar fund is available for some neighbouring areas.)

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HOW TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TIME

Every business owners wants to grow their business, and if a business can be grown with the least amount of effort, the better.

Time is what all of us lack. So, how much time do you have to spend on increasing your business profit? Well, if you're like me, there are simple not enough hours in the day to get everything you'd like to get done, done!

There is a solution.

This solution was given to me as advice from a highly respected local businessman who made their fortune using this very piece of advice that I am about to divulge to you.

TOP TIP:
Find the very best people, to do what they do best. Don't try to learn and do everything on your own, it's a waste of time. Find the best, use the best, be the best.

This seems simple, but let's stop to think about this for a moment. Don't expect your assistant or employee to do your accounting as well as the best accountant in town. It's simple common sense that by using the best accountant in town, you'll get far better results.

And this is just a basic example.

For me finding the very best website developers and mobile app developers was the breakthrough in my business that allows me to focus on the aspects of the business which I am good at, while leaving the web development work to the people who are not just good at it, but complete professionals in their art. They get a website or mobile application up and running in far less time than it would take me to, they do it with such grace that their code is clean and beautifully well written. Why would I waste my time doing EVERYTHING myself?!

1 . Find the best people to do the task you're trying to do.

2. Give them the opportunity to complete the task.

3. Pay their rate. See excellent results.

4. Get more done, and grow your business - even if you don't have the time.

Call 01207 438292 to book your free consultation with Firefly New Media

YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET



1974, like many others, was a year to remember. The Miners strike dominated the news and there was a three day week. Television stopped broadcasting early to save electricity, and we endured power cuts. Yet, as we all know ordinary people have a way of just getting on with life, doing the things they have to do to survive and enjoying what they can. And their resilience always shines through.

Working Men's Clubs have always been a prominent feature of the north east and Consett sported a few of their own. They provided - and still do - a comfortable environment - the heating is always cranked up - with entertainment, cheap drinks, bingo and a place where community flourishes.

I recall the virtual Wheeltappers and Shunters Club being a popular television programme at the time. Although our clubs in Consett weren't exactly like that, there were certain similarities! I remember on my very first visit looking at hand written notices on the board next to the signing in table all finishing with - By Order of the Committee!

Some of my friends worked behind the bar and talked about serving pints of half and half. When I asked what is was, they replied, half of Best and half of Ordinary! Unless you are are a beer drinker you wouldn't be any the wiser.

I was amused that the raffle tickets I bought were for a big tray of meat, and a fish man with a white overall and a big rectangular basket was selling little pots of mussels and seafood before the bingo started. The seating arrangements were also interesting, rectangular tables pushed together in long lines with men sitting down one side, and all the women opposite down the other!

However luckily for us, the majority of members were



happy to sign us in when there was a band on in the big room. At the end of a working week going out and socialising was paramount. In a different time and culture, supermarket shelves weren't stocked with a variety of alcoholic drinks or takeaway meal deals, so folks met each other outside the home to make their own fun.

The pubs and cinemas provided social activities but it was the local clubs that raked in the crowds, especially at the weekend when local entertainers learnt their trade. There was always a 'turn' on, either a singer or comedian. And a variety of live bands doing the circuit. Once the posters went up or we had a browse through the Evening Chronicle's 'Around The Clubs', plans were made.

A few of my friends had tickets to see Hawkwind at Newcastle City Hall. I'd declined this opportunity - mainly because of lack of funds - and I only knew one of their songs!

Still there was plenty to do in Consett, with Blackhill Club, The Trades and Castleside Club advertising bands on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. So with three nights out on the cards I didn't feel I was missing out. And I wasn't, after an amazing Friday night in Botto's, I was queuing up again on the Saturday when the people behind me were talking about how brilliant Hawkwind were. They planned on requesting 'Silver Machine' - which was the only song I knew - when they got inside, as well as asking the DJ to make a memorable announcement.

Curious, my friends and I headed for the dance floor for our weekend fix of music. Just after 'Gonna Make You A Star' by David Essex and before Bachman Turner Overdrive's 'You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet', the DJ announced he had a groundbreaking proclamation.

With a wink he began, 'Nobody will be lonely this Christmas, as Mud are rocketing up the charts with their hit single, and for the first time this year, Richie Bartle has actually got a round in

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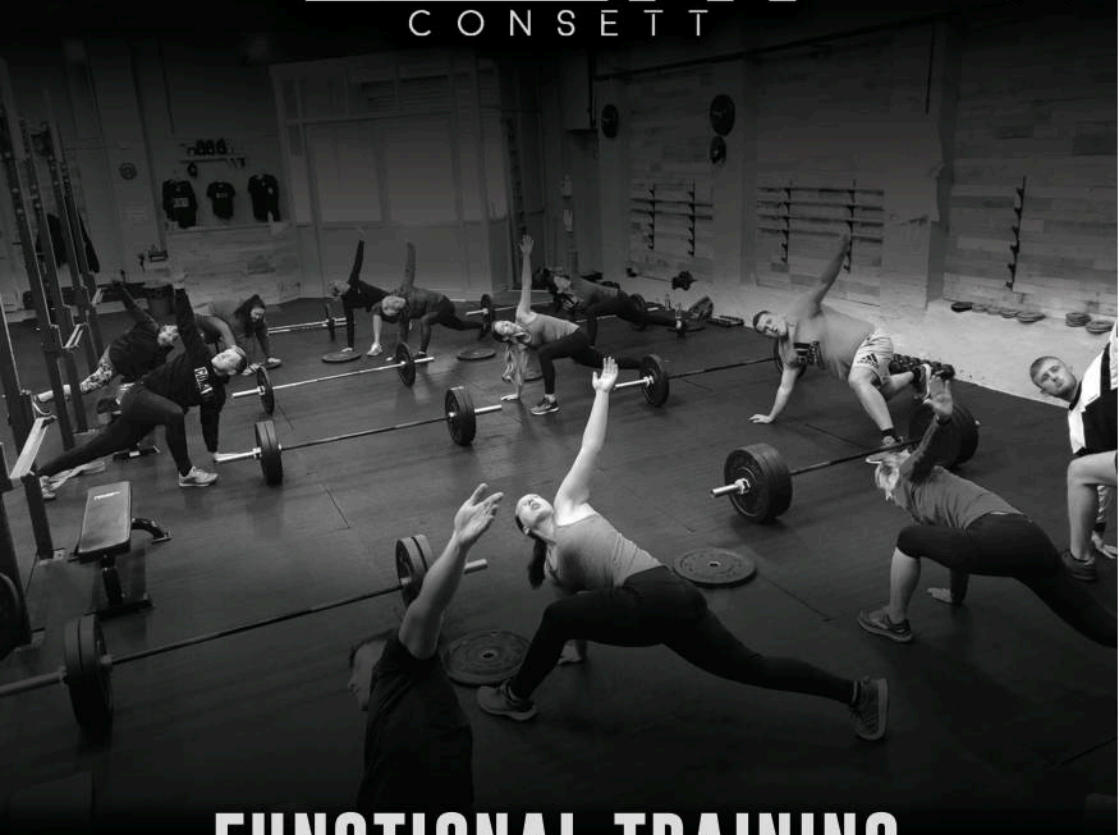

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Places to Go: ROTHERHITHE

On 6th November, a select band of rail professionals and interested members of the public gathered in the shaft of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's tunnel under the Thames, the oldest structure on the oldest Underground network in the world, and the first tunnel under a river ever constructed by man. The occasion was the launch of the new National Rail map, and it took place in Rotherhithe, a mile down the river from Tower Bridge, and it took place there for a special reason. The map this year features the voyage 400 years ago of the Mayflower ship from Rotherhithe via Southampton, Dartmouth and Plymouth to the new world and a port now known as Plymouth in Massachusetts.

The Mayflower is commemorated in the name of a pub on the riverside, on the south side of the Thames, where many of the Pilgrims boarded the ship of Captain Jones for the historic voyage. They used to be known as the Pilgrim Fathers, but there were women and children too so they are now known as Pilgrims. The pub was known as the Spread Eagle in those days – indeed it would be most odd if it had been of the same name as the ship. But today it is one of the attractive riverside pubs from which activity on the river can be observed, and was an excellent spot for some networking after the launch.

Brunel's tunnel was originally opened in 1843 after many years of delay, for the passage of pedestrians and goods on carts, but was converted to became a railway tunnel in 1869, only six years after the first underground railway (Paddington to Farringdon) opened in 1863. It was for many years the fag-end of the Metropolitan line, known as the East London Section, and trains just ran from Shoreditch and Whitechapel in the north to New Cross or New Cross Gate to the south. In recent years, the stations on this line have undergone a renaissance and form part of the Overground orbital line around London.

The new National Rail map is an ideal Christmas gift for a rail enthusiast or regular traveller, and whilst it describes 2,700 stations on land in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the story of the Mayflower and her ill-fated sister ship the Speedwell is told on the sea.

Speedwell started its journey in the Netherlands at Leiden, but only Mayflower ended up in Massachusetts where the Plymouth Settlement was founded in 1620. It's a great educational tool for young people wanting to find out more about their home country. Today, the Mayflower pub in Rotherhithe is still licensed to sell US postage stamps for mariners and visitors, and proudly flies the star spangled banner over the Thames. There is a Thameside riverside path up and down the river, but the easiest way to get there is on the Overground. From King's Cross use the Hammersmith and City line and change at Whitechapel.

The map is available as a coated paper poster, and the size is 100cm deep by 63 mm side. It retails, as last year, at £10 a copy, and up to five copies can be placed in a postage tube for sending all over the country, indeed all over the world. Postage costs £5.80. plus £2 for a sturdy tube to send them in. There is a website at railmap.org.uk to order maps on line, or send a cheque for £17.80 for a single map including P+P made payable to National Rail Bishop Auckland Ltd at 32, Front Street, Pelton, Chester-le-Street DH2 1LX.



Willow Burn
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Shop Local This Christmas and Support Your Local Hospice.

Why Christmas shopping in charity shops is the gift that keeps on giving.

This Christmas, support your local high street charity shop and make a difference to the lives of people in Derwentside.

There are many reasons for supporting your local hospice charity shop, apart from the difference that every single purchase makes to your community, it could also help you and your family at an expensive time of year. The Willow Burn Hospice shops are full of treasures, including nearly new dresses, perfect for your Christmas party needs, Secret Santa gifts and stocking fillers. You can even stock up on your Christmas cards! All of this under one roof and at reasonable prices.

By supporting a Willow Burn charity shop you are changing lives in your local community. Every penny that is made in the shops in Consett, Stanley and Chester-le-Street goes to support the vital end of life care provided by the team at the hospice.

The Christmas Gift Challenge

This year, why not set yourself and your family, friends or work colleagues a Christmas challenge to buy all of your gifts to one another from a Willow Burn Hospice Shop. This is not only a great way to save money, especially if you have a big family, but it can be lots of fun too! The Willow Burn Hospice charity shops have a huge range of high quality items including clothes, homeware, games, DVDs, books and so much more.

Find your local shop

Your nearest Willow Burn Charity Shop is located on John Street, next door to Consett Carpet Centre. Parking is available outside the shop.

For further information about how you can support Willow Burn Charity Shop Consett, please call Tracy on: **01207 506603**

willow-burn.co.uk/shops/

CONSETT POOL LEAGUE

In the Consett Pool league, after 8 games, the Demi A are still top of the third division, with a healthy 11 point advantage. Rob Tyson and Ronnie Nesbitt of Finnians E in second place, leading the division 3 individual rankings. In Division 2, we see Finnians D leading the way by a single point, with the Kings Head, Black Horse, and Station Club close behind, with only 4 points separating the top 4 teams.

Experienced player Ronnie Moran leading the Division 2 individual rankings. In Division 1, again its tight at the top with only 5 points separating the top 4 teams.

Blackhill Club leading the way, followed by the Phoenix, Finnians B and Finnians A. The quarter finals of the knockout cup has been drawn:

Station Club v Finnians B

Barn A v Leadgate Club

Blackhill Club v Golden Lion B

Fountain B v Phoenix.

All games to be played on December 18th.

Consett Pool League are holding a Christmas knockout at Finnians, Consett on 22nd December.

£10 gets you into a singles, a random scotch doubles and a 1 frame knockout competition.

Money will be raised for our charity of the season Derwentside Mind. Competition starts at 12pm with doors opening at 11am. It's the last opportunity for all players to get together and have a drink.

You can keep up to date with all the scores at **cwnpl.leaguerepublic.com** or for any information about the league, email: **consettpool@gmail.com**

Cameo
Family History

The guide to researching your family history.

Part 12 – Trade Directories

Today we are used to being able to locate goods and services through a variety of means: local newspapers, publications such as Consett Magazine, and the Internet. Those of us who are somewhat older will remember Yellow Pages and the like. However, such sources of information are nothing new and before the advent of the above, local trade directories were a common resource for local people and services.

These were published in book form as commercial enterprises by a number of publishers. Businesses had to pay to appear – which means that these records are not complete. Nevertheless, they provide an excellent source of information on your ancestors and the environment in which they lived.

If your ancestor was in business, you can follow their listing over time to see how long it lasted and how it evolved. You can also trace how certain businesses and premises changed hands.

Typically, a directory entry for a town will include a brief description of the place, followed by details of local facilities such as churches, schools, postal and carrier services. There can then be a list of private residents. There will also be a list of trades and businesses each giving names and addresses for people in those trades.

Trade directories typically date from around the end of the 18th century, starting with the major cities and then extending coverage to the wider area.

An excellent collection of historical directories is available online via the University of Leicester Special Collections website (free). Most main libraries and county archives also have a good collection of local trade directories in their local studies collections.

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By Christina Groves
Prince Bishop Veterinary Hospital

Encouraging Your Cat to Exercise

Cats are designed to be active in short bursts so incorporating playtime into their normal daily routine is a really great way to keep your cat fit and healthy, or encourage them to lose weight if they are overweight (a common problem in adult, indoor cats).

Most cats love toys they can chase, hit and pounce on and this can be done on even the smallest budget with a rolled up piece of paper, or a toy attached to a piece of string which you can drag across the floor. Scratching posts, cat towers, cardboard boxes and tunnels to run through will also keep your cat active, toned and prevent boredom setting in. Providing scratching equipment means your cat will also be less likely to damage your furniture and carpets, as well as keeping their nails a healthy length.

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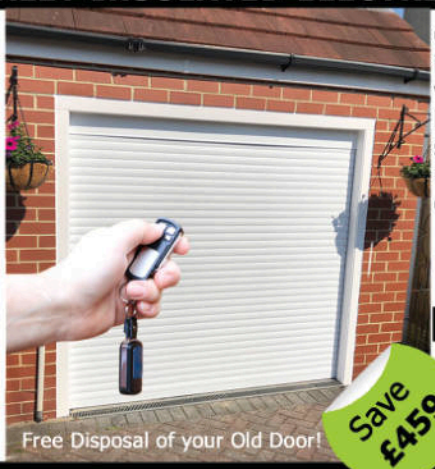

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