

CONSETT MAGAZINE

Issue 110 Jan 2022

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Thank you for picking up this year's first Consett Magazine of 2022.

We're certain you'll be up to date with all the latest positive local news from our awesome time by the time you finish reading this edition. So, let's take a look at what's inside:

On page four, we caught up with the "Consett in Focus" documentary photography group who have presented their work from Consett and surrounding areas with a series of unique human photography. A special thanks goes out to everyone involved and the fantastic photographers George Ledger, Steve Webb, Chris Bruce and Debbie Todd. Turning to page six, Lorraine Weightman reminisces about times gone by over the festive season, we wonder if you still can remember your own School's Nativity Play? Leaping forward to page eleven, we cover the Consett RAF Veterans who are raising money to help veterans to have a happier retirement.

If you're looking for somewhere close to home to visit in early 2022, then check out our "Places to Go" piece on page twelve as we visit York, a place where there is never a shortage of things to do. On page thirteen, we cover local MP Richard Holden on his bid to reopen the rail connection between Consett and Newcastle upon Tyne. And for those of you interested in local history, the back inside cover (page fifteen) contains a historic look at the Consett Park Bowling Club submitted by John Haney, can you believe we're close to 100 years of Consett Park Bowls?

In 2022, we'd love to hear from more local people about the things that are most important to them in the local community. If you'd be interested in becoming a writer, blogger, photographer, or video producer with Consett Magazine then please contact us via email or phone. We have some exciting opportunities to get your story heard in DH8, both online and in print.

We wish everyone the very best for 2022, let's hope you will have the most positive year ever.

Warmest regards, Barry Kirkham, Marco Elsy, and the entire Consett Magazine team!

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SCAN ME

The Front Cover

The front cover this month is by Durham Drone. Send your drawings or photographs to: editor@consettmagazine.com

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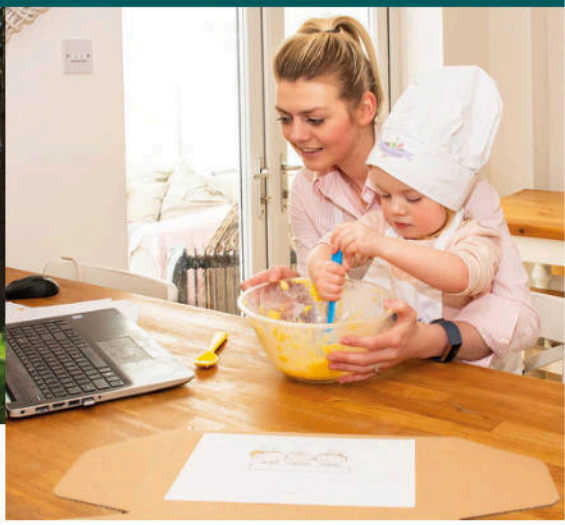
‘Consett in Focus’ Documentary Photography Group

This month we are highlighting images from the Corona Project that show Culture, plus the first image of the new project:



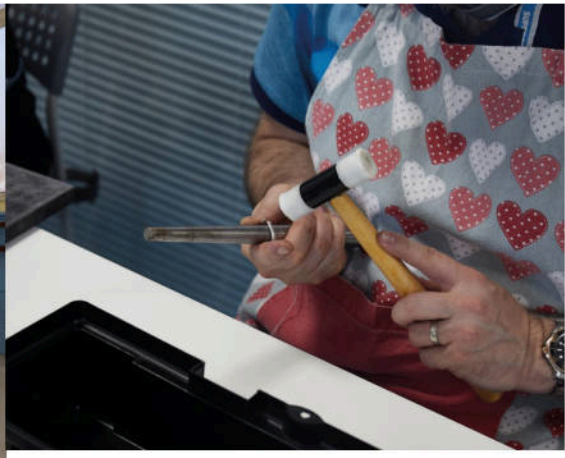
01 - The Biking Vikings (NE) - is a group of motorcycle riding, stilt walking, pipe and drum playing Vikings who raise funds for Brain Tumour Research. Each year they would normally perform at County Shows and other venues and raise much needed money for Brain Tumour Research charity. During the pandemic none of the events has been able to go ahead but they have still entertained various local Care Homes and managed to raise some money by making and selling Viking themed cards, crafts, models and even jewellery. Currently the same group are performing at various events and locations around our area but this time dressed as Santa’s – Do not miss them! - (Image: George Ledger)



02 - Creative Kitchen - Many people were furloughed or had to work from home during the pandemic. Jemma decided to change career and had to adapt to the changing restrictions and set up ‘Creative Kitchen’. She taught home baking to children online at first, but returned to the classroom when permitted. (Image: Steve Webb)



03 - Dance Classes – Studios such as The Pauline Cook School of Dancing in Consett, only managed to open their doors for short periods between lockdowns. However being ever resourceful, they have maintained some teaching for their dancers via Live Zoom lessons. The photograph shows Jack in the studio teaching one lesson via Zoom. (Image: George Ledger)



04 - Jewellery Making Classes – Ros opened her doors following Stage 3 of the Governments Roadmap of recovery in May 2021. This was the first time she could welcome customers to her silvery jewellery workshop which she runs at No 1 Indutrail Estate, Consett. Her premises are covid secure and PPE is provided, along with locally home baked cakes. (Image: Debbie Todd)

'Consett Corona Photo Project' which started in March 2020 at the start of the First National Lockdown. Now as it, hopefully, reaches its conclusion, they are starting out on a new Project documenting Culture and Hobbies in the Consett area. You can still view the original projects photographs at: facebook.com/ConsettCoronaPhotoProject



05 - Crafting Club – Many Church Halls and Community Centres run craft clubs, St John's at Snods Edge is no different. The ladies have even used their crafting skills to good use to making a Corona-19 Commemorative quilt which is on display in the church. (Image: Chris Bruce)



06 - Music Lessons – Ian, of Consett Music Tuition, had continued to tutor his pupils during the pandemic via 'zoom' but the normal interaction had obviously not been the same. He was certainly looking forward to welcoming back pupils to his studio in April 2021 when we photographed him. (Image: Steve Webb)



07 - Pebble Painting – Early on during the first Lockdown, Pebble painting became a popular activity to keep a smile on everyone's face. Helen is a highly creative person who painted and hid stones in her neighbourhood for people to find. (Image: George Ledger)



08 - Pantomime – Is there a better way to put a smile on your face than see a Pantomime? The CBS Theatre Group have been 'treading the boards' for over 80 years and this January will be putting on Aladdin at Consett Empire (10th - 15th at 7.15pm, with a matinee on Saturday 15th at 2.15pm). The photo shows some of the cast during rehearsals at Blackhilll club. (Image: George Ledger)

Shining Star - By Lorraine Weightman

One of my many recollections of teaching in a local primary school is the annual Nativity Play, as it always makes me smile. Mainly because we always managed to tell the whole Christmas story in a fifteen minute performance; principally by getting the entire cast to follow a star, bundle 25 five year old tea-towelled shepherds onto the make shift stage; close to a host of tinselled angels and a bewildered Mary and Joseph, who carried a swaddled 'Tiny Tears' upside down!

At the end, to complete the story, the little ballerina, dressed as the Star Of Bethlehem danced in, heralding the arrival of the Three Wise Men. However on this one occasion there were only two, as the one bringing up the rear clutching his gift of myrrh was still hiding behind the curtains, refusing to go on, with his first ever dose of defiant stage fright!

I have always had an affection for the Epiphany story, not only because it's a special feast day but it has a kind of magic about it. And is universally recognised as bringing hope to everyone!
I was reading recently about a unique non - religious tradition practised in Ireland - especially in Kerry and Cork - called Nollaig na mBan which translates as Women's Christmas, pronounced, null-egg-nah-mawn.

These Irish women historically met on January 6th and gathered together on this day to enjoy each other's company in pubs or places where they could relax; while the men stayed at home and took over the cooking, cleaning and child care. It was primarily to give women a 'day off' as they were usually responsible for all the extra work involved during the festive period.

While some may see it as outdated and sexist, in today's society most have taken it to a new level; turning the day into a celebration that enables them to get together to salute their lives and achievements, with the focus on honouring the community of women.

Which brings me back to the first Epiphany, celebrated 12 days after the birth of a baby in a stable; as it's believed it took those three wise men that amount of time to get there!
I guess we have all heard the joke that has been circulating for many moons!

Question

'What would have happened if there had been three Wise Women instead of three Wise Men?"

Answer

.They would have asked directions
. arrived on time
. helped deliver the baby
. cleaned the stable
. brought practical gifts
And made a casserole



I remember hearing something very similar to the above at home when I was younger, as my family were quite happy to make fun of themselves.

I'd like to think that we can all do the same with humour and goodwill while remaining inclusive. As, inevitably, we are all on the same journey, and we all have our own star to follow.

It's also interesting to note though, that the Three Wise Women may have said something like the following when they left:
'That donkey's seen better days and did you see the sandals Mary was wearing with that dress!'
'Aye, and I hear Joseph's not working at the minute!
'I wonder how long you'll wait to get your casserole dish back!'

'You're a shining star
No matter who you are
Shining bright to see
What you could truly be'

Earth Wind and Fire 1975
Billy Porter 2021



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Think of branding as the foundations of the business you're building. Without solid ground, there is no hope of building higher.

Branding consists of several elements that accumulate to create a "gut feeling" about your company. Branding is not what you say about your company. Branding is what your customers say about your company.

A Brand cannot be controlled, but it can be influenced.

Probably the most important step in the whole process is understanding your goals, your client's goals and your brand goals. We identify the essence of your business, whom you're providing value for, what your brand priorities are and the best way to action them. At the end of the discovery meeting we'll have a real insight into your business and we'll have a brief defined ready for the next stage.

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Step #2 Website

Think of your website as a full time employee. An employee that never sleeps, needs food, complains or takes days off, they don't even require toilet breaks!

Your website has several jobs to do, it should act like a concierge to every "guest" that visits your site. A service manager that can answer frequently asked questions, a sales manager to qualify and gather leads, a customer service rep to respond to questions, a social media manager to publish important news and updates.

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Consett RAF Veterans Join Housing Cash Appeal



Lonely veterans hoping to move to a retirement community so they can relive the camaraderie of their RAF days are asking County Durham residents for help.

The men and women, who are scattered across the UK, are appealing for donations to fund the completion of a charity's housing project so they can settle together.

The Royal Air Forces Association, which supports serving and ex-RAF personnel and their families, is converting its former Rothbury House Hotel in Northumberland into 26 retirement apartments.

An initial appeal led to half of the £500,000 transformation cost being raised from Association members and grant-making trusts, allowing building work to start. Now veterans are asking members of the public to join in to get the project over the line.

Among them is widower Tom Brown (87), who served with the RAF in Germany in the 1950s.

Tom, who has survived cancer twice in recent years, said: "I made life-long friends in the RAF, and many of us met annually for group holidays. Now there are just three of us left, so it would be marvellous to live among other people who served in the air force."

Having lived alone since his wife died in 2000, Tom used to be a regular guest at Rothbury House before its doors as a respite hotel closed last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said: "If I could live permanently at Rothbury House, I'd jump for joy!"

Work to provide half of the 26 new apartments planned for Rothbury House began in the summer, and it is hoped the first residents will be able to move in by the spring.

Tom, who lived in Cornwall for 18 years before moving to County Durham in 2010, added: "It would be wonderful if people across County Durham could donate to the RAF Association's appeal, and help me and other veterans to have a happier retirement.

The RAF Association's Director of Welfare and Policy, Rory O'Connor, said research showed an urgent need for more good quality affordable retirement accommodation for veterans and their spouses.

He said: "With an estimated 40% of RAF veterans living alone, we know that, tragically, isolation and loneliness is a huge problem. We want to offer more people the opportunity to relive the camaraderie of their time in the RAF, and Rothbury House would be perfect for that."

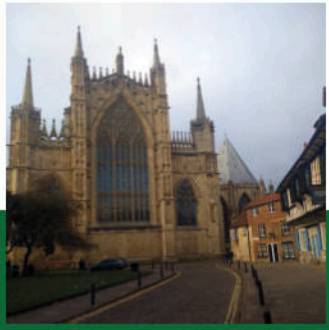
Rory praised the generosity of the appeal's supporters so far, with several RAF Association branches, including Aylesbury and Halton, Alnwick and Jersey, giving significant sums.

He said: "We're also grateful to several trusts, including the Sir James Knott Trust, the Veterans' Foundation and Selkirk No. 2 Trust, for providing grants. Companies including MBDA Missile Systems have also made donations."

To donate to the RAF Association's Building Futures appeal, please visit buildingfutures.rafa.org.uk or call 0800 018 2361.



York



York is a city in which there is never any shortage of things to do. The Christmas markets might have closed up shop for the year, but the Shambles market is there all year round. I have been to York twice during November, and had a ride on the only City Cruises vessel still working the river, with the other seven tied up together by the Lendal Bridge, patiently waiting for when more tourists turn up in the spring.

The train is the best way to visit York, with a range of fares and direct services from many north east stations. My first trip started at the National Rail Museum, admission free, followed by a walk around the City before boarding the York Pullman bus 36 out into the country for the Yorkshire Air Museum, based on the site of the former bomber command station at RAF Elvington. I ran out of time to see everything, both aircraft of varying ages and the remaining huts and buildings such as the control tower. Luckily, like many attractions today, they have a scheme where you can return for free within a year. I therefore returned on my second visit for just half an hour to see the latest two huts I had missed, and the Chapel. However, when I discovered the cinema at the back of one of the huts showing a selection of wartime films, which I had no chance of watching in 30 minutes, I resolved that a further trip will be required before next November. RAF Elvington was significant for having two French squadrons no. 346 Guyenne and 347 Tunisie based there in the later stages of the war.

My second trip was a two night overnight stay at the Premier Inn at Blossom Street North, where I was staying in the Minster Wing. Meals are taken in the physically separate but close by restaurant at Premier Inn Blossom Street South, solid with people at 0900 one morning and pleasantly quiet at 0800 the following morning. Clearly, they are catering for the tourist market. A night away does allow you to pack in more visits, and I attended morning Eucharist at 0750. Minster services are free to attend, whereas tourist visits are charged for.

Apart from the Minster, and Jorvik (the Viking exhibition), York Castle Museum etc. you might like to try less well-known places like the York Army Museum, Fairfax House and the Van Gogh exhibition, all close together near the under-refurbishment Clifford's Fort. The Merchant Adventurers' Hall, York Chocolate Story, the National Trust's Treasurer's House and Cold War Nuclear Bunker (English Heritage) may all whet your appetite. Added to which bars and restaurants and interesting shops in places like Walmgate, Goodramgate and the improbably named Whip Ma Whop Ma Gate means there is plenty to explore on foot. Buses go back to the railway station from most stops throughout the city. If you come by rail you can get a York Plus Bus ticket for £3.50 adult, £1.75 child and £2.30 for railcard holders. You can even buy these at York station travel office on arrival just by showing your rail ticket, to use on the majority of the bus services in this most fascinating of northern cities.

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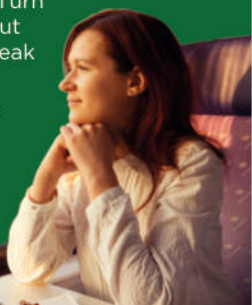



Government asked to consider re-opening Consett to Newcastle Railway

Proposals to reopen a rail connection from Consett to Newcastle have been submitted to the government by a North East council.

Durham County Council has submitted a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to the Department for Transport to re-establish a passenger rail connection between the two locations.

In 2020, the government established a £500 million fund to restore railways and reconnect communities. As part of this, it confirmed that additional funding was available to explore the feasibility of 15 transport proposals which aim to restore local rail services.

Durham County Council submitted an Expression of Interest to explore the feasibility of restoring the rail service in Consett as part of its broader commitment to improving public transport connectivity across the county. In November 2020, it was awarded funding to further develop proposals.

This week, the council submitted the case, with the endorsement of Richard Holden, MP for North West Durham, for the restoration of passenger rail services.

This will now be assessed by the Department for Transport, which will decide whether it will be progressed further to a detailed assessment.

Under the proposals, a new station would be built at Consett as well as further intermediate additional stations along different route options. Route options have also been reviewed and include a route via Annfield Plain and Stanley, which would link to Newcastle via the East Coast Main Line.

A potential route via the Derwent Valley has also been explored, with the council committed to further developing appropriate environmental and cycle route mitigations along these potential routes.

The business case states that establishing a new railway line between Consett and Newcastle would enhance access to opportunities within the wider North East area, reduce the environmental impacts of existing road traffic and improve air quality.

Richard Holden, MP for North West Durham, said: "For decades, we've seen services removed from the towns and villages of North West Durham. It's time for that to change.

"The people in towns and villages of North West Durham deserve the same opportunity as those in any other part of the country to access career and education opportunities. I will continue to campaign to deliver greater opportunity for everyone in North West Durham."

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VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Looking After an Older Pet

On average, dogs live for around 12 years and cats for around 14 years, although many will live much longer than this. As your pet gets older, there are many things you can do to ensure they live comfortably and happily during their later years:

1) Consider switching them onto a senior diet which will better suit their changing dietary requirements

2) Take them for shorter walks, more regularly, and keep them active at home with toys and games

3) Keep an eye on their nails. They're likely to need trimming more often as their exercise levels reduce and cats use their scratching posts less

4) Keep an eye on their eating, drinking and urinating habits. If there're any changes, book an appointment with your vet

5) Lots of older pets will develop arthritis which is often worse in the winter months.

There's lots of things that can help with the discomfort and stiffness arthritis causes including anti-inflammatory medication, laser therapy, physiotherapy and joint supplements. Speak to your vet about which options will be best for your pet.

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History of Consett Park Bowling Club

By John Haney

Consett Park Bowling Club was founded by the Consett Iron Company in April 1923 on land given to them by the said company and at the time as part of the works and used for inter departmental competitions.

The opening ceremony took place on the 16th of May 1923.

The Consett Iron Company sponsored a challenge cup competition in July 1924. Whether this was a final or one of the rounds we are not sure but it was between Consett v Chopwell Officials. Consett won comfortably (we have names and scores but no photos).

In 1928 Consett Park Bowling Club were the visitors at Barnard Castle in the North West Durham league. The local club were the winners by 24 shots, after the game the visitors were entertained by the home players after which Mr W Emerson ex-president, extended a hearty welcome to the Consett members.

In reply, Major A Mangles, who is president of the Durham and Yorkshire Bowling Association and a strenuous worker for the game in North-West Durham, spoke of the pleasure it gave them to visit Barnard Castle.

Although an old cricketer, he had now been playing bowls for 20 years and he declared it to be the finest game in existence. It encouraged and developed a friendship and in other respects fostered the true spirit of sportsmanship.

He hoped that the Barnard Castle Club would shortly pay the Consett green a visit when they would be assured of a hearty welcome (one wonders if that ever happened), He also adds that could not boast of a magnificent building like the Bowes Museum, we had at Consett the finest works of their kind in Europe.

BOWLS.

CONSETT IRON CO. LTD. CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION.

CONSETT v. CHOPWELL OFFICIALS.

Played in Consett Park. Details:—
of the curriculum.

CONSETT.

J. H. Turnbull, W. H. Lowe, J. W. Lake, J. B Richardson (s)	35
D. Hutton, J. S. Moon, M. Hobday, R. Park (s)	25
C. F. Tate, J. Aitken, T. Dent, R. Wilson (s)	36
A. J. Page, P. McCaughey, J. Morgan, G. Eustace (s)	25-121

CHOPWELL OFFICIALS.

H. Eddy, J. Cowan, J. Hocking, J. H Parker (s)	10
J. S. Robinson, J. Wills, R. Smith, W. T. Storey (s)	14
W. Brown, J. Sisterson, R. Taylor, H M. Imrie (s)	6
J. Kidman, R. Fairless, T. Toward, W. N. Watson (s)	13-43

They had thoroughly enjoyed their visit and he hoped that the friendship formed that day would be renewed to their mutual benefit (extracts from The Teesdale Mercury Wednesday, August 8th 1928).

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