CONSETT MAGAZINE

FREE

Consett's Independent Magazine

ISSUE 17/ December 2013



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Help protect your local area

SO LONG 2013!

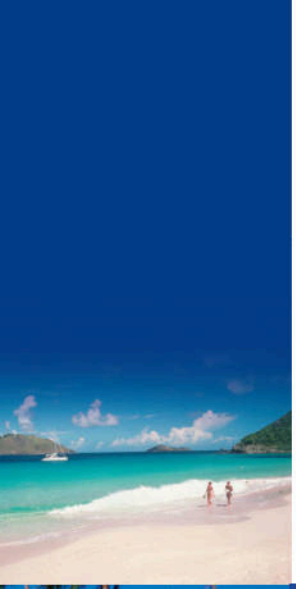
Wrapping up a very interesting year

XMAS IN CONSETT

The festive season has evolve over the years in Consett

ACOUSTIC ALCHEMY

Local group The Buskers are here to get you involved



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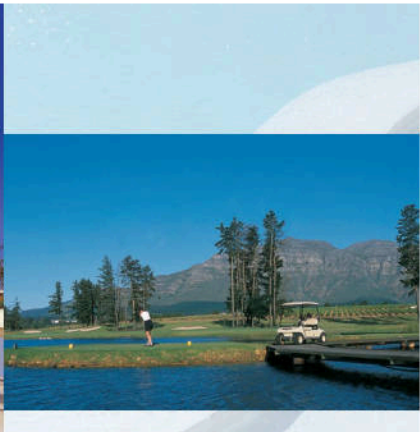





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THIS MONTH...



NEWS

Bedroom taxes, neighbourhood watch, the Consett Lions and DCCs plans for keeping our roads clear are in the news this month.

LIFESTYLE

See out 2013 with us whilst wrapping your sausages in bacon. Also, check out how you can contribute towards combatting polio.





HISTORY

Read about Christmas old and new in Consett; and how our ancestors used to manage with very little during the Winter months.

BUSINESS

Review your future finances, whether they be in Bitcoin or Pounds Sterling. Keep yourself out of trouble during your festive business parties.





SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

New Gaia telescope to allow for much earlier asteroid detection.

ENTERTAINMENT

Go busking with The Buskers and hear all about Consett on the radio with The Works.





SPORT

Check out the latest fixtures for Consett AFC. Put your running shoes on and get out into the woolly wilds with the Blackhill Bounders.

WELCOME

To Issue 17 of Consett Magazine!

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Whether you like it or not, Christmas is already upon us. Those who still haven't done their festive shopping (you know who you are!) should probably be thinking about beating the inevitable rush as the time draws near.

In this month's Consett Magazine we've gone all out to get as much support as possible. Everyone at the team would like to extend their thanks to those who have come on board with us this month, both old and new. On top of that, we've reached a new milestone in the amount of guest authors and contributors providing articles, photographs and useful information about the local area and more.

We've also gone for a more bite-size approach to how our articles are published, to go along with a few aesthetic changes that I'm sure you've noticed on the first few pages. Many of our pieces will point you in the direction of our website consettmagazine.com. There is a myriad of web exclusive content to view there, so if you're interested please don't hesitate to browse over and take a look!

As always, we hope you enjoy your read of the Consett Magazine.

Ivan J. Laidler,
Editor-in-chief

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Impact of the Bedroom Tax

by Peter Wood



Since its introduction earlier this year, there has been mounting opposition to the element of the welfare reform policy which has been dubbed the 'Bedroom Tax' by its opponents, but is referred to as the 'removal of the spare room subsidy' by the Government.

Whatever name is used, the policy means that tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit in order to meet their rent payments are hit by a 14 per cent reduction in the amount they receive if they have a spare bedroom, and a 25 per cent reduction if they have two spare rooms. This, the Government says, is to encourage people to downsize to free up larger homes for others on waiting lists.

Another aim of the policy was to reduce the overall Housing Benefit bill by £480m according to initial Department for Work & Pensions estimates. However, according to research by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, "The savings estimated by DWP assume that of the 660,000 households affected, none of them will move to a smaller home."

But their research shows that people are moving, but with nearly half of those who cannot move already in arrears, their report adds "we can only see that figure going in one direction."

Many other organisations have called on the Government to re-think its policy including Shelter, the homelessness charity, and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Chief Executive of Citizens Advice, Gillian Guy said in a statement "Thousands are being pushed into arrears, 96 per cent of people affected have no alternative smaller homes to move into and some housing associations say they are being forced to demolish homes whilst 1.8 million languish on waiting lists.

"Ministers are right to seek value for money, but the rushed nature of these changes and the lack of alternative housing means many will be caught in a catch-22 and unable to avoid the extra cost."

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW THE BEDROOM TAX HAS DEVELOPED HEAD OVER TO CONSETTMAGAZINE.COM TO SEE THE REST OF THIS ARTICLE

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WATCHING OVER THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Neighbourhood Watch participation has increased over recent years and is going from strength to strength throughout the Consett and Stanley areas of County Durham.

Currently there are approximately 6000 homes across the Consett, Stanley and surrounding villages signed up to Neighbourhood Watch and working closely with their Neighbourhood Policing Teams and partners. AND WE NEED YOU!

There are currently 42 schemes in Stanley and 79 schemes in Consett, totalling 121 schemes. This equates to around 15% of homes covered throughout the areas.

Did you know? Setting up and being part of an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme could entitle you to a reduction in your home insurance premium? It's also a great way to promote community spirit and get to know your neighbours.

What is Neighbourhood Watch? Neighbourhood Watch is a community led scheme and supported by local police teams and Community Liaison Officers. Neighbourhood Watch aims to improve communication between scheme Co-ordinators and members and allows police to provide timely updates to members of the community. This may be in relation to positive policing action as a result of a report to police or alternatively providing updates regarding crime, incidents, suspicious activity, seasonal crime prevention advice or events in your community or scheme area.

Neighbourhood Watch is about empowering local people to take pride in where they live, promote reporting information to police and other agencies and also work together to come up with initiatives to make our communities safer and more pleasant places to live and work. It also aims to improve security and vigilance, cut crime and the opportunity for crime and encourage a sense of security.

by Vikki Ord

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The Lions of Consett

by Chris Brown

Consett is a town is filled with vibrant groups who all aim to get together and make things happen around the region. One of these groups has recently been celebrating their 50th anniversary after they were first chartered way back in 1963. The Consett Lions are a dedicated group of people who look to help those in the local community along with some also further afield.

The Lions International are a world wide organisation with a staggering 1.5 million members in over 150 countries across the globe. Their goals are simple; to help those in need be it close to home or in places all around the globe.

Whilst a large percentage of money raised is donated to local causes, some money is sent abroad to help the Lions who are involved in crisis situations overseas. The Consett Lions donated money to help with the Asian tsunami relief efforts in 2004. There are no affiliations with any religion or political party as they truly are a serviced based organisation looking to make a difference doing whatever they can.

To celebrate their 50th anniversary, The Lions organised a celebratory dinner at Consett Golf Club to remember their rich history in the town and to plan ahead for the future. When the Consett club was formed, it was officially the most northern club in the UK. Surprisingly, the Edinburgh Lions came to be after a fact finding mission to Consett to see what the club did and how they operated. This night of glitz and glamour seemed like the perfect way to celebrate the birth of such an important and selfless organisation.



The Consett Lions are always looking for more people to get involved and anyone with a passion for helping others are welcome to join. The Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 8pm at Consett Steel Club. If you want to become a part of this prestigious organisation just head along and find out more about the Consett Lions.



Keeping the County Moving

Durham County Council have been hard at work to make sure the roads won't be impassable this winter.

John Reed, head of technical services at Durham County Council, said: "We are already putting in place measures to ensure that we are as prepared as we possibly can be for any winter weather."

In preparation for the winter the council has stockpiled more than 42,000 tonnes of salt ready to use if the weather turns bad. 2500 salt bins will be filled across the region and 37 gritters equipped with snow ploughs will be ready for the call if needs be.

It is reassuring to see Durham County Council are ready for the worst weather this winter.

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PIGS IN BLANKETS

by Chris Brown

'Tis the season to be jolly and all over Britain people are getting together with their friends and families to celebrate and give thanks for everything we have. For many, Christmas dinner is one of the highlights of the year with great food and company culminating into a fantastic day. This year why not try something different with your tasty trimmings by making your own pigs in blankets?



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Step 4: Once you get to this point you have a choice. If you are getting prepared extra early for Christmas you can place your creations in the freezer until they are needed. If you do this you need to make sure they are fully defrosted before going on to the next step.
Step 5: Place the pigs on a baking tray evenly spaced ready for the oven.
Step 6: Place the food into a preheated oven at 375F/190C/Gas Mark 5 for 30 minutes until the bacon is crispy.
Step 7: Serve with your roast turkey and enjoy.



GOODBYE 2013, HELLO 2014

by Ivan Laidler

After the exciting year 2012 provided featuring the London Olympics and a possible doomsday, it seemed hard for 2013 to manage to reach the amazing highs that rocked the world throughout last year. 2013 has been a year filled with turmoil around the world but has still had some great highs; locally, nationally and all around the globe. We're going to take some time to think back over 2013 and see what has occurred throughout the year right here in Consett.

Consett has been the scene of some major developments over the year which have lead to the new retail park now located across Genesis Way and the bottom of Front Street. This influx of big business into our small town has dramatically changed the landscape of Consett but has also provided more jobs for people in the area looking to get into work. With all of these new opportunities in Consett, it's easy to see why confidence in the local economy is making a big return for 2014.

Consett AFC also had a huge year in 2013. After spending a huge portion of their existence at the Belle Vue Stadium, the club waved goodbye to their old home and recently moved into their brand new facility over by the old Tesco store near Delves Lane. This 100% bespoke stadium is looking to be much more than just a sports club but more of a community hub which a large section of the public can use and enjoy.

Of all that went on throughout 2013, one of the best events for the local area was the Consett Festival, masterminded by Dust Town Dogs member Brad Wilkinson. The 1 day event in April saw people of all ages from Consett coming together to have a great time at the Consett Rugby Club grounds. Local musicians provided the soundtrack to the day whilst local businesses erected trade stands, selling a huge variety of merchandise and promoting their services to the people of the area. The festival was a huge success on all fronts with the 2014 event being planned as we speak.

Once again, 2013 proved that there is never a dull moment when you are out and about in Consett! Now let's hope that 2014 is even more eventful and prosperous for the town and everyone who calls it home.

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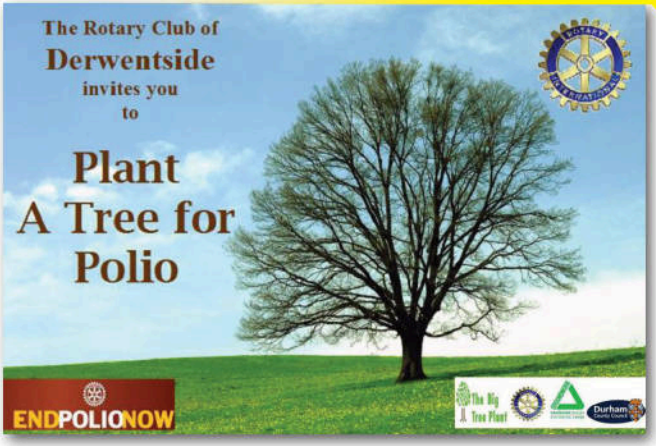

TREES FOR POLIO

by Colin Hayes

The Rotary Club of Derwentside have walked over burning hot coals, held meetings under water and abseiled from high buildings in order to serve their community. They have given financial support to hundreds of local charities and community groups and their members have travelled as far as West Africa, Sri-Lanka, India and even Kathmandu in the service of their club. They should be quite proud of their record as they approach their tenth birthday.

To commemorate their tenth anniversary in 2014, the Rotary Club of Derwentside has teamed up with Groundwork North East and Durham County Council to plant a one-acre wood for Polio.

The project, which is part of the Big Tree Plant, will be taking place in March 2014.

Rotary began eradicating Polio from the world in 1985. Today with our partners around the world we are nearly there.

The club are asking members of the community to sponsor a tree for Polio. For £5 only a tree will be planted in the sponsor's name, or someone's of their choosing.
Sponsors will receive a certificate, which will include the name of the person the tree was planted for, the grid reference and the type of tree planted for them. If it is for a Christmas gift, a special gift voucher can be provided.

To Sponsor a tree, you can send your payment to the address below.

With your £5, we will need your name, the name of the person in whose name the tree is being planted, if different and the address where to send the certificate. Please print the details clearly. The certificates will be sent out after the planting in March. If it is for a Christmas present, we can send a small gift certificate.

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Keeping Trim This Christmas

Throughout the Christmas and New Year period it is easy to eat well more than the daily recommended number of calories when snacking on indulgent nibbles and rich foods. This creates the sobering New Year guilt we all know and experience after going a bit too far throughout December. To avoid the inevitable New Year fitness rush, why not make a conscious effort to cut the calories during December.

One great way to keep from putting on the pounds when hosting a Christmas party is to send your guests home with left overs. On one hand your guests get some of your great food to take home, yet you don't have the temptation to keep snacking for the following days. Another way to cut down on the Christmas calories is to swap out fattening foods for healthier alternatives. By mixing fresh herbs and low fat yoghurt you can create a tasty and tempting dip without worrying about gaining any unwanted weight.

Christmas should be a time for celebration and we all often forget about our health throughout the weeks before and after Christmas. By making a few simple changes you can keep the pounds off whilst still having a very merry Christmas.

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	Senior Netball	The Louisa Centre, Stanley 7.30 - 8.30 p.m.	£2.00, Over 16s
TUES	Boxercise	Annfield Plain Community Centre 6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	£1.50, All welcome
	Table Tennis	St. James' Church Hall, Burnopfield | 6.00 - 7.30 p.m.	£1.50, Children welcome*
WED	Cricket Conditioning	Beamish and East Stanley Cricket Club | 6.00 - 6.45p.m.	Free for club members, £2.00 for public, All welcome
	Pilates	Ebchester Village Hall 6.30 - 7.30 p.m.	£1.50, All welcome
	Over 40s Keep Fit	White-le-Head Methodist Church 7.15 - 8.15 p.m.	£1.50, Over 40s
THURS	No Strings Badminton	The Louisa Centre, Stanley 6.00 - 7.30 p.m.	£2.00, Children welcome*
SUN	Archery	Consett Academy (North Campus) 9.30 - 11.30 a.m.	£2.00, All welcome
	Xpress Tennis	St. Bede's Catholic School, Lanchester | 11.00 - 12 noon	£1.00, Over 18s

*Children welcome but must be accompanied by a participating adult.

For more details contact: Rebecca Haynes, Sports Development Co-ordinator
Leisureworks, The Louisa Centre, Front Street, Stanley, DH9 0TE
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Christmas in Consett - A Mixed Bag

by Brian Harrison







An A5 Wall Calendar with 12 Unique views of our area is now available to buy. It costs £3 and all profits go toward the upkeep of the CDHI. You can get a copy by either popping into the Lodge, Blackhill & Consett Park any Tuesday 10-12 or a Wednesday 10-4 . Alternatively you can enquire about them at Consett Library where we will be having a small display.

Brian is part of the Consett & District Heritage Initiative. For more info contact cdhi@live.co.uk or drop in to The Lodge, Blackhill & Consett Park, Wednesdays 10am - 4pm.

Christmas was always a special time for me. We may not have had much money but our parents always made sure we had something under the tree to open. I remember being so excited waking up to the smell of oranges and tangerines that had been placed neatly in my stocking at the end of my bed, along with a few small toys. That's when you knew "Santa" had been. I have tried to instil the same thing in my kids and hope that in years to come they will look back on their Christmases with the same fondness.

So I decided to look and see what I could find in Consett's past and delve into the old newspapers. Mostly I found Consett to be a very social town, the churches playing a major role. Each church and denomination came together in celebration, decorating trees and having public diners held in relevant halls and schools. There was also many hard time's. In 1866 there had been a major strike at the Iron Works which left many of the people in the area penniless. Something I am sure many people from our time can relate to, especially during the 1970's and early 1980's. The papers at the time commented that the mood in Consett was "very quiet" for the season and in fact was "very dull occasioned, doubtless due to the ordeal the operatives in the area had to endure over the previous months". But the people still got up, went out and sang carols in the streets, showing the true mettle of the Consett towns folk.

Read the rest of this story and many other interesting article @ consettmagazine.com

Christmas With Nowt

by Mike Bowden

Christmas once again, that magic time of year, and the usual spending sprees that seem to be part of our lives. But it wasn't always like that, as many of you will probably remember. My sons had been for Christmas dinner and have now left, my wife had gone to the churchyard to pay her respects to her parents, I was sitting with a glass of cheap sherry, staring out of the window. Many years ago my parents would always have sherry in the house for Christmas when visitors called. It's simply a nostalgic link with the past. Outside there isn't any snow, we don't get much nowadays, but it is cold and it would be easy just to turn up the heat, but not just yet.

I began to wander down memory lane to Christmas in 1963. I had just become a teenager and was coming to terms with the devastating news that Santa didn't exist. It didn't ruin Christmas because I still had to pretend to believe for my 3 siblings.

The scene outside the window was very different then, it was a very cold and crystal clear.

The sun was beginning to slip over the horizon, a red ball in the sky spreading its orange rays across a countryside covered in a blanket of deep snow, the trees and hedgerows gripped in white frost. The pit heap looked like a snow covered mountain, and even the winding wheels at the top of their tower, looked clean and harmless. The sun slipped away, chased by a bright moon and its winter companion, the North Star. The sky became covered in stars twinkling in the bitterly cold of Christmas Eve.

The choir was in the street singing carols, something they did every year, they would be followed on Christmas Day by the local Salvation Army Band. The same carols, but played with the military tones of brass instruments. Everyone came out for these events and there was a real feeling of belonging and that Christmas was a special time, no matter what you believed.



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Financial Outlook for 2014



2014 is set to be a great year for the British economy as financial experts are predicting a rise in growth throughout the year. Currently, experts are speculating that 2014 is set to see a growth rate of 2%. This is positive news after the years of recession and austerity.

Unfortunately it is looking like 2014 will once again be a year where wages will not be getting the big rise which everyone has been looking for throughout the past 3 years. It is increasingly likely that wages will see a slow average increase in 2015 easing the cost of living.





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It's Party Time!

by Rob Grinter

It's the festive season and the works Christmas party is just around the corner. Everyone is looking forward to letting their hair down and having a good time. Just be careful though that you don't do something which you may later regret.

A works party is still a work function and inappropriate behaviour could get you into trouble.
Alcohol can dampen inhibitions and it is not a good idea to tell the boss what you really think of him or to start a fight with the smug guy from despatch who thinks he's something special.

Employers are still responsible for the behaviour of their employees at parties 5 they are held during working hours or after work. So if you step out of line and someone complains about your behaviour you might find yourself in trouble.

A survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development reveals that 10% of workers know of a colleague who has been disciplined for inappropriate behaviour at the Christmas party.

Let's keep this in perspective though and remember that the vast majority of Christmas parties take place without anyone behaving badly so no one wants to be a killjoy but employers need to make it clear to employees what is and is not acceptable behaviour.

A quite word about what is expected should be all that is needed but all employers should:
have an equal opportunities policy and a dignity at work policy in place to cover any misdemeanours which may arise.

Ensure that managers also know how to behave responsibly
have an agreement about late or non-attendance at work the following day.

Finally, sites like Facebook often carry unflattering photos or comments about the boss or work colleagues. This may cause a loss of respect and trust between colleagues and in serious cases can bring the employer into disrepute. Many companies now have social media policies and you could find yourself in trouble for such actions so be careful what you post.

So having said all that,have a good time and enjoy your party!

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The Bitcoin Boom



Over the past month the online cryptocurrency Bitcoin has had a significant increase in value. At the end of 2012 each individual Bitcoin was valued at $20 a unit but in recent times this value has shot upwards at an extraordinary rate.

At the time of print, a single Bitcoin had an average value of around $420. This is an amazing rise which has seen a number of people start to get involved as both a precaution and also as a speculative investment opportunity. Starting out back in 2009, Bitcoin has had a somewhat rocky start with due to the untraceable nature of the currency but has recently gained a lot of positive press.

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TELESCOPE TO PREDICT ASTEROID HITS

by Ivan Laidler

THE GAIA TELESCOPE CAN ALSO BE USED AS A VITAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM TO DETECT ANY DANGEROUS ASTEROIDS

It sounds like something from a science fiction film but there is a small chance that a large asteroid may at some point in the future strike Earth. Such an event if left undetected could cause significant damage to the whole population of the world. One way to limit the damage and attempt to stop the asteroid itself would be to detect the deadly astral body before it's too late. The tool in question is the Gaia Telescope which was originally designed to create a 3D map of our galaxy, the Milky Way.

Set to be launched into space this month, the Gaia Telescope can also be used as a vital early warning system to detect any dangerous asteroids which could be on a collision course with Earth. At a cost of £800,000,000 this space installation is a costly project to say the least; but can you put a price on the safety of the whole planet? It seems almost as if the plot of hit 1998 disaster film Deep Impact is almost coming to be a reality.

The likelihood of an asteroid hitting the planet is quite small. The last theorised asteroid hit on Earth was known as an extinction level event that is credited for the destruction of the dinosaurs. These amazing reptilian creatures were completely wiped out by the impact of a large asteroid and a similar fate may come about for humans. By using an early warning system like the Gaia Telescope there is a good chance that there will be a proper plan in place if the time one day comes.

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Local man David Morrison has recently published a novel entitled SOMNIUM under the pen name of Tom Arnet

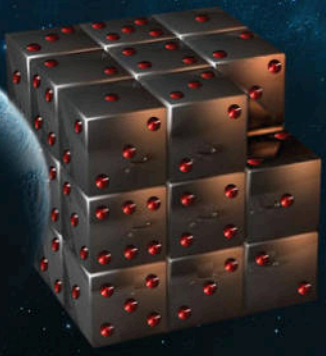


The 'War in Heaven' never ended, it simply has a new battlefield, the Earth - and Malachi Shield finds himself having to choose sides. His story takes him from the depths of depravity to the upper echelons of society and leads him from the dawn of time to world domination.His astonishing quest involves him with the Wu Shing Wu Triad, the Russkaya Mafiya and worse - the Nephelim.
He is aided in this journey by the beautiful but enigmatic Zia, and a man named Charlie, otherwise known as the Comte du St. Germaine.

Malachi finds himself the unwitting recipient of a knowledge that could change the world Forever. Billions of years earlier a series of mystical cubes were left hidden as a test of mankinds maturity by an advanced alien race. The strange coding etched into these cubes point the way to a cache of knowledge that will literally give the discoverer the power of God

It is a unique concept when a fictional novel describes an alien artifact that actually exists. Or for that matter, a puzzle exists that requires a novel to explain its mystery and complexity. Whichever way you look at it, a seed is planted which forces a free thinking mind to ask a thousand more questions - some of which are answered on a daily basis

THE STARCUBE



Somnium is available from Amazon and Kindle as well as Stinging Kiss Studio. Also coming shortly to all other book outlets

The pen name 'Tom Arnet' is an anagram. Can you guess the true name that the anagram is taken from?
If so, give your answer to Stinging Kiss Studio (contact details opposite)
The first three correct answers drawn will receive a signed copy of SOMNIUM



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Sale Pepe

DEEP DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, ITALIANS STILL ENJOY THE TRADITIONAL HOME-COOKED FOOD THAT THEIR GRANDMOTHERS USED TO MAKE.

In the heart of Shotley Bridge, for the past 9 years, Sale Pepe has aimed to bring Consett some of the delicious and authentic flavours of Italy.

In October 2013 Sale Pepe celebrated its 9th year anniversary, still retaining the best of its chefs and waiting staff and proudly still operating under the same name and management.

In the last 12 months, Sale Pepe has gone through a major refurbishment, starting from new larger tables to provide a generous space between diners, a new decoration and colour scheme and new window blinds and flooring.

All in all they've created a stylish décor to give diners the experience of authentic Italian dining, despite being thousands of miles from Italy -

and all at an affordable price. The current new menu features some specialities that not many diners have tried in this region, like the wonderful Fregola and Risottos made the traditional way, various pastas, fish dishes and of course, the house specialties.

These delicious dishes are complimented by a selection of the very best wines from Italy, Australia, South Africa, Chile and USA.

The staff at Sale Pepe pride themselves on giving all customers an opportunity to experience genuine Italian hospitality.

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THE BUSKERS OF CONSETT

by Chris Brown

Consett has such a vibrant music scene with pubs, clubs and venues hosting a wide range of different nights ranging from cover bands to hardcore metal. One act which has forged their reputation in Consett and the surrounding area are The Buskers. Barrie and Tony make up the foundations of the outfit who have gained a great amount of support in the local area for their unique and interactive shows.



One thing that sets The Buskers aside from any of the other bands who can be seen in the pubs around Derwentside is their attitude towards audience participation. Rather than just watching the band and singing along, The Buskers bring with them a whole host of musical accessories to get the crowd involved and playing along with the band.



This improvised percussion section made up of the crowd brings a new dynamic, blurring the lines between audience and band. Some audience members have been so enthusiastic playing the tambourine they have ended up waking up with a bruised hand the next day. Now that's some hardcore musical dedication for you!



Things are going well for The Buskers as they have a very busy December ahead of them with shows planned throughout the holiday season at a number of venues. On Fridays throughout the month The Buskers will be found at Derwent Manor playing a selection of Christmas shows. Boxing Day sees the guys heading to the Horse and Groom in Castleside whilst on New Year's Eve be sure not to miss The Buskers bringing in the New Year at The Miner's Arms in Medomsley. If that isn't enough, they are also doing a New Year's Day show to help soothe the hangover at The Cricketer's in Blackhill.

If you are looking for a great night of musical hijinks from artists ranging from Avicii to The Pogues then why not go and see The Buskers in action?

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The Works

Putting the Heart Back Into Consett

by Chris Brown



Consett is lucky to be one of the few remaining towns with a definite sense of community spirit. This "village mentality" has lead to our town having a close community with people who truly care about the area. A new online radio show named The Works is looking to be the soundtrack to this community revival. Starring former Metro Radio presenter Brian Clough, The Works is an innovative fortnightly radio style podcast looking at Consett past and present with some great music in between.

Hailing from the local area, the guys at The Works have a unique and interesting idea to help bring the community ever closer through fortnightly online sessions, available through The Works website. This innovative show takes a look at the past, present and future of Consett whilst talking to the people who make Consett the town it is today. Influential and important figures of the town's population will be making appearances on the show to discuss what Consett means to them. You can be sure that the shows will be filled with great music and intelligent conversation.

Over the December period, the Works will be running a special Christmas broadcast dedicated to the spreading of Christmas cheer around the area. On December 21st, the people of Consett past and present will be taking over the airwaves to make their Christmas message heard. This means people who have family based in the area but are elsewhere during the festive period can still let their message be heard. Don't hesitate to get in touch on the email below if you want to get involved in the special Christmas edition of The Works.

You can get in touch with The Works by emailing them at admin@theworksconsett.co.uk or by visiting their website at www.theworksconsett.co.uk

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Festive Fun Planned for Blackhill Parkrun

by Sara Sarginson

Parkruns are free weekly timed 5k runs, held around the world on Saturday mornings. Parkrun isn't just for club runners and serious athletes, it's for the whole community, whatever age or ability.

I attended my first Parkrun three years ago, and loved the friendly supportive atmosphere which eventually gave me confidence to join my local running club – Blackhill Bounders. A group from the club then started making regular trips to Durham Parkrun, where we got to know Event Director, and North East Ambassador for Parkrun, Alister Robson.

Fast-forwarding to sometime in 2012, Leisureworks approached Parkrun about starting an event in Consett & Blackhill Heritage Park. Alister, contacted a few parkrunning members of Blackhill Bounders, hoping some of us would want to take up roles on the core volunteer team. Eventually a small team was formed, including myself, and led by Event Director and fellow Bounder, Colin Hodgson. Our first event was held in July, attracting 95 runners. Parkrun depends entirely on volunteers, and many runners have discovered that it's just as much fun volunteering, as it is to run. On December 21st, the Blackhill event team are holding a Christmas fancy-dress Parkrun. We'd love to see as many runners, joggers or walkers as possible, come and complete the course in festive fancy-dress. There will also be a Parkrun on New Year's Day, starting at 9am. What better way to start the New Year?

Parkrun takes place at 9am every Saturday morning, starting at the park lodge. Participants need to register with Parkrun first, which is absolutely free, print out their personal ID barcode, and fetch it with them every time they run. Consett Bowling Club very kindly provide Blackhill parkrunners with refreshments afterwards.



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