

newton news

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The 'news' links town and industry

The "news" is pleased to announce that from this issue its circulation will increase considerably to serve the 9,000 people working on the Aycliffe Industrial Estate.

The present circulation of 6,200 will be increased to 7,500 with further increases as our distribution points are established.

The idea basically for this move is an effort to bring about a better co-operation and liaison with town and industry. It seems, at the moment, we are divorced from the Industrial concerns which give the town its employment.

The "news" hopes to be

the instrument of communication which bridges the gap and with this aim in mind have started a page called "The News in Industry".

Many firms on the Industrial Estate have thriving social organisations and it is this, as well as industrial news, we wish to publicise.

One of the features of the page will be a Situations Vacant Column and already we have the support of G.E.C.-A.E.I. who will appear in each issue. We have received real encouragement from the industrialists for this venture and the "news" will endeavour to provide a service worthy of their support.

Valentines Day Wedding



A secretary who works in the Parish Clerks office and lives at Shildon, Miss Margaret Bell, married Mr. Colin Lawson of Newton Aycliffe.

The wedding took place at St. John's Church Shildon, on St. Valentines Day.

The newly weds will take up residence in Marley Road.



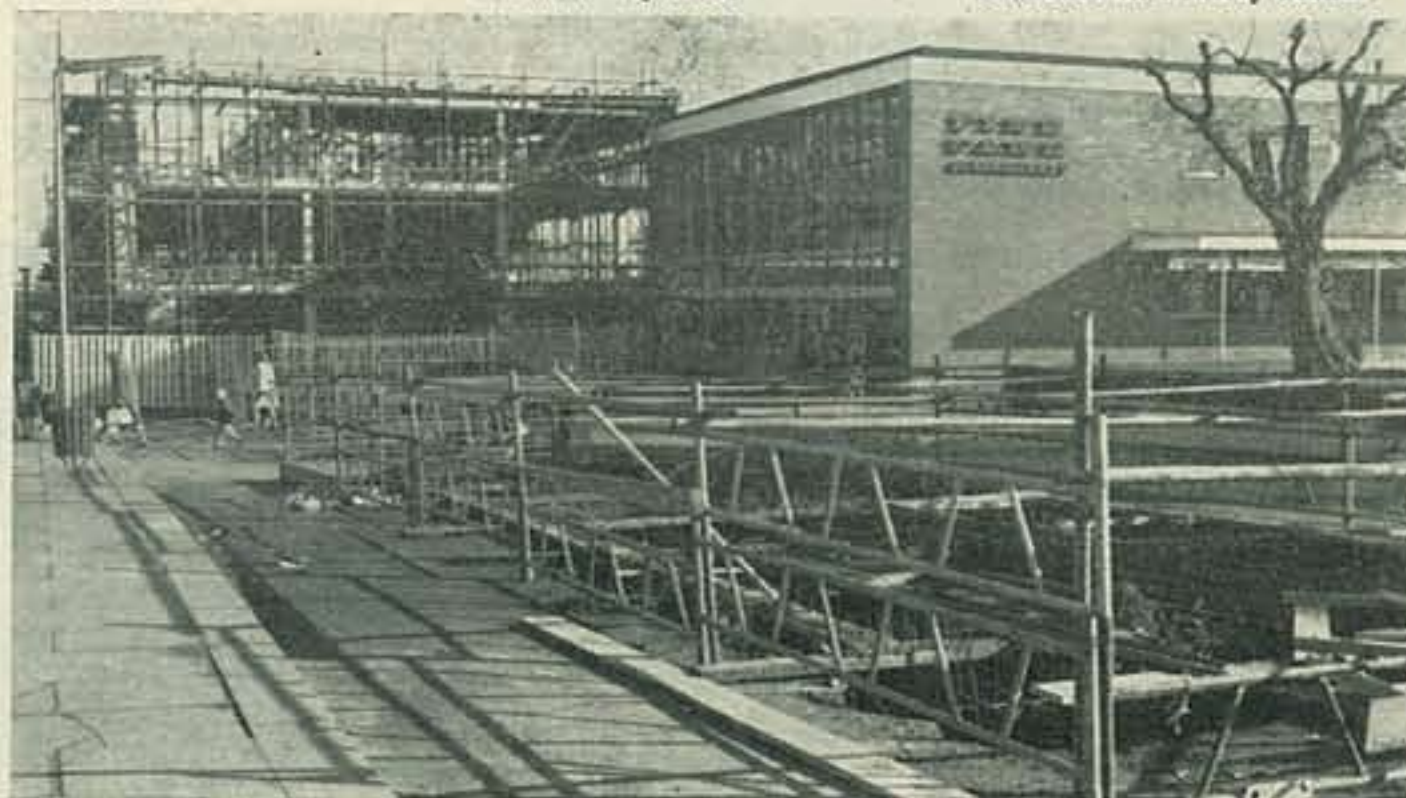
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● TRADERS TO MEET MINISTER

Increasing rents are a problem to everyone and when another 10/- or 15/- go on to our cost of living then we are rightly disturbed.

Industrialists inevitably work in many times this scale of increase and sometimes the thousands of pounds involved are beyond the comprehension of the private individual but one can appreciate that a new rent of 3½ times what was being paid is considerable in anyone's budget.

This is the scale of the problem that the Aycliffe Traders Association is trying to tackle and after going through all the normal channels of complaint they have finally approached the Minister of the North, Tom Urwin, M.P. to enlist his support.

The meeting is to take place on the 17th March and I am sure that all of us who are involved will wish success to their endeavour to protect our Industrial prosperity.

What goes on?

Have you wondered what is going on in the centre of Beveridge Way?

The "news" asked the Development Corporation for details and found that a ramp to the new first floor shops is under construction.

The ramp which starts at the Wool Shop has a very slight gradient which should not

make pram pushing too difficult.

The width will be 15' with metal handrail and vertical bars.

The whole development of the new shops and ramp should be completed in 6 months and Mr. Frear of the Architects Department thinks the town will be serviced by these new shops in the Autumn.

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● SATURDAY CINEMA POPULAR

What a delight to hear the joyful shouts of the kiddies as Laurel and Hardy appear on the screen. The whole performance is really great fun for the kids at this popular Saturday morning Film Show in St. Clares Hall.

"Mr. Ted Carr, projectionist, is doing a marvellous job" said one of the Churchwardens. "He is providing a wonderful service for the town and helping to swell Church funds at the same time" he added.

● NEW TOWN GUIDE A WINNER

The Town Guide printed and published by Newton Press is selling extremely well. We have received orders from Darlington Library and expect other libraries to order too.

It is an informative booklet outlining the town's history and administrative make-up.

There is a street map and guide to Aycliffe Industrial Estate. We believe it is good value for money. Get your copy from your newsagent now. Only 2/6d.

● SHAFTO HOUSE FEAST

Shafto House benefited from the publicity preview at Station Approach Garage Bishop Auckland of the new Hillman Avenger Car. The food that was surplus from the buffet was given by Mr. Joe Morgan to the elderly residents. They were delighted with the food which was made up of a variety of savouries.

Unit with a Tradition

Do you remember the 50th (Northumbrian) Division? Can you recall the last time you saw the once famous TT emblem on a battle dress sleeve or emblazoned on an army vehicle?

If you are in your middle years you might even have been a member of this collection of Northern fighting men, together with the 51st (Highland), spear-headed many of the 8th Army's offensives in North Africa and Sicily and later helped to liberate Europe.

Above all, you will remember that the units of this Division, which learned to become professional in the hard school of total war, were originally Territorial formations composed of "weekend soldiers" with a sprinkling of regular instructors.

The old 50th no longer exists in the organisation of the British Army, but the sons and grandsons of those soldiers of earlier years are still serving as volunteers, in the local units of the Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve.

124 Corps Recovery Coy REME (V) is one such unit still proudly displays the TT sign on Tyneside and in your own town of Newton Aycliffe. The members of this unit are still "weekend soldiers" with their sprinkling of professional instructors, but today there is a vital difference. They, too, are expected to become very professional, but while still in their peacetime locations. In any future conflict there will be no time for them to "learn their job" on the battlefield, and no "phony war" giving them six months to "rub off the rough edges" of inexperience.

In short, the volunteer members of 124 must be battle ready, and this can only be achieved by a serious dedica-

tion to training in their primary war role.

The next time you hear the characteristic roar of a Scammell engine in the streets of your town, be sure to glance in its direction. Its driver and crew may even be neighbours of yours, setting out on a recovery task or engaged in driver training.

Their vehicle will be displaying an honourable symbol which, more than any other, represents the contribution of the North East to the military history of this country.

● TOWN IS FULL OF TALENT

Mr. D. G. Mackintosh, chairman of the newly formed Arts Group, says Newton Aycliffe has more than its share of talented artists.

Local clubs are able to see proof of this in the form of paintings hung in the lounges.

The new group have a membership of fifty and have acquired the use of a room in Marlowe Hall each Monday from 7.30 p.m.

Mr. Mackintosh is very proud of his club and is writing to all interested sources in order to put Newton Aycliffe on the map. "Its time we opened this place up" he said.

"Later on we hope to stage a public showing of Newton Aycliffe Artists," he added.

"We still have room for more members and can offer them an interesting programme, with lectures, painting with models and outings." The membership is varied, and Mr. Mackintosh stressed the point that all the members are just ordinary people who enjoy painting.



● STEVENS TREATS THE LADS

The 25 Newsboys who work for Stevens, Town Centre Newsagency were given their annual treat by the proprietors Ralph and Lilian Holmes on Shrove Tuesday.

The party boarded the bus which took them to Newcastle. First for a meal in a fashionable restaurant and then on to the Essoldo to see West Side Story.

"We do this each year to show the boys our appreciation for their work during the year," Ralph Holmes told the "news".

We are sure the boys appreciate what Ralph and Lilian do for them too.

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MARDI GRAS FUN AT ST. CLARES

An enjoyable evening for all who attended the Mardi Gras at St. Clares Church Hall on Shrove Tuesday.

There was dancing to suit all ages and a cabaret provided by the Sunday School teachers gave much pleasure.

Also entertaining the audience was Syd Brett who sang and the vicar who amazed all with his magic act.

The event was organised by Mr. G. Allison who has recently taken charge of entertainment at St. Clares.

Judging by this event Mr. Allison can expect great support for the next venture.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS TURN MODELS

The Sunday School teachers of St. Clares are organising a Lingerie Party to be held in the Large Hall on Thursday 19th March at 7.30. The clothes will be by Pippa Dee and modelled by the teachers.

The proceeds will be in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind and will augment efforts being made by the Sunday School Children with the collection of silver paper.

The Sunday School teachers are all quite young and can be complimented on their zeal and public spiritedness.

Can woman be equal

by "Harrier"

This currently popular question is of course quite absurd. Equality in that context is a matter of pay for the job and this, by the new Government Bill, they will get.

But, what about other rights which cannot be enforced by any Government?

A woman marries a man (for some vague and mysterious reason called a honey-moon). Brings her back to a draught proof Corporation house and plunges herself into debt to furnish it. And then back to the grindstone in the hope that he may salvage a couple of pints a week out of the disaster. This involves him in turning out of his warm bed at the crack of dawn and slaving all day—to get back home in time, if he is lucky, for Coronation

Women's Column

way."

Many years ago, I was visiting a boy friend, his father was crouched over the fire in his 'long annies'. He said to the boy, "Charlie, go up your mother's stairs and in your mother's bedroom on your mother's bed you will see our trousers". They were a happy family. The father was just acknowledging a fact of life.

In the solemn marriage ceremony, the man declares "... with all my worldly goods, I thee endow." Thereby ending his 'selfish' bachelor life. He then proceeds to provide this woman with all the luxury and security within his capability—starting off with a lush holiday

Street or the party political broadcast.

And what of the wife? What is she doing in her campaign to achieve "equality"? Some yawn their way downstairs in bedroom slippers and dressing gown just in time to catch a bit of Housewives Choice over a cup of tea, and the a leisurely saunter to the Town Centre to collect the tins for the evening meal. Back to bacon and eggs accompanied by Sam Costa. A dozy afternoon with Woman's Hour. A Tupper tea party with a few other endowed females. The tins are emptied into the pans (slow heat for 20 minutes). No wonder she gives her husband an affectionate welcome (you wash and I'll dry).

There is no doubt about it, this type were equal before they married—but now—she is definitely more equal than he is!

On the other hand the working wife who works on an equal basis to men should be paid equal money and equal respect regarding work in the home.

The husband should feel obliged to help with all those "womanly" chores.

If you have any views on this subject write to the "news".

WEIGHT WATCHERS CLUB TO START

Mrs. Little of 17 Ramsey Place is aiming to live up to her name by organising the formation of a Weight Watchers Club.

She has made application to the Medical officer and hopes the first session can be held in the Clinic, Dalton Way quite soon.

Mrs. Little already has 40 persons interested and she stressed that the sessions, which will begin with dieting and later exercises are to be for both men and women, once a week.

Anyone interested in this club can contact Mrs. Little, but she asks that if you require diet sheets to first get the agreement of your doctor.

KARATE CLASS OPENS FOR LADIES

Bryan Crossley former British Champion, and resident in Newton Aycliffe has started a Karate class for Ladies.

It meets at Clarence Hall on Wednesdays at 2.30 and it is aimed at those unable to attend evening classes.

Mr. Crossley recommends this course to all who are seeking healthy recreation and exercise.

NEWTON AYCLIFFE OPERATIC SOCIETY

Newton Aycliffe Operatic Society are in full rehearsal for their next production Pink Champagne which is an adaptation of Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus" or "The Bat".

Make a note in your diary for this performance ? ? ? ? ? A pro-forma for tickets is printed so that you can book your seats well in advance. It is expected to be a "sell out" for this popular musical.

PINK CHAMPAGNE

Booking Form

To the Secretary:

Mrs. Steele, Address to come.

Please reserve tickets. Price

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU



The Newton News talks to Major Ken Coates, Army Cadet Force, who lives at 39 Mellanby Crescent.

Q. Are you a Durham County man.

A. Bishop Middleham was my home as a boy and until 1940 when I was 17 I joined the Royal Air Force where I eventually became a Warrant Officer (Air Crew). After 12 years in the RAF I returned to Durham County for the post of Chief Signals Instructor in 23 Reserve Flying School at Usworth.

Q. How did you come to live at Newton Aycliffe.

A. I was one of the first tenants at Peterlee and in 1954 when the Government closed down the Air Force Reserve at Usworth I was appointed as Supervising Telecommunications Instructional Officer at Catterick Camp and moved into a house in Newton Aycliffe in 1955.

Q. How do you find Newton Aycliffe as a place to live.

A. I find it very pleasant indeed. I have no grumbles or grouses about it.

Q. What does the Army Cadet Force offer young people.

A. It is a very pleasant introduction to the kind of life one may expect in the armed forces. The cadets go on camping expeditions, take part in all kinds of competitions and in general have a really good time.

Q. If you had the choice to live anywhere in the world, where would it be.

A. New Zealand. Here they live the British way of life, mostly in a better climate and with almost limitless opportunities for out of door recreations. Just the place for a man and his family.

Q. With regard to the Army Cadet Force in Newton Aycliffe, what is the routine for joining.

A. The headquarters for south Durham is at the Armoury opposite the British Legion Club. Open every Wednesday and Friday at 7.30 p.m. Anyone interested, just come along and have a good time.

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Newton Aycliffe 3780

The 'news' looks at a new car and one of its promoters

Joe Morgan who lives at Ross Walk, Newton Aycliffe is a very proud man at the moment. He is the local Rootes Dealer and is responsible for showing the latest Hillman Car the Avenger, at his garage at Station Approach, Bishop Auckland.

He is proud because he believes he is promoting a car which is the best car on the market in its class.

Joe Morgan first came to Newton Aycliffe 9 years ago and with his wife Brenda and two sons have settled here quite happily.

Joe was attracted to the town because it lay in between his two garages, Darlington and Bishop Auckland.

Of the town he says, "We like many others thought we would stay here until we found something better, but quite frankly we haven't found anything better."

I believe the Corporation are doing their best and have done as much as is possible under the circumstances," he said.

Station Approach Garage is the only Rootes Dealer in the Bishop Auckland area and Joe Morgan has many customers in Newton Aycliffe who know him for his fair, value for money dealings. Joe was a founder member of Newton Aycliffe Round Table and was Chairman in the 1968 session.

Of the new Avenger Joe says, "I have never known such interest in a new car—over 500 people have visited the Station Approach Garage at Bishop Auckland in the fortnight since its release."

The "news" reporter visited Station Approach Garage to see the Avenger and can recommend readers take the opportunity to see the demonstration models. The car is undoubtedly very attractive both in looks and price. The interior is particularly comfortable and

well finished while the exterior provides a sleekness worthy of a "car for the seventies."

Newton Aycliffe
OPERATIC SOCIETY

Pink Champagne

MARCH 31st - APRIL 4th

Tickets can be booked in advance by using booking form on previous pages and sending it to the Secretary Mrs. Steele, 66 Whinlatter Place.

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More room—ample for 5 adults and all the family's luggage.

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Avenger de Luxe '1250', £766*. Avenger Super '1250', £811*.

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AUTHORISED DEALER



ROOTES

Letter

Sir,

I've just been re-reading the "Newton News" of 27th Jan.—in particular the Motoring Quiz on page 10—and I would like to take issue on two answers.

Question: Do you pay the same attention to your driving on the open road as you do in towns?

The answer suggested as correct is "I take more care in towns."

Now, for a quiz which carries acknowledgment to Durham Constabulary, this is a shattering answer. The only correct answer is "Yes", a really good driver pays 100% attention to his driving—always.

There is one other answer with which I cannot agree.

Question: Do you think you are to blame when you have to brake suddenly?

The required answer is "Yes" and for many people, particularly those who often have to brake suddenly, is the correct one. However, other people rarely need to brake suddenly because they are constantly on the alert and, on the very rare occasions when they do brake suddenly, it is because of some unforeseeable reason—e.g. a large hole suddenly appearing right in their path.

The scoring worries me too. Total possible marks are 60 so a score of 50 does not, as you suggest, indicate a good driver. 100% score could be called a "good" driver—anything less than 100% is less than good.

K. Collins-Todd
3 Church Close.

"This should benefit all . . ."

A Foreword by Mr. D. H. L. WAITER, Chairman
Aycliffe and District Traders Association Ltd.

I believe that half the people who work on the Aycliffe Industrial Estate are residing away from Newton Aycliffe and they make a very valuable contribution to Company's performance and skills.

However, I do not believe they would detract from the bond which must be obvious between Newtonians and the Aycliffe Industrialists. Indeed, the close ties are more evident to the people involved than the Authorities, on present organisation.

The prosperity of both facets of our community are interdependent and one of the purposes of the "news" Industrial feature is to report business news which I hope my colleagues of the Aycliffe Traders Association will support and develop as a means of communication.

Newtonians do face a challenge in building a community but they have achieved much to date. If this new effort on the part of the "Newton News" is used to advantage then I am sure that it will benefit all concerned.

D. H. L. Waiter.

THRISLINGTON ENGINEERING

Frank Widdall, a partition assembler of this company, returned from Crufts Dog Show with a first prize in his dogs class plus several other awards.

Thrislington have recently gained some major contracts, among them are Fords at Dagenham and 2 Nuclear Power Stations. The company manufacture office partitioning.

REMPLOY LTD.

Will be celebrating their 25th anniversary on 17th April. They now employ 70 people of which 65 are disabled.

A social will take place on the premises and guest speakers have been invited.

NEW FACTORY AT LEASIDE

A new chemical factory has opened at Aycliffe. Kraken Chemical Co. under the directorship of Mr. Williams who lives at Langdale Place.



A new snow clearer to be manufactured at Aycliffe

FLYMO BRING OUT NEW MACHINE

Flymo Ltd. have introduced another machine which like their lawn mower is original and could open up a new market for them.

It is a snow clearing machine called a "Toro Snowhound".

It is capable of moving one ton of snow per minute and is assembled at Flymo, Aycliffe Industrial Estate from parts manufactured in the U.S.A.

The machine is ideally suited for Schools, Local Authorities, Airports and other Institutional applications as well as Car drives, footpaths etc.

With about 160 employees remaining at the works, (23 men paid off over the weekend) Mr. F. E. Buttell, secretary and a director, said last Tuesday that more than two dozen firms have shown an interest in taking over the Works which has gone into voluntary liquidation.

"But, if no one steps in to save the company, it will close down by the end of June. We are still hoping that one of these firms might take us over but we have had to start a run down of the company just in case. I don't think the skilled people will have any difficulty in finding other jobs."

The "news" in industry

Featuring Industrial and Social News of Aycliffe Industrial Estate

"NEWS" TRAVELS FAST

The "news" was taken to Sweden last week.

Mr. Dahlkvist, Managing Director of S.A.B. took the issue which published S.A.B. expansion details to the head office in Sweden.

OBITUARY

Mr. Harry Spittlehouse, the longest serving member of Toledo Woodhead Springs Limited, died at the age of 71 on Saturday morning the 14th February, 1970.

He joined Mr. Frank Woodhead in 1938 at the very commencement of the Company, became a Director in 1946 and was appointed Chairman and Managing Director in 1964 upon the death of Mr. Frank Woodhead. He resigned from the Chairmanship in 1968 but remained on the Board as a Consultant.

His technical knowledge and long experience have, of recent years, materially helped the Company to meet some of the new technical developments and he will be missed both for his knowledge and experience and for his qualities as a man.

BUS SERVICE

With regard to Bus Services from the Industrial Estate it is reported that Mr. George Summerson met with the Executives of Tallents to thrash out the transport problems. Results maybe an improved service.

TALLENT ENGINEERING

Feverish activity between now and Easter is reported. In an effort to increase production the Machine Shop from No. 1 factory will be moved to No. 2 factory.

On the social side the Senior Staff and Directors are holding their Annual Dinner at Ramside Hall.

The Chairman of the group Mr. Michael Colston will be present along with the Director of the boards of Tallents and Colston.

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WORKING HOURS: 7.30 a.m. to 4.0 p.m.

Why not phone Mrs. McCabe, in our Personnel Department to arrange an interview, or call personally between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday to Friday

Saturday morning interviews 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

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● TRADERS ENJOY ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

Approximately 150 members and guests of Newton Aycliffe Chamber of Trade enjoyed a Dinner Dance at Ramside Hall on February 11th.

After an excellent meal the President Mr. Colin Buck welcomed all the guests and made his personal thanks to the organisers and donors of gifts.

Replying on behalf of the guests Mr. A. V. Williams, General Manager of Aycliffe Development Corporation thanked the Chamber for inviting him along. He remarked it was a gesture of Christian Charity that he should be invited bearing in mind the way the Town Centre was being altered by the Corporation at this moment.

After the speeches the dancing commenced and carried on until 1 a.m. when traders went home to catch a few hours sleep before starting another day of shop keeping.

Nearly New Shop

in aid of N.S.P.C.C.
OVER 60 CLUB
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Thursday and Friday
March 19th and 20th

Any gifts of Clothing, Books, Household goods gratefully accepted at:—
11 Cumby Road,
50 Westmorland Way,
2 Henson Grove.



Mr. A. V. Williams, General Manager of Aycliffe Development Corporation, addresses members and guests at the Chamber of Trade Annual Dinner and Dance.

Any complaints?

asks IRIS COLLINS

● LET'S START A "BUY A BRICK FUND"

What a wonderful concert the Apollo Male Voice Choir gave us in the Methodist Church on January 31st, the soloists excelled themselves. I must express my gratitude to the people who organised such a marvellous evening's entertainment, but a shame that such a noted choir of sixty men had to cramp themselves into such a small space and shuffle about to allow the soloist to come forward to entertain.

This fortunately did not effect the quality of the entertainment but went to prove even more the great necessity for a good concert hall or arts Hall, call it what you may, for the Towns folk of Newton Aycliffe.

The organisations who put on such excellent concerts, shows and plays and the visiting artists deserve better treatment and in my opinion an Arts Centre should be built now, plans have been published recently by the Darlington Rural District Council for a new Recreation Centre to be built in the town centre, and this I am told includes an Arts hall, but please let us see the building of it start soon, but I know as many of you will that it will probably be the hard cash that will hold this project up. Why wait for the Authority to say we can't get a big enough grant, lets start a "buy a brick campaign" and the people of Newton Aycliffe show them that it can be done.

● OBLITERATE THE ODOUR

Now how about that smell? I know of individuals who have complained, but where has it got us. If only some large bodies of townsfolk would get together and make a big halaballoo and let them know that we don't want that smell. Isn't it nauseating to wake up in the morning, and instead of taking in lungfuls of fresh morning air you have this sickly horrible odour which penetrates into the home. We all know the offending factory and realise it is a living for many people, but surely in this day and age of science and technology something could be done to obliterate the odour. So lets have less talk and grumbles and start some action!

● SUGGESTIONS TO THE CORPORATION

Would it not be a good idea if the corporation removed some kerb stones and replaced them with small slopes, especially around the town centre to help people with prams and wheel chairs. I've seen many a person having quite a struggle to cross a road by firstly having to bump prams and wheel chairs down a kerb and then to get over a kerb at the other side. Some of the kerbs are quite a depth, and how about having the railing removed between the new car park and rent office, to make a small walk through. It would save that walk around the office or the back ache of ducking under the rail.

● IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN THE "NEWS"

Over recent issues we have been much encouraged by the response our advertisers gain from the news.

In the last issue a small advertisement costing 1/- brought in stacks of replies.

Another instance was the opening of E.L.P. Stores.

We announced they were open "now" in an advertisement which wasn't strictly true as the "news" went out too early.

Consequently people were knocking on the door on the Saturday prior to Monday—day of opening.

There were so many people waiting that the shop had to open.

These are just two instances which prove advertising pays in the "news".

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Nearer to the War in Africa

continuing FIFTY YEARS OF MUSIC AND ADVENTURE

by MRS. F. M. FORD of Newton Aycliffe

Looking back over the years, the journey to Malta began an almost fairy tale of living for the next seven years. We had put our household goods into store for an estimated two and a half years. We never saw them again. It was more difficult in those days, to save, than it is even today. Most of our savings went on a good piano. We seemed to walk every street in London to get the right things for a home. Building up for the 'civilian' times to come. In 1941 we received a letter, "We regret to advise you that your goods were destroyed by enemy action." Apparently, a bomb through the stores roof had put paid to our collection.

However, nothing marred my excitement as I boarded the Rome Express at the Paris Gare du Nord railway terminus. It was my first real contact with the French and Italian people.

They express themselves in public with apparently no reserve. I was fascinated by the prolonged tearful farewells which continued long after the train had moved away—people jumping on to the long platform as the train gathered speed. And so on to Turin, Rome, Naples and Sicily.

I was afraid to sleep in case I missed anything. To me, it was a fairyland journey through vineyards, mountain tunnels and that fantastic coastal journey—almost touching the sea at times, down to Southern

Italy and Sicily. Every hundred miles was a different world.

The sea journey from Sicily to Malta was very rough and I was quite relieved to find that I was a 'good sailor'—no sickness.

My husband was away at sea the day before Xmas Eve but he had made arrangements for me to be met by a Maltese family and to stay at the Y.W.C.A. On Xmas Eve, his ship returned to port and we moved into a furnished flat in Sliema. We spent all Xmas Day scrubbing it out.

On Boxing Day, we took a cab to the high ground at Valetta the island capital. From here, is a marvellous view of the Grand Harbour where at anchor, lay the might of the Mediterranean Fleet. Battleships, Aircraft Carriers, Battle Cruisers, Light Cruisers, Destroyers, Fleet Auxiliaries, and further up the harbour, the Submarines, Mine Sweepers and myriads of all kinds of craft. This being Boxing Day, quite a number of them were dressed up for the evening dances and all the ships were being busily attended by Admirals Barges, picket boats and Maltese passenger craft (dghaisas). The sounds of bugles mixed with church bells (Malta is an island of churches) added a fairyland touch to the whole scene which I shall never forget.

But we had to get back to Sliema. The Chief and Petty

Officers of the Fleet were giving a dance in the Queen's Hall, Sliema. It was a full dress affair with guests from the Green Howards and the Royal Air Force. My introduction to the splendour which almost always attended dances given by the Services.

However, the glittering life which this first pageantry promised, was soon to be threatened by Adolf Hitler.

Malta enjoys nearly nine months of summer weather. The island is about the same size as the Isle of Wight with magnificent bathing and surf riding. Once you had your home set up, there was very little work to do. For 2/6, a Maltese girl would come in and wash out the entire flat, floors, stairs and walls; and do the shopping if you wished. The Maltese are grand people and we are fortunate to have had their friendship during nearly 200 years of our association with them.

Servicemen's wives soon form into compact little 'cliques' and our days were repeats of almost nothing to do but dress, tennis, shopping, picnics and of course the dances, dinners and tombola (bingo) which was a national pastime in Malta before England ever heard of it.

Threats of war, we read about in the newspapers but apart from sometimes feeling slight twinges of apprehension, we felt that our sunshine life would go on. War was for someone else.

Mussolini and his Fascists were only a very short distance away from Malta. But, in a pretence of friendship he sent the Italian heavy cruiser "Julius Caesar" on a good will visit to Malta and the Royal Navy were the hosts to the obviously selected Italian sailors. We gave them a grand dance and dinner and in return we were their guests on board the Julius Caesar. The time was soon to come when we would be trying to kill each other.

The 1938 Emergency Call Up, scattered the Fleet from Malta to their emergency stations around the Mediterranean and the wives who were left behind had to decide whether to get back to England as quickly as possible—or chance the war scare blowing over.

We all considered this to be a heck of a nuisance, just when life was becoming one long picnic.

The scare eased off. But the ships had done their 'tuning up' for war. And life was not resumed as before. The functions went on but with one ear listening for the call. The newspapers were headlining 'Peace' but we knew that the Royal Navy was gearing up to war readiness. The Standing order was "In Time of Peace—Prepare for War" this was the Royal Naval Gunnery School motto. Ships were moving away almost every day and the wives were deciding one way or another—that the party was over and it was time to go home. A few of us were planning to stay.

My husband's ship was (as I learned later) in North Africa, helping to set up bomber bases near to Oran (in French Africa). Apparently the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force did not believe the 'peace' news in the



newspapers. The rumour was that the Fleet would, in the event of war, move to new bases in Egypt.

So—I began to look out for a passage to Egypt and the opportunity presented itself when the P. & O. liner "Viceroy of India" called at Malta. I boarded the ship and found the purser. He very firmly told me that there were no vacant berths and that the ship would sail that very night. I was allowed to visit the ship's main lounge—a vast luxurious space. And with a splendid piano. The lounge was thronged with passengers. I could never resist a good piano and I sat and played from Bach to

Beethoven through Grand Hotel and community singing. And did they sing!

The Chief Steward came along to say that he'd heard that I was seeking a passage to Egypt. And that, if I paid a nominal sum of £9, there would be a first class berth available subject to one condition. That I played the piano at least once a day (if sea conditions permitted).

Before you could say 'Jack Robinson' I had my suitcases on board and was off to Egypt! And a little nearer to the war which was coming in North Africa.

Next Issue: INTERLUDE IN EGYPT

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Round Table have fun at 'Hippy Sit-in'

What a wonderful collection of Hippies turned up for the Newton Aycliffe Round Table "Sit-in" at the White Horse Hotel on Valentines Night. The effort put in by many to dress up must have taken hours. There were over 100 present and each person entered into the spirit of it by leaving

their shoes and socks at the door and squatting on the floor to eat and drink. There was plenty of "Hippy type" music and dancing, and also singing when Margaret and Walter Young of the "Candle-liters" made a guest appearance to lead folk singing. This was one of the high-

lights of the evening and it was good to hear them sing again. Afterwards, Tabler Ken Stewart who organised the event, presented the duo with a giant Easter Egg. There were prizes too for the Best or should I say Worst dressed male and female hippy

and various prizes for games. The idea was novel, the atmosphere authentic — this could catch on! Newton Aycliffe Round Table always put on good entertainment and we hear of other events coming up shortly Cheese and Wine, Gentleman's Evening, Barn Dance.

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PRIZE LETTER WINNER

The editor has chosen Mr. Ray Allison's letter on bus services as the prize letter of the month. He will receive a set of printed stationary. Why not have a try yourself. Write a letter on any subject to the Editor, News Office, Greenwell Rd, Newton Aycliffe.

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