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MARCH 2016

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Welcome

Dear Consett Magazine Readers,

Hello Consett Magazine Readers,

This month sees a few very important dates, including a big 30th birthday milestone for Consett Magazine's founder Barry Kirkham. We'd like to wish him a very happy birthday and not to worry about his favourite bands now being considered Classic Rock.

Sunday, 6 March 2016 is Mother's Day and much like many festivities, Mothering Sunday has origins with religious purpose. Held on the fourth Sunday in Lent, three weeks prior to Easter Sunday, originally it was a day to give thanks to the Virgin Mary. Such celebrations meant people would visit their 'mother' church or cathedral in their area.

Today it is a day when children give presents, flowers, and home-made cards to their mothers. So, here's to Mothers everywhere, thanks for everything!

We're delighted to have the opportunity every month to bring you another completley free, positive news driven Consett Magazine.

If you have an amazing story, event, charity, photograph or announcement you'd like to share next month, please call us on 01207 438 292 or email us:

editor@consettmagazine.com

Contributors

Brian Harrison
Barry Kirkham
Marco Elsy
Frank Bell
Neil Sullivan
Lorraine Weightman
Syd Peck
Malcolm Clarke (Online)
Jim Callan
Alan Harland (Online)
Dr Jacqui Molyneux
Emma Atkinson
Haley Redshaw
James Colwell

The Front Cover

A big thank you to Haley Redshaw for providing the fantastic photo on the front cover. If you have a great photograph you would like to share, then send it across and it could be your photo we use - send any photographs to: **editor@consettmagzine.com**

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A CURIOUS INCIDENT OF EBCHESTERS BURNING MAN



Mr Robert Johnson, a Gentleman of Ebchester Hill was a very happy man at the birth of his son Cuthbert in 1724. He was his first son and would be his heir. However, father and son were not always to see eye to eye. Cuthbert had followed in his fathers footsteps, nurturing property and looking after his fathers portfolio. Robert owned half lease to the Estate of Consett as well as a major lease holding of the area in and around the Ebchester and Medomsley. Ebchester was only a small place with a few houses sparsely located here and there and only a small distance away from Shotley Bridge village and the hamlet of Medomsley.

Robert had plans for his son to marry into a good family at a level he had deemed in keeping with their status. Unfortunately Cuthbert fell for the beautiful Isabel Fewster daughter of another local Gentleman and land owner. Robert wanted nothing to do with the relationship and forbade him to have anything further to do with her. Cuthbert was unable to do this and so they were married in secret without his fathers consent.

This angered Robert so much that he immediately changed his will and pronounced publicly that his son would never get a penny of his money and even declaring "I hope my right arm will burn off before I give my son a sixpence".

The years rolled on and the initial quarrel was forgotten. Cuthbert had son Fewster Johnson in 1854 and he was a favourite of his grandfather Robert. A few years later in 1757 Robert became ill and died. In his will dated 22 February 1757 he once again had bequeathed all his real and personal Estate to his son Cuthbert.

As the family and friends of Robert gathered to talk over his affairs they became aware of a faint smell. At first it was not strong but soon could not be ignored. It was the smell of burning. The family searched in vain to locate the source at first to no avail. It was only once they approached the coffin and laid their hands upon it that they felt the heat from within. A crackling of burning flesh could be heard from within.

The coffin lid was prized open and to the horror of the family and onlookers lay the body of the dead Robert his right arm almost completely burned to cinders. Quickly the lid was replaced and the coffin raced to the Church yard to be buried all the while the sizzling and crackling from inside continued. The Rev Lithwaite, incumbent of Ebchester Church at that time witnessed the strange event and was said to have wrote down the whole incident in the parish book along side the burial record. The page however was later ripped out and the burials of 1757 are no longer recorded.

Maybe the family wanted to have the incident forgotten about, but the tale spread like wild fire. The story even reaching the ears of the Evangelist John Wesley founder of the Methodist Church. Wesley on hearing the tale ask Mr T Lee, who was visiting near there, to enquire about what had happened. Wesley later document the incident that his friend relayed to him. In Wesley's rendition he add that on entering the grave yard with the burning body in the coffin the earth began to shake. The body was quickly placed in the grave and as it was the Church itself began to shake and shudder and the steeple was visibly moving. The onlookers moved from the grave and as they did so the steeple fell to were they had been standing only a few moments earlier.

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MOTHERING SUNDAY



Happy Mother's Day!

Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. On the 4th Sunday in Lent, everyone would visit the church of their baptism or the one they attended as children. Consequently this brought together families and communities who hadn't seen each other in a while. Historians think that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. In later years the practice of bringing flowers or thank you gifts on this day became a popular custom, and Mother's Day as we know it was created.

My Mother loved buying and receiving flowers all year. As she was born in March one of her favourites was daffodils as she said they brightened up every room.

She loved to dance and sing. She sang while washing the dishes, cooking, and doing household chores. From the age of five I attended ballet and tap classes so it was common practice for us both to dance on the kitchen lino while preparing tea. My Dad just turned the television up in the sitting room while we blasted out ' Alexander's Rag Time Band' and practised our time step.

She made things fun and always looked on the bright side of life. Her 'one pan' delicious dinners were legendary in our family and my children loved their Grandma's cooking.

It was common place for us all to go and watch her at the over sixties concert party at Saint Patrick's Church Hall where she had a solo spot wearing a flappers outfit, singing and dancing to 'Don't Bring Lulu'.

It was only after she turned 80 that the arthritis kicked in and she found it difficult to walk, let alone dance. Then the falls started and although she was reluctant to do so, she agreed to go into a care home for respite.

Age is a great leveller and while in there her philosophy of making the best of things echoed among her friends and the staff. Soon her arthritis was so bad her knees were misshapen and she was forced to use a wheelchair, yet her smile remained constant. So when I arrived with daffodils and Irises on Mothers Day which fell on her Birthday and found she wasn't in her room; I followed the music to the large lounge and there she was, part of a circle of chair dancing golden girls, doing all the actions to YMCA.

CONSETT STREET FRIENDS



Consett Street Friends were pleased to welcome Durham Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Hogg who went out with teams in and around the town centre.

Police and Crime Commissioner Hogg met with teams at 23:00 at Consett Methodist Church on Saturday the 13th of February, and worked with the teams on patrol. He met with police and door staff as well as publicans and those out in the night time economy, Mr Hogg was able to see in action the work that Consett Street Friends does.

This was a fantastic opportunity for the Consett Street Friends to show their appreciation for the support both moral and financial that Mr Hogg has contributed to the group.

PCC Ron Hogg said that: 'I very much enjoyed spending time with Consett Street Friends. The work they do to reduce anti-social behaviour, and to support the local community, is admirable'

There was a fantastic response form those out in the night time economy both towards the Street Friends and for the Police and Crime Commissioner. We would like to once again thank all those who have supported our organisation and very much look forward to continuing to work with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Durham Constabulary, as we continue to grow our group in other areas such as Chester le Street.

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ROTARY REACHES OUT TO KEEP INDIA POLIO FREE



Local Rotarian from Consett will later this month be supporting National Immunisation Day by travelling to the most at risk areas of India to immunise thousands of children against Polio.

Michael Dynes, from the Rotary Club Of Derwentside will be joining a group of 106 volunteers from across Great Britain & Ireland, the largest to have ever travelled, and will also meet up with other Rotary International members from Belgium, Luxemburg, USA and Japan to help with the immunisation of children across the country.

This is an extremely encouraging response to keep India polio free, after the tremendous efforts to eradicate the disease from the area. Although the country was declared free from the disease in 2014, there is still the real risk of re-infection from the cases found in nearby Pakistan and therefore it is essential that high levels of immunisation are maintained.

Michael, who is travelling to India with the project for his 2nd time, comments, "It is incredible to think that since making the pledge in 1985 to eradicate polio, Rotarians have pulled together to combat the disease all over the world. Travelling to India and working with fellow Rotarians illustrates how important it is to be involved in community projects that are not just on your doorstep."

The aim of this year's National Immunisation Day is to vaccinate over 172 million children under the age of five, nearly three times the size of the UK population. In order to do so, the Rotary office in Delhi have allocated five locations where the International Rotarian volunteers will be placed to assist the local Rotary members, namely Delhi, Kolkata, Ludhiana, Bhidawi and Karnal.

The immunisation, which is administered by two simple drops on the tongue, can be carried out easily by someone with no medical experience, and is crucial to keeping polio at bay. Rotary then hopes to continue to send out volunteers in the coming years, until this type of immunisation is replaced with an injection, a procedure that would require medically trained personnel.

Michael, continues, "It's important that we don't lose momentum if we are going to beat this disease and the large group of Rotarians travelling out this year illustrates that we are still as passionate as ever. If you want to make a difference, you could join your local Rotary club or donate."
To donate to End Polio Now or to join Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, visit www.rotarygbi.org or contact your local Rotary club.



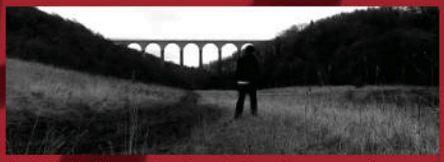
WOMAN'S World Day of Prayer will be held on Friday, 4th March. It is an interdenominational movement and the day of prayer starts at dawn in the Island of Samoa and continues around the world ending at sundown off the coast of American Samoa, some 35 hours later.

An estimated 3 million people in over 170 countries and islands will gather to observe the day of prayer. This year's service has been prepared by the ladies of Cuba using as their theme "Receive children, receive Me" a reminder that everyone is a child of God and worthy of our love and respect.

Over 6,000 services will be held in the British Isles and our local service will be held on Friday, 4th March at St. Patrick's Church, Consett starting at 2 p.m. An open invitation is extended to all.

Death of a Video Shop (Part 4)

By Steven "Monkey" Mason



So, "Global" was the last video shop standing, but not for long. Out of the blue the shop closed down as the company had went into administration.

The company tried many things to keep the store going. Some stores even went as far as having sunbeds in stores. This idea seemed very strange to me.

It was sad to see that now of the video shop in Consett close down. One of the saddest parts for me was Global's best employee, Beryl Lawes loosing her job.

Beryl love what she did and showed passion for video. She tried everything in the final days to keep the shop going.

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Wed 16th	March - 7:30pm	Away - West Allotment Celtic
Sat 19th	March - 3:00pm	Away - North Shields
Tue 22nd	March - 7:30pm	Home - Seaham Red Star
Tue 29th	March - 7:30pm	Home - Washington

Function Room

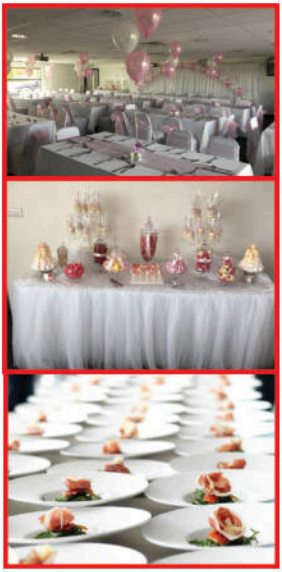
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WHY SHOULD A SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN ITS ONLINE PRESENCE IN 2016?



It's very safe to say that the digital world is now more important than it has ever been before, and it looks no signs of slowing down.

It's having a significant impact on how we behave as social creatures, as consumers and how we do business. Any business that does not embrace to the new era of marketing and communications is in danger of losing out.

Now, I am obviously very passionate about everything digital, so I don't suggest any business stop doing what it is already doing to attract and keep it's current client base - not at all, I just strongly believe that businesses should blend their strategy with digital and traditional marketing methods, they both have benefits. For example, you could be reading this article in print or online. It's available on consettmagazine.com, social media channels, email campaigns, and of course in every single printed edition. All platforms hold merit and allow local businesses such as **Fosters TV & Radio, Essential Interiors, Firefly New Media** and of course Consett Magazine to connect with people both digitally and physically.

Here is how I see the 5 benefits of Digital Marketing:

1. Level playing field:
Any business can compete with any competitor regardless of size with a solid digital marketing strategy.

2. Reduced cost:
Your business can develop its online marketing strategy for very little cost.

3. Real time results:
You can see the numbers of visitors to your site and its subscribers increase, peak trading times, conversion rates and much more at the touch of a button.

4. Refinement of your strategy:
Basically anything that you capture in your customer journey can be reported on and honed for greater success.

5. Brand Development:
A well maintained website with quality content targeting the needs and adding value to your target audience can provide significant value and lead generation opportunities. The same can be said for utilising social media channels and personalised email marketing.

I would be delighted to hear your views and online marketing challenges, perhaps you can provide some ideas in my next article.

You can call me direct on the number below to discuss your website, social media, or digital marketing needs; anytime with no obligation, I'd even be happy to offer some free advice to you!

Happy Digital Marketing.

Barry Kirkham
Firefly New Media,
Project Manager
0800 955 1266



BRAINS IN THE RAIN

It's not that Ollie is stupid, it's just that Nina is smarter.

Ollie is all heart, spontaneous and doesn't think too much. He just goes for it!

Nina on the other hand will step back and consider the situation carefully. She'll let Ollie go where angels fear to tread and if he doesn't make a complete fool of himself she will give it a go too.

Mind you, Nina's no angel. She's prone to do her own thing. She thinks nothing of breaking from the pack and following her nose, wherever it goes.

Ollie is sent off to track her down on these occasions.

Ollie and Nina are both smart in their own special way.



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Spotlight Community Theatre

Spotlight Community Theatre Productions was founded in 2011 to produce quality theatre productions in the North East of England.

We are a mixed age group, ranging from 7 year olds up to adults. We all have a passion for music and theatre and love putting on shows for the local community, including: Whistle Down the Wind for which we receive a NODA award, The Wizard of Oz (Noda Nominated), Jack the Ripper, A Christmas Carol, The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe and most recently Avenue Q.

As funding for all arts projects is becoming more scarce, we rely on fundraising events like the Easter Fayre and the support of the local community in order to be able to stage shows like the upcoming Alice Through the Looking Glass, coming to the Empire Theatre in November.

Website:
spotlightctp.co.uk/
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If you need any more information, feel free to contact Andrea Shannon on **07946 358 388.**

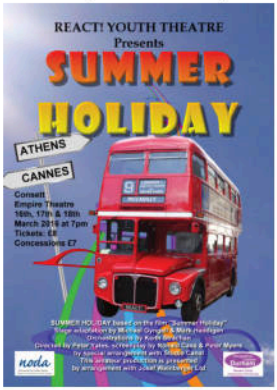
REACT! Youth Theatre invites you to chase away those winter blues.

So pack your suitcases and board the big red bus for their production of, **Summer Holiday**. The highly acclaimed Josef Weinberger Musical Stage Show is at the **Empire Theatre Consett** from **Wednesday 16th to Friday 18th March** performances at **7pm.**

Let Us Take You For A Ride with an evening of fun, laughter and **Foot Tapper** entertainment. Our **Bachelor Boy** and friends go **Round and Round**, as **Time Drags By** waiting for their Summer Holiday. Once their holiday ensues they meet a girl group, **Do Re Mi** and begin their adventure through Europe as our young guys and girls work out if they're going to get together.

This musical comedy will have you wanting to dance in the aisles bringing back the fun of the 60's, including hit songs "***The Young Ones***", "***Bachelor Boy***", and of course "***Summer Holiday***".

Tickets available from the Empire Theatre Consett **01207 218171** (or book online)
Prices £8 (concession £7)





Shotley Bridge Nursery School

They took the children on a trip to The Pavilion at Iveston to wish them **'kung hei fat choi!'** The children had helped to make a Chinese lion dragon and practised a dance which they performed at the restaurant for staff and customers. They had also made their own red envelopes which they gave out to the staff and patrons. We also took a basket of tangerines which is a traditional gift at Chinese New Year. The children enjoyed the experience immensely, as did the staff. We have visited the restaurant at Chinese New Year on a number of occasions and as usual the staff were fantastic and had prepared a buffet of food for the children to enjoy.

Northern England

Steep hills and sudden
Gouged by ice, and water-formed -
This is no civilized landscape
gentle

With demesne and orchard

And sun-kissed downland copses.

It is the terrain of warfare,

Of Northumbrian tearing at Scot,

Of Hadrian walling off the terrifying Pict,

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And Consett huddles 'gainst Pennine snow. - **By Syd Peck**



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By **Dr Jacqui Molyneux**
Prince Bishop Veterinary Hospital

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EASTER TRADITIONS



The name Easter comes from the Anglo-Saxon name for April, Eostermunath. It means the month of beginnings. In the early years of Christianity there was a dispute over the date of Easter.

In 325 the Nicean Council decided it should be on the first Sunday after the full moon after the Spring Equinox. That is why the date of Easter changes each year.

Friday is the day of the week when Jesus was crucified. It is called Good Friday because good meant holy. On that day we eat hot cross buns. (Good meant holy). The origins of hot cross buns are obscure but in pagan times people baked buns and offered them to the gods. Cross buns with the cross representing the cross of Jesus were first mentioned in the 18th century. In the early 19th century people sold hot cross buns in the street from stalls and so they became known as 'hot' cross buns.

The Easter bunny was originally a hare because hares were fertility symbols in the pagan religion and they continued to be associated with Easter after people were converted to Christianity.

Because people in the USA were unfamiliar with hares the Easter hare became a rabbit.

In the Middle Ages Christians were forbidden to eat eggs during Lent (the forty days before Easter). Not surprisingly people were keen to eat eggs when Easter arrived! Some people also said that the egg represented the tomb of Jesus (Although long before Christianity eggs were a pagan symbol of fertility).

In the Middle Ages people painted Easter eggs red but by the 18th century people bought artificial eggs made of various materials to give as gifts at Easter. (Sometimes the artificial eggs contained gifts). Chocolate Easter eggs were first made in the 19th century.

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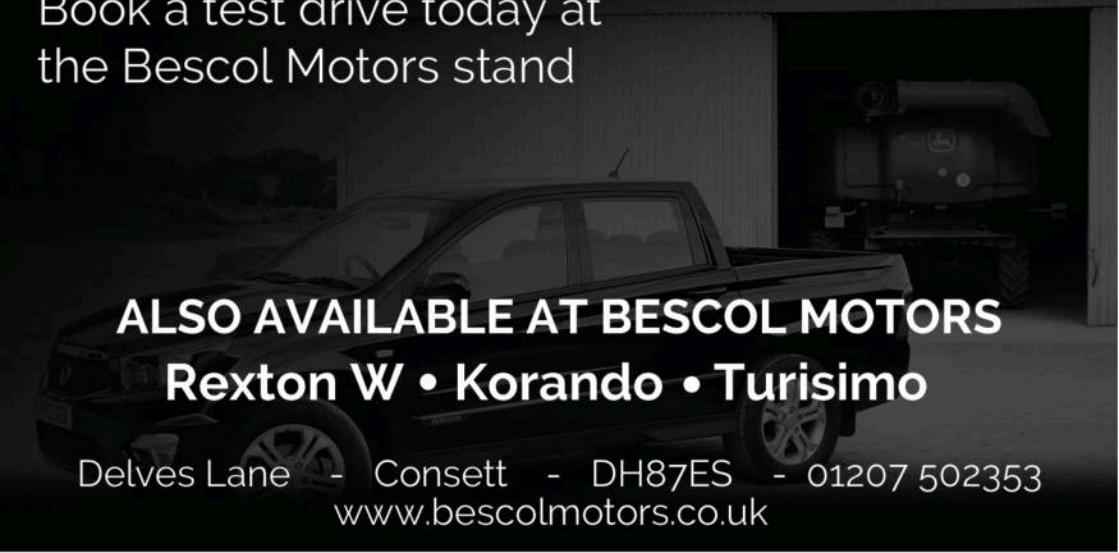


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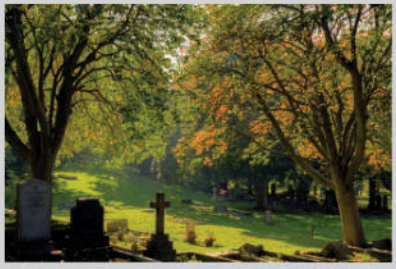


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Photo Corner - By Haley Redshaw

We've been sent some wonderful photos from Haley Redshaw. Top picture is of a cemetery in Blackhill. The bottom picture is a view over Medomsley fields.





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