

# Newton News

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## Dennis Steavenson to quit as ADC Chairman after his present term of office



Dennis Steavenson's term of office as Chairman of the ADC ends in November and, as he has indicated unwillingness to carry on, a successor is now being sought. The process of selection has begun and an announcement will be made in the next few weeks.

It is with some regret that we see Dennis leave the position as he has proved to be an outstanding chairman. He changed the image of the Corporation from the day he arrived, and since then has worked with enthusiasm in bringing Aycliffe and Peterlee to the fore.

His talent has been recognised in many circles and with appointments to various important committees he has demonstrated an undeniable flair. Dennis Steavenson's efforts and achievements on behalf of Newton Aycliffe are numerous and one would hope our Civic leaders will recognise his work in some tangible form.

## DELAY IN SALE OF COUNCIL HOUSES IS INTOLERABLE

OVER A YEAR AGO tenants interested in buying their Council house thought their opportunity had arrived.

The new Government, whose policy was to increase home ownership, instructed Councils to get on and sell their property at concessionary prices to sitting tenants.

Yet our own Sedgefield District Council, who have stated they do not in principle oppose the sale of houses, have done nothing but talk.

Meanwhile all over the country other housing authorities are complying with the Government's request.

Two thousand people in Newton Aycliffe are still waiting for some answers and councillors should remember this is a sizeable number of votes.

We offer our columns to those Councillors who feel they can give a good reply justifying the delay in the sale of council houses.

### Questionnaire

Sedgefield did send out a questionnaire to ascertain what interest there was in the district. This was seen widely as a means to forestall the issue. Or perhaps they didn't expect such an overwhelming response from Newtonians. They have also prepared a scheme outlining the terms of sale, but up to date they have got no further forward.

Our Town Council have debated the matter at great length and have minuted the following motion which was carried:—

"This council views with alarm the absence of any action on the sale of council houses and asks all members to put all possible pressure on Sedgefield District Council to sell, bearing in mind that they raised the hopes of some 2,000 people. The delay in sales is intolerable."

### "More talk"

This is all very well, but it only adds up to more talk. When are our District Councillors, some of whom sit also on the Town Council, going to carry the views of the people to the Council Chambers? When are these councillors really going to represent the people they serve?

## MP to preach at St. Clare's

On Sunday, 21st September, our MP Derek Foster will be guest preacher at St. Clare's morning service. Mr Foster, a prominent Salvation Army officer, is a good speaker and his sermon should be interesting.

## Odeon Film Centre

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**THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** (A)
- This Week  
**THE WARLORDS OF ATLANTIS** (A)  
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**THE WATER BABIES** (U)  
Sun. 3.45, 6.05, 8.25, W'days 1.20, 3.45, 6.05, 8.30  
**FREE AS A BIRD** (U)  
Sun. 3.00, 5.25, 7.45, W'days 3.00, 5.25, 7.45  
Wed. Morn. 13th Aug. at 10 a.m.  
The greatest daredevil of them all  
Evil Knievel in **VIVA KNIEVEL** (A)  
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Wed. Morn. 20th Aug. at 10.00 a.m.  
**GODZILLA v. THE COSMIC MONSTERS** (A)  
Plus Cartoons. Child 30p. Adult 60p.  
ALL PROGRAMMES FINISH AT 10.00 p.m.

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It is our experience that the overwhelming number of houses sold in Newton Aycliffe sell to people already living in the town. As the only Estate Agents offering a truly local service with a full office in the Town Centre, please remember whether buying or selling, for Property in Newton Aycliffe, it has to be CLOSE & HOLMES. As a further extension of our service to the public we are now also able to offer a full Mortgage Advisory Service and Insurance Broking Service. Members of the public may call for quotations without any obligation. Anyone wishing to discuss Mortgages should arrange to talk to Mr Holmes, who is readily available to help at all times.

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BY LORD ANTHONY

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The Flymo offices in Redworth Way.

## Flymo sales hit all-time high

Record half-year sales of £18.5m have been announced by Flymo Limited, Europe's largest manufacturer of powered mowers. Results are on target for another annual peak against the previous best £21m last year.

Second quarter sales of £8.6m in 1980 compare with £5.8m for the similar period last year — the previous high.

Announcing the record figures Flymo Managing Director Peter Bullock said current production exceeds 700,000 mowers. Output in 1981 will be substantially

increased for the fourth consecutive year. Exports in 1980 are expected to be up 44 per cent on last year.

So far this year £1.5m had been invested in plant and equipment and more employees will be engaged at the world headquarters complex at Aycliffe.

Mr Bullock forecast continued success with the introduction of seven new products to the Flymo lawnmower range in Autumn 1980 in addition to a range of nine Flymo Partner chain saws.

# ROAD POLICY COULD PROVE "RECIPE FOR CHAOS"

Failure to invest more in the country's road network could be a "recipe for chaos" in years ahead the RAC warned today.

It is also claimed that the Government's decision to abandon some motorway projects and defer others could create "disaster areas."

These are among the points made by the RAC in a submission to the House of Commons Transport Committee about the Government's White Paper on roads in England.

Mr Tony Lee, the RAC's Director of Public Affairs, commented: "We have said it will be deplorable if large numbers of road deaths and injuries must be anticipated due to the failure of authority to have the courage to make necessary national plans regardless of local objections and using reduction of resources as an additional excuse to justify such feeble road planning."

He said that the decision to withdraw proposals for a new section of the M3 motorway to replace the out-of-date and heavily

used Winchester by-pass was a typical example.

"Once again this will leave an extremely dangerous pinch-point on to which traffic will pour from adjoining lengths of motorway." Accident statistics submitted to the Transport Committee show that the death rate on the Winchester by-pass in recent years has been more than four times worse than on the existing length of the M3 motorway.

The submission described the Government's promise to "take a fresh look" at the situation in due course as a futile endeavour to cover up the creation of an insuperable problem for a future Minister of Transport.

Other missing motorways criticised in the RAC's submission are the M23 extension leading from Gatwick Airport towards Central London which it is proposed to abandon, and the Ashford-Maidstone section of the

M20, construction of which has been deferred and stated not to be urgently needed.

Mr Lee said the RAC recognised the need to cut public expenditure in view of the current economic situation but found it extremely disturbing that successive Governments had failed to invest sufficient money to improve and maintain Britain's road network to essential standards.

"The strategic main road network should be regarded as an indispensable national asset. More resources to improve and expand it should be made available and regarded as essential capital investment, especially to facilitate

efficient movement of traffic for industrial and trading purposes.

"Road transport users justifiably expect to obtain value for money in return for the ever increasing taxation they pay — estimated to provide about £6,900 million to the National Exchequer during the current financial year.

"Greater investment in highways is essential to limit the growth of other transport costs — especially because good roads reduce fuel consumption." Mr Lee said that recent official forecasts confirmed that road traffic was expected by the end of the century to exceed present day levels by some 25 to 60 per cent.

"Therefore failure to invest greater resources in order to plan for the future could be a recipe for chaos in the years ahead," he added.

## Inner Wheel Club continue to assist the community

A very successful coffee evening was held by the Inner Wheel Club at the Methodist Church Coffee Lounge in Newton Aycliffe on Thursday, 24th July, when the proceeds raised from various functions were distributed to various organisations and individuals in Newton Aycliffe.

The evening was presided over by incoming President Mrs Mary Vadgama and the retiring president Mrs Lorna Stanwix made the presentations. Among the presentations were two braille machines for the use of two blind persons in Newton Aycliffe and portable weighing scales for the use of district nurses and midwives weighing babies in their homes.

Help was given to enable a handicapped family enjoy a much needed holiday, and cheques were presented to the Newton Aycliffe Swimming Club for the Disabled, the Wishing Well Club, the

Wednesday Club and the local Marriage Guidance Council.

Donations during the year had been made to the Kampuchean Appeal and West African Appeal.

The event was the culmination of a very successful year and the club hope to go from strength to strength in helping the local community from their fund raising efforts.

## Flower Show for St. Clare's

As part of the Jubilee Celebrations the Parish Church of St. Clare is to hold an exhibition and flower show from September 18th to 21st inclusive.

The plan is to utilise the whole of the premises during this period, as follows:—

The church will be used for a flower festival, telling the story of our local history from the earliest times, through to today, and using within it exhibits of interest from down the ages, culled from local churches, civics and industrial sources.

The main hall will offer an exhibition of our church's current work and action, presented by our various organisations, showing what there is to offer today.

The new hall will be the site for an industrial exhibition of current interest to all residents of the town. It will be about what goes on in our own industrial estate.

The lounge (redecorated) will be the cafeteria, providing coffee and light refreshments throughout.

Details have yet to be finished, but this will be a major effort involving a lot of people. Offers of help gratefully received by the Vicar. Flower arranging, model making, the arranging and display of items, etc., are all tasks to be done, as well as such jobs as catering (M.U. are looking after this), stewarding and security.

## New vicar

The Rev. Michael Tippere, the new Vicar of St. Andrew's, Aycliffe Village, will be inducted on Monday, 15th September.

## REGIONAL GRANT DELAYS CAN CAUSE CLOSURES

Mr James Briggs, a director of Tolwood Multifasteners, has enlisted the help of MP Derek Foster in getting the Government to speed up the payment of regional grants.

Mr Briggs complains the delays put undue pressure on small companies who need prompt payment to help cash flow.

If the application form is correctly completed the payments are not too long in coming, but any queries result in very long delays indeed.

The Government department will not process the payment until the form is correct in every detail. Mr Briggs hopes the Government can start the payment procedure and clear up any queries during the four months between the date of application and sending the grant.

Derek Foster has written to the Secretary of State asking the matter be given urgent attention as he believes these sort of delays cause closures, and our region can ill afford more.

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# CIVIC THEATRE ENLIST TOP LINE STARS FOR THE AUTUMN SEASON

Darlington Civic Theatre's Autumn season opens on Saturday, 13th September, with the Radio Cleveland Northern Lights Talent competition, which takes up the curtain onto an array of entertainment of drama, opera, ballet, pantomime, musicals and childrens theatre. Theatre director, Andrew Jowett, considers this to be one of the best programmes ever, with top line stars and companies coming to Darlington

with a feast of entertainment unrivalled in the North East "theatreland".

**Saturday, 13th Sept.: Northern Lights.** For the first time, Darlington is entering a team of local talent into the Radio Cleveland sponsored competition. This is your chance to come and support Darlington in a friendly challenge to arrest the 'Top Town' title from Stockton. Ten local acts will be appearing, and the live performance will be recorded and broadcast at a later date on Radio Cleveland.

**Wednesday, 17th Sept.: A Gala Evening of Ballet.** Darlington will play host to the London City Ballet and will be presenting in Darlington some of the biggest names in British Ballet. This is Darlington's opportunity to see stars from the world-renowned National Ballet Companies, including Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet, London Festival Ballet and Scottish Ballet, with eight principals who will include prima ballerinas of these companies and

leading male dancers. This will be an evening to rival the Margot Fonteyn Gala of five years ago.

**Thursday 18th and Sat. 19th Sept. Rod Hull and Emu.** One of the funniest acts ever to appear on the British stage and television will be arriving in Darlington on September 18th when Rod Hull and his crazy companion Emu descend on Darlington to create havoc in his own inimitable style. Supported by Billy Dainty who appeared with Emu on children's television, in the programme E.B.C. This will be two nights of variety with supporting bill — Anna-Lou and Maria, and International pianist Mike Terry. There will be great entertainment for all the family with some very generous children's concessions available.

**Friday, 19th Sept.: John Pollard Brass Ensemble.** For the lovers of Brass Music, this ensemble will be presenting an exciting programme of classical and modern music to suit all tastes.

**Monday 22nd to Sat. 27th Sept.: Find The Lady.** The 'First lady of Comedy' Molly Sugden (Mrs Slocombe from Are You Being Served) will be appearing in Darlington in Michael Pertwee's hilarious comedy whodunit, now playing to smash-hit business in Eastbourne. "Find the Lady" is a farcical comedy with a strong

suspense theme, crackling with seemingly inexhaustible invention and a wit that never flags. Starring opposiet Molly Sugden is Tony Adams, the heart-throb Doctor Bywater from "General Hospital" and more recently Adam Chance in "Crossroads." This promises to be a superb week of comedy, and early booking is advisable.

**Tuesday 30th Sept. to Saturday 4th Oct.: I Am Who I Am.** Once more Cambridge Theatre Company returns to present a superb drama in Darlington, with the first of two productions for the Autumn. "I Am Who I Am" which was an amazing success when first presented two years ago, was written by Royce Ryton, seen recently in Darlington acting in "Schooldays" and "The Unvarnished Truth," who wrote the smash-hit play "Crown Matrimonial" which centred around the abdication of Edward VIII. This time he has turned his attention on the Russian royal family, and in particular the Grand Duchess Anastasia. This historical drama is centred around the ever-popular mystery that has hinted that Anastasia was saved from the Bolshevik Revolution. Is she still alive today? This is an amazing play written with great perception, which attempts to unravel the complex series of events centred around "the Princess that saved the Revolution" and stars Laurence Payne, famous for his television portrayal of 'Sexton Blake'.

Details of shows scheduled for later in the season will be published at a future date.



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## CUTS IN DRIVING TEST DELAYS

Driving test delays have been cut by seven weeks in the past nine months, according to an RAC survey announced recently. Average waiting time is now 20 weeks, compared with 27 weeks in October 1979 when the RAC conducted a similar survey.

The biggest reduction is in the South Midlands area, which was one of the worst areas when the RAC carried out its previous survey. The average waiting time is now 13 weeks there, compared to 34 last year.

In the far north of England the average delay time is still 14 weeks, and across the border in Scotland the average delay of 24 weeks also remains unchanged. In Yorkshire, delays have been cut by about nine weeks, but in the Lancashire area around Manchester the cut is only about one week.

Mr Tony Lee, the RAC's Director of Public Affairs, said: "This is really heartening news for the thousands of learner drivers who are waiting to take their tests. It shows that the welcome vigorous efforts made by the Transport Minister to recruit more examiners are already producing

results and waiting times are on the downward trend."

Mr Lee repeated the RAC's earlier advice to learner drivers to "shop around" if they were prepared to move out of their areas to take a test. In East Anglia, for example, some centres have delays of only four weeks, while in the Midlands and Southern Counties centres are offering tests of five weeks from the time of receiving the application.

## OFFICIAL OPENING OF AVON COURT

The Royal British Legion Housing Association officially open Avon Court at Burnhill Way on Sunday, 14th September.

A special parade is arranged with standard bearers and the town band.

Lord Barnard will officiate and representatives of Christian Churches within Newton Aycliffe will take part in the service of dedication.

Mr H. M. Wood, chairman of Avon Court, will propose the vote of thanks. Guests will be given a conducted tour of the new flats and communal area.

## Brownies say thanks

Neville Parade Brownies would like to say thank you to all Newtonians who supported them in their recent "Sponsored Wellie Hoy" in aid of the Give a Kid a Break Appeal. The sum of £206.53 was raised by the Brownies and handed over to the leaders of the Methodist Youth Club who will be taking a party of underprivileged children on holiday in August.

## Enjoyable weekend for Eskimo

Our adopted ship's personnel had a good time over last weekend during their visit to our town.

The helicopter landing was a highlight for the youngsters and no doubt earned the Navy a few potential recruits.

The future of H.M.S. Eskimo is still unknown but plans to put the ship in moth balls are to be soon implemented.

What happens after that no one seems to know. It is possible, however, that we may get another ship.

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★ THE NEW 12 SPEED RACING CYCLE £91.00 ★



Durham County Council have informed our Town Council that any by-pass for Aycliffe Village would not be possible until after 1988!

"We are developing a range of sites and 500,000 square feet of factory space," said Mr Inglis. "All this was planned and begun before the recession and we feared we would end up with a mass of empty factories and egg on our faces, so we worked even harder to promote Peterlee. Now the

Details of the individual companies will be announced as soon as negotiations are completed. Their employment within two years is expected to exceed 200.

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DEADLINE 1.00 p.m. WEDNESDAY PRECEDING  
PUBLICATION DATE