

Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Magazine

Editorial and Advertising contact: paul@newtonnews.co.uk - Telephone: 01325 300212 - www.newtonnews.co.uk



Tesco, Helping the Local Community

See page 2 for more

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PAUL HOWELL
MP for Sedgefield



Greenfield Arts Announce New Exhibition



Greenfield Arts are delighted to welcome back artist Bill Hindmarsh to the Greenfield Gallery. Bill's exhibition People and Places, has a new place in our programme and is an exhibition that showcases Bill's 'eclectic mix of subject and media' including previously unseen and current work.

Bill is a renowned artist who lives and works in the north east of England. His work includes a strand of work that draws upon his time working in the coalfields which explores a sense of place and time with a unique perception. The exhibition runs from Thursday 18th March 2021 to Wednesday 5th May 2021 and boasts a number of opportunities to engage and connect with the exhibition.

Greenfield Arts are offering an opportunity to meet the artist, this event will take place online and will feature a conversation with Bill and the chance to find out more about the man and his art. There will also be creative challenges that will offer the chance for our community to connect and create work inspired by People and Places.

We are also offering a video workshop which will be led by artist Graham Stead who will help you explore the art of capturing people and the benefits and skills of sketching. Inspired by the exhibition Graham will support you to develop your skills and capture your own subjects.

Our current exhibition Finders, Seekers is currently available to view through our newsletter and via our website just follow the link <https://bit.ly/2ZxKil2> to find out more. Bethan's unique paper structures are capturing imagination and curiosity and there is still time to engage with this wonderful exhibition.

To find out more about our exhibition programme, projects and activities visit our website www.greenfield-arts.co.uk follow us on social media or contact our friendly team by email info@greenfield-arts.co.uk or call 01325 379048.



Tesco, Helping the Community



Dear Sir,
Tesco Newton Aycliffe would like to thank our customers for their kindness and understanding during the current global pandemic, we would like to reassure everyone that we are still doing all we can for our local community.

We have recently donated items to the following groups: Fire Service, Police, Ambulance drivers and our local Covid Vaccination Centre - we do this, as well as donating surplus food to local charity groups. We are all in this together and we are proud to be able to keep supporting our local community.

If you think we can help your group please get in touch with us.

Shirley, Tesco Community Champion
The Supporting Families team would like to give a huge thank you to Shirley, Tesco Community Champion, for donating three boxes of nappy bags which will help needy families in and around Newton Aycliffe.

We really appreciate the help.
Sheena, Yvonne, Liz, Rachel and Bob
Supporting Families team.



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Covid-19 Won't Wilt Marie Curie's Daffodil Appeal

End of life charity, Marie Curie, is calling on people across Newton Aycliffe to step into spring next month by completing a daily 10,000 step challenge to show support for those impacted by death, dying and bereavement.

Marie Curie's flagship fundraiser the Great Daffodil Appeal - which is reaching its 35th anniversary next month - has, for the first time, had to cancel all of their iconic public collections for the campaign. The charity is facing a potential loss of over £3 million due to this, but is encouraging the people of Newton Aycliffe to support in a variety of creative ways.

One way the charity is hoping their supporters will back the campaign is by donning their trainers, getting out in the great outdoors every day and walking 10,000 steps. The Great Daffodil Appeal is the largest fundraising campaign in the hospice sector and, since it began in 1986, the money raised has helped Marie Curie run its essential frontline services providing care and support to people with terminal



illnesses and their families across the UK. The last 12 months have been extremely difficult, as key fundraising events have been cancelled and all of Marie Curie's charity shops have had to close. Despite the cancelled public collections, the charity is calling on the public to dig deep and donate online, where they can also order their iconic daffodil pins too.

All donations from the Great Daffodil Appeal will ensure that Marie Curie Nurses, doctors and hospice staff can continue working on the frontline throughout the pandemic caring for people at end of life in people's homes throughout County Durham. Last year, the charity saw a 16.5% rise in the number of people they cared for at end of life, compared to 2019 and their support line saw a 20% increase in calls too.

Carl Searle, Community Fundraiser, said: "The Great Daffodil Appeal is vitally important to us. Having been held every March for over three decades, this is the first time we've had to cancel all of our public collections. This is a huge blow as each volunteer would raise on average £80 from a collection shift: enough to pay for the equivalent of four hours of nursing care. The campaign would normally bring together millions of people across the country to volunteer, fundraise, donate and wear a daffodil and we're still encouraging people to do this in any way they can in a safe manner."

"Around 300 people a day already miss out on the end of life support they need and we expect this figure to rise as a result of the pandemic, combined with usual winter pressures associated with seasonal flu and the backlog of people who have missed diagnoses."

"In these unprecedented times we need peoples' support now more than ever. Volunteers play a huge role in helping us raise money, continue our vital work across Newton Aycliffe and ensure Marie Curie Nurses can be there to provide end of life care when people need it."

During the Great Daffodil Appeal the first annual National Day of Reflection will take place. Since the first lockdown began in 2020, millions of people have been bereaved. Join Marie Curie on 23 March, the first anniversary of UK lockdown, for a day to reflect and commemorate this tragic loss of life.

For more information on how to fundraise, donate or set up a virtual collection, visit: www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil

New Friends, New Places

New Friends, New Places normally meet at The Big Club, Newton Aycliffe - start date to be confirmed, hopefully around 18th April. We welcome all members, old and new, to join our group.

We started in 2018 with just a few members, we now have a membership of 60. We meet every Tuesday from 2.00pm until 4.30pm and enjoy activities such as line dancing, armchair aerobics, bus trips to places of interest, Bingo plus entertainment and much more.

Over the past twelve years people have been attending and enjoying lasting friendships.

Please come along and join us, for more details ring Dorothy Bowman 01325 308094 or 07967 901477.

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Lockdown Scams Costing Households Millions

Households in County Durham are urged to be vigilant against cold callers, suspicious messages and rogue traders after a growing number of new scams have emerged during lockdown.

The warning comes after it was revealed over £4.6million was lost to scams during the first lockdown (March 2020) with reports of fraudulent cold calls increasing by nearly 50% compared to the previous year.

There are also concerns that households struggling financially during the pandemic may be lured in by promises of cheaper prices from scammers and unqualified tradespeople, potentially putting them at risk of shoddy work in the home and expensive repair bills.

In response, OFTEC, a registration body for off-gas grid heating, is raising awareness of the types of scams taking place during lockdown and how households in County Durham can protect themselves from unscrupulous activity. These include:

- **Text scams.** Over 275 Covid financial scams have been detected during lockdown. Any message which asks for your card details to claim government grants are fraudulent and should be deleted immediately. HMRC never offers tax refunds by text. There have also been reports of messages asking for payment to receive a Covid-19 vaccination. These are all fake. Look out for grammar and spelling errors which are a sign that an offer or service is not genuine.

- **Telephone scams.** HMRC has responded to over 300,000 reports of phone scams. With more people at home, criminals are pretending to be calling from a bank, mortgage provider or utility company. If you receive an unexpected or suspicious call, do not share any financial or personal information and hang up immediately. If you have any concerns about a call you have received, contact your provider directly.

- **Email scams.** Over 11,000 people believe they have fallen victim to a 'phishing' email during lockdown which seek to obtain personal or financial information. Avoid clicking on links as they may contain viruses or direct to you to a fake website, designed to look like the government's. You should also keep your web browser up to date as you may receive an alert if you try to visit a fraudulent website.

- **Social media scams.** Scams on Facebook or other social media platforms are particularly dangerous because they can be accidentally shared by a friend or family member which might make you think they are legitimate. Be wary of adverts or posts for schemes or products which offer a high financial reward with low risk. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is!

- **Rogue traders.** Unqualified individuals may impersonate heating technicians or other tradespeople and their work can lead to unsafe heating systems and expensive repair costs. If you need your boiler serviced, make sure the tradesperson has the right accreditation. Use a technician who is GasSafe (for mains gas) or OFTEC (for heating oil or solid fuel) registered as they have undergone professional training and are regularly inspected to ensure they are following best practice. Remember, there are strict rules on tradespeople in the home, including social distancing, so ensure these are carefully followed.

Malcolm Farrow from OFTEC, commented: "It's an incredibly difficult time for everyone with vulnerable individuals spending more time at home on their own and many households struggling financially. Whilst communities across the region have come together to support each other, unfortunately scammers and rogue traders have been taking advantage of the situation. It's incredibly disheartening to see the number of victims of fraud increase.

"We should all be wary of 'out of the blue' phone calls, emails and text messages, as well as strangers at the door. Fraudsters often try to pressure you into making a quick decision, so don't hesitate to take a step back and consider whether an offer is genuine. If you do need a tradesperson to undertake work in your home, make sure they are appropriately qualified and check their ID badge upon arrival.

"For oil households, if you have any concerns about a heating technician, contact OFTEC directly for advice and support."

For more information, visit www.oftec.org

Charity Champions Maternity Bereavement Suites



Plans to develop a dedicated maternity bereavement suite at University Hospital of North Durham have received a significant boost, thanks to a donation of £100,000 from local charity, 4Louis. Louise De Luen, matron for acute maternity services at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, said, "Women and their families who are living with a pregnancy loss, whether it be miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a baby, experience a very unique form of grief. While our maternity teams are skilled in offering them the physical and psychological support they need, the new bereavement suite will provide a place of solace and comfort, set apart from the rest of the maternity unit, where families can be supported. We're enormously grateful to 4Louis for their generosity."

Bob McGurrell, Managing Director at 4Louis, said, '4Louis was founded in 2009 to offer support for families who experience a loss of this kind. One of the ways we do this is by helping to create dedicated bereavement rooms in hospitals, providing precious time and space for families to spend with their baby or child. With the generosity of our supporters and donors, our mission is to ensure every hospital can provide these dedicated bereavement facilities, enabling families to grieve and create lasting memories of their precious baby or child. We hope, after we complete this project, we can also help create this same comfortable environment at Darlington Memorial Hospital too.'

Pat Chambers, Charity Development Manager at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, said, "This fantastic donation from 4Louis will go a long way towards helping create this dedicated haven for grieving families. The pandemic has put huge pressure on charities, making this support all the more generous – we're enormously grateful. We're discussing plans to create a similar space at Darlington Memorial Hospital, with costs estimated to be similar to those at University Hospital of North Durham, so would really appreciate any help to make both of these projects a reality, whether it be financial donations, skills or help with fundraising. Please contact us at: cddft.charity@nhs.net or call us on 01325 743781.

Photo: 4 Louis Team, Bob & Tracey McGurrell and Paula Parnaby.

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**** Updates from MP Paul Howell at 12noon weekdays ****

SATURDAY

9-10am	Eurovision Show	Simon Harding
10-12am	Moderation	Jack & Garvey
12-2pm	"Kitchen Floorfillers" Sponsored by The Cleaning Group	Caz Bojangles
2-4pm	Kitchen Floorfillers	Paul Baker
4-6pm	Weekly Edition	Kevin Sowerby
6-8pm	Motown, Northern & Classic Soul	
8-9pm	"The Saturday Night Experience" Sponsored by Bengal Lounge Indian Restaurant & Takeaway	
9-10pm	Evening Session	Jimjams
10-12am	Rock the House	Carl Booth
12-1am	Retro Trance Mix	OZ-DJ
1-2am	Drum 'n' Bass Show	MC Supa
2-3am	Night Club Session	A DJ

SUNDAY

9-10am	Church Service	Xcel Centre
10-11am	Yesterdays Music Today	Alan Brown
11-12pm	Random Reiki Master	Phil Hawkins
12-2pm	Dave's Sunday Brunch	David Ringer
2-4pm	Bear Blues Show	Colin & Monica
4-6pm	Folk/Celtic/Rock Show	Steve & Col
6:30-8pm	Jazz Time	Mike Dixon
8-10pm	Paul's Down Time	Paul Kjenstad
10-12am	Sean's Sunday Set List	Sean Lawless

* MONDAY to FRIDAY DAILY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop (Mon, Tues & Wed)	Richard Smith
12-1pm	Call Me No 1 (Tues & Thurs)	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	Colin McNeillie
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker

MONDAY

5-6pm	Euro Chart Show	Dave Graham
6-7pm	60s Show	Karl Simons
7-8pm	70s Show	Peter Rush
8-9pm	80s Show	Gary Avery
9-10pm	90s Show	Paul Baker
10-11pm	00s Show	Producer Dan
11-12am	Teens Show	Andy Fittes

TUESDAY

6-7pm	Mystery Year	Paul Baker
7-12am	Motown, Northern & Classic Soul	Kevin Sowerby

WEDNESDAY

5-7pm	Joey's Jukebox	Joey Collins
8-10pm	Alternative Aycliffe	Gaz n Alby

THURSDAY

6-8pm	The List	Colin McNeillie
8-10pm	BeatRoote	Graeme Roote
10-12am	Rock Night	Jonny Goldsmith

FRIDAY

6-8pm	Techno Trance Mix	PVR Studios
8-10pm	5th Mar - Nathan Abbott - Dance Classix	
10-12am	Alternative Aycliffe (R)	Gaz n Alby
12-1am	Night Club Session	A DJ

Check our website for full schedule

www.ayclifferadio.co.uk

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Factual Error

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to have to report a typo in my letter last week. I wrote that: "government cuts have left Durham County Council with a hole in its budget of £250,000 [i.e. a quarter of a million] a year". It should have read, of course, "£250,000,000 a year" [a quarter of a BILLION].

The government has stripped £250 million a year from Durham County Council (and the people of County Durham). This equates to approximately £474.35 per head per year in our county, now if that is not a reason for every candidate standing for election in May to unite and get the fair treatment of our home, I do not know what is.

With any hope we are in the final stretch of the pandemic, happy hour of this hellish shift of the last 12 months and the NHS, once again being the absolute gem of our country, getting us through this final siege of what has been a long, drawn out, tragic war on all fronts.

For me, getting that money reimbursed, even just getting us back to where we were, might just help our home win the peace. A peace which is undoubtedly coming, a peace where we can transform our town for the better.

Thank you for allowing me to correct this error and stay safe everyone.

Simon Hocking

Sedgefield CLP Campaigns Team

Northern Pride Festival Moves Online for 2021



North East festival-goers are invited to show their pride virtually this year, as one of the UK's largest LGBTQ+ events moves online. Due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, organisers of the Northern Pride Festival, sponsored by Barclays, have made the decision to postpone their physical event and UK Pride status until 22nd - 24th July 2022.

But there are huge plans in place for a virtual celebration on 24th July 2021, with more to be revealed during an announcement at 5pm today on 18th February at:

<https://www.facebook.com/northernprideuk>

"We would love nothing more than to be in a position to celebrate Pride weekend with a huge festival this summer and postponing isn't a decision we have taken lightly, but the safety of our event team, volunteers and community is our top priority," said Ste Dunn, Director of Northern Pride.

While a rise in Covid-19 cases in the UK has made many large-scale events review their plans this year, Ste believes that it is of the utmost importance to host a virtual alternative.

"A report from the LGBT Foundation found that LGBTQ+ people are more likely to have poor mental health, be socially isolated and experience domestic abuse - factors which have escalated due to the pandemic. Online events like these are a lifeline to keep people connected and help to raise the visibility of the community as we continue to campaign for better protections," he said.

"We've channelled all of our energy into planning a really fantastic virtual programme, which will hopefully have something for everyone, and we're delighted to have Barclays returning as sponsor for another year."

Nick Forbes, Leader of Newcastle City Council is delighted to hear that Northern Pride will go ahead with an online event.

"It's devastating to hear that UK Pride in Newcastle has had to be postponed again, however the safety of all involved must be the priority as we continue to battle the virus and build the right foundations for Newcastle's recovery," he said.

"So many members of the LGBTQ+ community have been affected negatively by the pandemic and, although we can't meet up physically, we can continue to connect with each other through these events and, together, look forward to the better times ahead for our city. I'm really pleased that the next UK Pride will definitely take place here in Newcastle and I'll be working hard with the LGBTQ+ community and the organising committee to ensure that our Pride in 2022 is the best we've ever seen."

Any Platinum Passes already purchased for this year's festival will now be valid for the 2022 event. Those who no longer wish to keep their tickets can donate them to an akt service user or claim a refund before 18th April by emailing info@npride.org.uk - For more information about Northern Pride, visit www.northern-pride.com or search northernprideuk on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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Liverpool Play Returns to Stage



Helen Forrester's play *By The Waters of Liverpool* is coming to Darlington Hippodrome in September.

The acclaimed stage production of Helen Forrester's *By The Waters of Liverpool* was cut short last March after just three venues into a seventeen venue tour; but now producers have announced the continuation of their UK tour in Autumn 2021.

Writer and Co-producer Rob Fennah said: "When we launched *By The Waters of Liverpool* last year the response was so overwhelming we were determined not to let the pandemic get the better of us. We have a mantra when things get tough, 'don't give up – don't give in!'"

"*By The Waters* is not only returning to the stage in September, it is going to be bigger, bolder and more glorious than ever."

Co-producer Bill Elms added: "With the vaccine roll-out going so well, we can now see the light at the end of a dark tunnel for the theatre industry and we just hope people will feel safe enough to come back in their droves; embracing theatre and live performance more than ever before."

The stellar cast features star names from stage and screen, including Sian Reeves, Mark Moraghan, Parry Glasspool, Lucy Dixon, Eric Potts, Lynn Francis, Danny O'Brien, Roy Carruthers, and Chloe McDonald.

By The Waters of Liverpool is set in the 1930s after Helen's father went bankrupt during the Depression. Her family were forced to leave behind the nannies, servants and comfortable middle-class life in the South West of England. The Forrester's chose Liverpool to rebuild their shattered lives, but they were in for a terrible shock. Taken out of school to look after her young siblings, Helen is treated as an unpaid slave. So begins a bitter fight with her parents for the right to go out to work and make her own way in life.

Photo credit: Anthony Robling

Building Society Donation Boosts Darlington Foodbank

A foodbank helping hundreds of families has received an unexpected boost thanks to a North-East building society.

Kings Church Foodbank is the latest good cause to benefit from Darlington Building Society's pledge to donate 5 per cent of its profits to worthy community organisations. Staff at the foodbank, in Darlington, spoke of their joy at receiving £3,000 from the building society.

Foodbank manager, Caroline Todd, said: "We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of Darlington Building Society, this gift is such a blessing and it couldn't have come at a better time."

"This money will allow us to purchase foods and essentials which we're running low on but are desperately needed by the families we support."

Kings Church launched its foodbank in 2012, but with the onset of Covid-19, staff and volunteers have seen a dramatic increase in the number of families in need of extra help. Since the beginning of the pandemic, nearly 200 families a week have accessed the foodbank.

"In an ideal world, no-one would need to use the foodbank and we wouldn't be needed at all," Caroline added. "However, in the current climate, it's clear that services like ours are more vital than ever."



"A lot of good people have lost their jobs because of Covid-19, and we want to do our best to support them through this difficult time. We couldn't do that without the support of our beloved community, and especially caring companies like Darlington Building Society."

Darlington Building Society Chief Executive, Andrew Craddock, said: "Supporting great causes in our communities is central to our ethos. The work of the Kings Church Foodbank has never been more important and we are delighted to have been able to provide this financial help in these difficult times."

• To support Kings Church Foodbank, visit: www.kingschurchdarlington.org/foodbank or call 01325 469446 to make a donation. Families in need of emergency food supplies can access the foodbank's help by visiting Kings Church at Prospect Place, Whessoe Road, in Darlington. A list of opening times is available on their website.

Photo: Staff and volunteers prepare food parcels at the Darlington foodbank (from left): Monda Bardhaj, Richard Ashaw, Andrew Coltman, Caroline Todd.

Never Say Never

Dear Sir,
As an avid Newton News reader, I'm interested to read the weekly offerings of the various standing and potential town and county councillors.

I sincerely hope that, if they are elected, these people will aim to swiftly restore some of the amenities lost to us, try to get to grips with the current spike in anti-social behaviour and pressure the town centre landlords into lowering rents so that more shops can re-open.

I have lived in Newton Aycliffe all my life and have a genuine passion for the town and its residents. My business is based here and local people make up the bulk of the workforce.

I'm often asked why I don't stand as a candidate, as I know I possess the attributes and community spirit needed to put new enthusiasm and fresh ideas into practice, and all I would say is 'never say never'. So, as 6th May looms close, let's hope that the people who end up in the various council hot seats have the town's best interests at heart and do their very best to make it an even better place to live.

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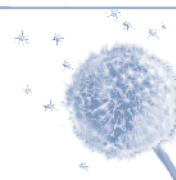


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Nominate Your NHS Hero for an Award

The last 12 months have been like no other year any of us has experienced, bringing enormous challenges for many. It's been a period during which those working on the NHS front line have had to use their skills and pull together like never before.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust has launched its annual staff awards, to highlight the extraordinary work of individuals and teams over the last year.

Noel Scanlon, executive director of nursing, said, "The encouragement and support our teams have received from members of the public over the past year has meant the world to our staff - motivating them and keeping them going during the hardest of times as they've focused, as always, on giving our patients the very best care. These awards are a more formal way for members of the public to share their positive experiences of our services and show their appreciation for teams and individuals."

If you, or someone you're close to, has experienced the care these unsung heroes have given to patients, whether they've had Covid-19 or another health issue, the Trust would love to receive a nomination from you. You may have had an admission yourself, or be the relative of a patient and it may be that a team or individual member of staff stood out for you, whether they're clinical, an allied health professional such as a physiotherapist or radiographer, a porter, or member of the admin team.

Categories include: Compassion, Excellence in Care - Clinical, Excellence in Care - Non-Clinical, Working Together for Patients and Covid Hero. Entries close on Sunday 28 February, with winners to be announced in a virtual ceremony at the end of March.

The simple nomination form is easy and quick to complete. You can find it, along with full category details, at:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/StarAwards2021

Men Talking Together

Men Talking Together meet at The Cabin, Unit 14A IES Centre (behind Newton Press and ScrewFix). We will be meeting every Monday from 12noon until 2.30pm, and Friday 1.00pm until 2.30pm (Fish and Chips).

This group started prior to the pandemic with 20 members, but has been reduced to just five. The focus of this group is loneliness, emotional and mental health problems caused by many reasons. We have plans for trips to local places of interest. We also would like members with various skills to pass them on to other interested members. The group will be open to any ideas to encourage people to talk and enjoy meeting and making new friends. Age range is from 40 years upwards, but younger people, over 21 years, are welcome. For further details contact Dorothy Bowman on 01325 308094 or 07967 901477.

Local Film Maker Debut Receives Rave Reviews

Newton Aycliffe local Ryan Metcalfe has made his filmmaking debut as the producer of a 21st-century adaptation of Shakespeare's classic *Romeo & Juliet*.

Starring Sir Derek Jacobi, Olivier Award winner Sam Tutty and newcomer Emily Redpath, the film was rehearsed and shot last November under heavy COVID safety restrictions. The production uses cutting-edge technology developed by Metcalfe to film the cast individually and place them into a CGI replica of the Manchester Palace Theatre, creating the illusion the cast filmed together in the theatre.

The film began its online streaming run on Valentine's Day to rave reception, including a four-star review from *The Guardian* in which they call the production "Trailblazing".

Metcalfe comments, "I'm so thrilled with the response we've received. We set out with a few main goals with *Romeo & Juliet*: we wanted to provide work and support to some of those in the theatre industry – an industry so severely damaged by COVID-19 – as well as creating a modern adaptation that retold this classic story in a more relatable and appropriate way for modern generations".

Metcalfe attended Woodham Academy and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College before progressing to study at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. During his first year at Guildhall, he founded theatre consultancy studio Preevue and in the five years since has worked on productions including *Harry Potter*, *Les Misérables*, *Bat Out of Hell* and *Moulin Rouge*, and has clients including Andrew Lloyd Webber and the RSC.

Romeo & Juliet is available to stream until the 27th of February. Tickets are available at RomeoJuliet2021.com/tickets and a portion of ticket sales is donated to theatre charity Acting For Others.



COVID-19 UPDATE

Newton Aycliffe Covid-19 Statistics & Advice

Area	7 day Cases	7 day rate per 100k	Weekly % Change	Change Direction
NA North	10	115.3	42.9	Up
NA West	4	69.4	100	Up
NA East	3	54.5	50	Up
NA South	13	98.2	-46.2	Down

Correct at 23rd February 2021

If you don't have anyone to pick up medication, please contact your community pharmacy. If you are unable to access support for help with essentials such as food supplies, or someone who can listen and support you, please contact Durham County Council:

Email: communityhub@durham.gov.uk

fill in the Covid-19 Help form at www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help or call 03000 260 260 and they will connect you to the help you need.

Want to join Durham County Councils' community hub?

If you are a local voluntary group, local business or other agency offering help in the community, why not join their community hub to help people find support in this time of crisis.

It's free, just fill in the form at www.durham.gov.uk/covid19volunteer or call 03000 260 260. You will receive a call to verify your details and your service added to Locate.

- 03000 260 260 is the number if you are struggling financially.
- PCP Befriending number 01325 329934 if you are feeling lonely.
- 03000 261 111 is One Point (for advice and practical support).
- 0800 3047039 (Freephone) HealthWatch County Durham
- In danger of losing your home? DCC Housing Solutions: 03000 268 000

If you require a test for Covid-19 ring 119
Durham County Council Coronavirus Helpline: 03000 260 260
HealthWatch County Durham: 0800 304 7039

Source: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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History Talk Helps Shine Light on Soldiers of the Past



Family historians can gain top tips on how to discover their ancestors' military past at an online talk this week.

Durham County Record Office, which is run by Durham County Council, is continuing its successful Branching Out programme with an archivist-led talk about researching soldiers.

Aimed at people who already have some experience of family history, Branching Out is a series of weekly talks that focus on a different research topic each time. Previous offerings include understanding the social background of illegitimacy and the challenges it can pose to the family historian and accessing and understanding burial and cemetery records.

Dawn Layland, education and outreach archivist at Durham County Record Office, said: "Our Branching Out talks provide helpful hints for those wishing to research their past in more detail. County Durham boasts a proud military heritage and so many of us have ancestors who have served in the Armed Forces. This course will provide an insight into the types of records that are available, allowing family historians to discover more about this important part of their forebears' lives."

Cllr Joy Allen, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for transformation, culture and tourism, said: "Our archive collections span almost 900 years and the Branching Out talks teach family historians how to get the most out of the documents available. "The way we are delivering our talks has changed, as they are now online, but they still offer a fascinating opportunity for people to enhance their research skills. They are also a chance to connect with people with similar interests."

The talk costs £5 and advanced booking is essential to receive the joining link.

To book a place, email record.office@durham.gov.uk. A link will then be sent to pay online. There are limited places available so early booking is also advised.

Greenfield Support Healthy Minds

Staff and students at Greenfield Community College have been continuing their learning journey whilst taking care of their mental health. The school has many effective supportive initiatives and signposting that have been helping to highlight the importance of taking care of the personal wellbeing of ourselves and others.

The school have a dedicated team of expert staff and have an open-door policy that encourages approachability and have dedicated counselling and support staff on hand.

The school are also very lucky to be involved in the pioneering Trailblazer programme, working with Mental Health Support Team professionals from the Tees and Esk NHS trust to provide bespoke support for our students since early 2020. "Even during lockdown, we are ensuring that those children who need support and guidance are receiving it. This partnership will be continuing in the future and we look forward to expanding the provision to support students even more!" said Miss Forkin, Deputy Headteacher.

A group of students are making a difference as they work towards creating a live platform for the school that can impact upon creativity and positivity to lift spirits and support well-being. Student leaders are working alongside Greenfield Arts and have designed and developed 'A Creative Space' platform that will be a creative resource for their peers. The space will be available for staff and students to access.

Greenfield Community College are committed to supporting their students to reach their potential. The school promotes an inclusive curriculum encouraging students to work together to realise an outstanding learning experience. If you would like further information visit www.greenfieldschool.net or contact the school by emailing contact@greenfieldschool.net or by calling 01325 300378.

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Energy Efficiency = Business Efficiency



Durham County Council's Business Energy Efficiency (BEEP) Project and has offered advice and guidance about energy efficiency improvements, at no cost, to around 300 small businesses across the County. Around 20/25% of these businesses have received some grant support towards the cost of installing new equipment. Unless you are using renewable energy, any equipment that uses energy (fuel) to carry out work for your business will cost you money: (the list includes lighting, heating, machinery, extraction, compressed air, motors, air-con, fans and pumps and more)

Do you know how much energy your business uses?

Do you know how much it costs you?

Do you know which aspect of the business uses most energy?

A small office-based business may have energy costs of more than £1000 annually, small manufacturing businesses may pay out in the tens of thousands. Saving 10% pa of these costs may be easily achievable and go straight to the bottom line.

BEEP offers impartial advice to all small businesses based in the county of Durham. We will audit your energy usage and make recommendations about how you can pay less, and manage better, the energy costs of your business. This BEEP service will cost you nothing. It may save you a great deal.

If you decide to make one or more improvements, as a result of the energy audit, grant funding may be available to help with that investment. Contact BEEP for more details on www.beep.uk.net tel: 03000 265547.

Annual Baby Memorial Service Online

Each year, the chaplains at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust hold services of remembrance for parents living with a pregnancy loss or the death of a baby. This year is no exception with chaplains delivering the service from the Chapel at University Hospital of North Durham.

The service will go live on the Trust's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter) at 7.00pm on Wednesday 3rd March and, following that, it will be available on the Trust's Youtube channel. Kevin Tromans, Senior Chaplain, said, "Our services of remembrance and thanksgiving are for anyone who has been affected by this very sad experience, including wider families and regardless of whether the loss was recent or in the more distant past. While Covid-19 restrictions are in place, we will continue doing all we can to remain accessible to those who need us."

Hog Blog Update

Tara and I have heard it's going to be a very nice weekend and a good year weather wise and hopefully a Covid free one too. We will be very shortly releasing all Rescue Hedgehogs, if they were found in a unsafe place they won't be returned there. They will go somewhere to thrive and increase our hedgehog population, they are a protected and endangered species, we have to try harder to help them too, they have a lot going against them.



Last Friday evening we received a phone call from our relation Billy, his sister Josephine and her neighbour discovered a little hedgehog out during the day, they picked her up and took her to the nearest vet, the vet in question removed ticks from this little girl and handed her back to the finder, this is not supposed to happen! The vets have a duty of care to this little hog, she needed a rescue centre without delay. Because of Josephine and neighbours quick thinking I became involved and, because we are full, Dawn at Prickly Problem came to Aycliffe and took her back with her, she was diagnosed with Lungworm and still had several ticks to be removed, but our centres are equipped with all medications and antibiotics to treat as soon as we get them. The sooner we act, the better chance of survival. Dawn is an exceptional BHPS rehabber and this beautiful little girl is a delightful juvenile at a mere 265 grams, she is doing really well and can stay with her till the weather gets better and she is much bigger.

Also admitted with a nasty wound last week, now named Katie (pictured), was brought in by Clive and Valentine, her wound is improving, still on antibiotics but enjoying being safe, warm and comfy, all treatment done here, no vet visit has been necessary, she is also a lovely girl, gaining weight too.

We need to thank Paul again for publishing this blog, also some wonderful people for purchasing items kindly made and donated by June, she is doing well for us. Sonia for her continued support and Eddie for stopping by and buying our little hedgehog gift boxes with a very helpful donation too, Bethany and her mum for making and selling bandanas from our Cobblers Hall vets. a young lady called Bethany Stacy for her hedgehog embroideries and finally Val who knits gorgeous baby knitwear including Pom Pom Hats.

Weekly tip: We have a Facebook page Prickly Haven Hedgehog Hotel, also BHPS can be contacted during office hours on 01584 890801 or our email pricklyhaven@yahoo.com

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Disgruntled

Dear Sir,
Today, because of the weather conditions (raining and windy), I went to the paper shop on Neville Parade, (not McColls), because we were short of milk. This proved to be a mistake because no one wore a mask. The gentleman in front of me didn't wear one and the gentleman behind me didn't, also the gentleman waiting outside didn't have a mask on either. I mentioned this to the young lady serving, but she seemed to be indifferent to the issue. Is this practice because they don't care, or is it because they have no consideration for other customers? That will be the last time I will be using this shop. I will, in future, rather walk to Tesco, regardless of the weather - at least Tesco enforce the wearing of a mask, for which I thank them. Yours a disgruntled ex-customer of this shop. Name and address supplied



Recovery
Recovery begins when we choose honesty over self deception and claim ownership of all we are. When we can accept our true worth, and come to believe we are deserving of the price to be paid.
Experiencing the healing power of forgiveness and unconditional love, freed from the burden of misplaced guilt, and the limitations of self recrimination.
Caring enough to claim personal responsibility for all we do in order to release the past on good terms, and create a future ready to be all that we can be.
Overcoming our demons through the power of acceptance. The courage it brings to recognise and release the self doubt that used to hide in shadows of our own making. Validating yourself through the actions of your personal truth demonstrated. Where the value of your self worth is no longer set by the praise or approval of others.
Embracing life without fear of rejection because of who we are. The past is who you were; the present is who you are and the future is for you alone to decide the person we wish to become.
Realising no one is coming to save you. You are a survivor of all you have endured and carry the scars as testament of your own strength and courage. Battered, bruised and scarred maybe, but as yet, never beaten. Yearning for the love of life; a beautiful soul on their journey of recovery. Their path forged through adversity becomes their truth demonstrated, rising to take each day slowly but surely one determined step at a time.



Once again I want to remind you that if you get the opportunity for a vaccine please take it. If, for whatever reason, you have missed your initial invite remember that invitation remains open and I would encourage you to make contact and catch up, if you need advice please let us know and we will try to help.

My week was officially recess, this meant that instead of working virtually from home and keeping an eye on Westminster I was working virtually from home! I had meetings on Green Homes grants; talking to local farmers; a Vaccine rollout update and a Police briefing as well as a number on local railways. I am actively supporting bids for Ferryhill Station, the Leamside Line and also for the Bishop Line (which is the one going through Aycliffe) to be upgraded.

The big event of the week, of course, was the Prime Ministers announcement on Monday as regards the route out of lockdown. To summarise the announcement, it started with the great news regarding the continued excellent progress of the vaccine rollout and, importantly, also the increasing quantum of data showing the efficacy of the vaccines. The data is beginning to show clearly what the benefits of vaccination are in preventing infection, preventing symptomatic cases, and in significantly reducing hospitalisation and mortality for those who do show symptoms.

Then the Prime Minister outlined a four stage road map, each stage of which requires four tests to continue to be satisfied to allow progress. The 4 tests relate to vaccine rollout; vaccine effectiveness in reducing hospitalisation; infection rates that would not put unsustainable pressure on the NHS and also that the risk has not been fundamentally changed by new variants of Covid.

Each of the dates currently associated to each step is the earliest date and are therefore at risk of delay if the tests require it.

The current steps and some of the key changes are: -

Step 1 - 8 March

Schools and and Colleges are open for all students as well as practical Higher Education courses; Recreation outdoors with household or one other person; No household mixing indoors; Wraparound childcare allowed; Funerals (30 people) and Wakes and Weddings (6 people) can proceed. You should still stay at home as much as possible.

29 March

Rule of 6 or two households; outdoors with

no household mixing indoors, Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents); Outdoor sports and leisure facilities open and organised outdoor sport allowed. You should minimise travel but holidays not allowed

Step 2 not before 12 April

Indoor leisure, libraries, community centres open for individual use or household groups; Personal care and all retail and outdoor attractions open. Overnight accommodation in self contained units or domestic stays for households allowed, international holidays not permitted and travel should be minimised.

Step 3 not before 17 May

Indoor entertainment; Organised indoor adult sport; Outdoor entertainment; All accommodation and some large events allowed. International travel will be allowed (subject to a review).

Step 4 not before 21 June

All legal limits on social contact removed and any remaining closed settings (like nightclubs) and large events will be allowed above the Step 3 capacity constraints.

If you need any clarification on any of the above please email us or give us a call.

As I am sure you are aware the data locally continues to get better and better which will support the above programme. It is however noticeable that we still see some hot spots, so, as and when restrictions on travel are allowed it would be common sense to take a look at the data for anywhere you consider travelling to and check you are not putting yourself or others at risk. Remember the vaccines are good but they are not absolute in their protection so you will still have a degree of risk.

Please continue to follow the rules as we now take the final steps.

Stay Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives - Stay safe

Paul Howell,
Member of Parliament for Sedgefield



We have a large number of cats needing homes - for more information please call Pauline on 01325 321855.

We also require good quality goods to sell on to make money to help cover our vet bills. For donations to be collected, please contact 01325 321855 or 01325 311215.

Please help us to help the animals in need - we need your support.



Paul Howell
Member of Parliament
for Sedgefield

paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk
Telephone: 020 7219 6385
Aycliffe Office: 01325 790580



A Dream

If I had one wish it would be,
That the world could now be Covid free,
That families could again be together,
Enjoy a hug, and meet untethered.
Weddings and parties could go ahead,
So many couples still wait to be wed.
Let the corks pop and celebrations begin,
We'll appreciate everything we've worked

hard to win.

Our freedom to travel and mingle again.
Enjoy our pastimes with family and friends,
Get back to work and the classroom,
Life will be swept clean with a new broom.
This is my dream and it will come true,
But, of course, we'll never forget all the lives

gone that we do regret.

It won't be long, so stay upbeat.

Until that wonderful day when we can

finally meet.

MMK February 2021

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Darran Weston.

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Neighbourhood Policing

By PC Simon Schofield

PACT Meeting: 10th February, 6pm, on Police Facebook page



Hello, I am PC 1168 Simon Schofield from Newton Aycliffe Neighbourhood Policing Team. We are aware of reports of further antisocial behaviour in the Western Area of the town in the last week. Owing to information from residents, together with our own police patrols, both marked and unmarked, we interviewed several local youths last weekend after they were identified as having thrown mud and stones at vehicles. A further three youths will be interviewed this week. This is a serious issue and could lead to injuries to the driver and passengers or worse. We are grateful to the members of our community who have reported incidents to us, which has helped us investigate quickly and identify those responsible. Fixed penalty fines have also been issued to parents for their child's breach of Covid-19 regulations.

Whilst we have had some long awaited and welcome news on the way out of lockdown from the Prime Minister this week, we would like to remind everyone, that for now, we are still subject to a national lockdown and youths should not be out in groups at any time, so it makes the fact that some are gathering and causing ASB more incomprehensible.

Have you heard of our online messaging service '**Keep in the Know**'? By signing up to this service, for free, you can find out what's happening in your local area - receive regular crime updates, information on road closures and learn about what your local neighbourhood policing team is doing. You can decide what agencies you wish to receive messages off when you sign up to the service. Head over to www.keepintheknow.co.uk and click 'Sign up'. It won't take long, and you can be kept up to date with many different things.

Thanks
 PC Simon Schofield

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7			3				5	8
3	1		4					6
1		5	7	6				
	7			8	3			5
6		3	5					1
				3	1	6		
		1			6	5	3	
8			9					7

Thoughts on Lockdown

You may be feeling that no one cares,
 But that's not true, as we all share,
 Our own frustration at this imposed isolation,
 And being locked down as a nation.
 So many folk are thinking of you,
 And for our health it's the right thing to do,
 Spring is coming and we'll have the job,
 And the bulbs are appearing - so let's feel glad.
 It'll be worth these cold, wintry days,
 To stay indoors, as the Government says.
 Settle down and read a good book,
 Or watch a comedy - just take a look,
 At an oldie - say Morecombe & Wise,
 They'll raise a smile so give it a try.
 Watch Eric and Ernie make a gaff,
 And it's sure to cheer you and give you a laugh!
 Crosswords and jigsaws may seem like a bore,
 But give them a go, I do implore.
 Give your brain some exercise,
 Have some fun to pass time by.
 What would we do without a chat?
 Some live alone and do company lack,
 So lift the phone and have a natter,
 To family or friends - It's good to chatter.
 If you're able, take a daily walk,
 Perhaps a mile or two you'll chalk?
 The fresh air will make you glow,
 But be careful if there's snow!
 Wrap up warm and please don't slip,
 Not all the paths have been sprinkled with grit.
 Give a wave when you spot your neighbour,
 They'll smile behind their mask and return the favour!
 And most importantly, look after you,
 Take the precautions we've been asked to,
 Wear a mask, wash your hands,
 Keep your distance so Covid can't land,
 Anywhere near your dear home,
 This applies to us all. You're not alone.
 The NHS is working so hard,
 So please stay vigilant, don't let down your guard!

MMK, January 2021

Doublethink - '1984'

Dear Sir,
So, Boris has set out his plan for getting out of lockdown. It'll take months, on top of the year we've endured so far, and it contains the caveat that it won't necessarily end at all. That light at the end of the tunnel is just a fading eco-bulb nailed to a brick wall. They switch it on for a while, then switch it off again!
SAGE have declared that if lockdown ends, we will face up to 4000 deaths a day from the 'Virus of Doom'. On the same day, and please note this is all on the same day, Matt Hancock has stated that the vaccines are so good that hospitalisations from Covid-19 are down 80%. So, massive resurgence with corpses in the streets, or the vaccine is working well and hardly anyone even needs a hospital. Which is it? I have talked to people who literally believe both simultaneously.

I read '1984' many years ago and couldn't quite grasp the concept of doublethink back then (holding two diametrically opposed opinions and believing in both at the same time). But I can see how it works now.

Meanwhile, there is much outrage over Matt Hancock handing his homework in late. He should have published details of the PPE procurement contracts within 30 days. He took 47 days and there was even a court case about it. This is irrelevant. Who can honestly say they've never been late handing in a report when under pressure? Okay, I have little time for the man, but when this epidemic was at its height, he had much more important matters to deal with than a bit of paperwork.

I don't care at all about him late filing the reports. I'm not even all that bothered about him giving contracts to his mates. If the correct PPE showed up, at that time that was all that really mattered. Who provided it is not really of any consequence to me I can see it smacks of being shady and sneaky and under-the-table but he's a politician - what else would you expect?

Much press time has been given to this late-homework nonsense. I am far more concerned about a much earlier and more sinister lie. Matt Hancock told Parliament that he had commissioned a study into Vitamin D and found it had no effect - no such study exists. He lied, to Parliament and the British people. Any immunologist, virologist, nutritionist, et al, will confirm that Vitamin D is an essential ingredient in a healthy immune system.

The Vitamin D lie was deliberate and potentially devastating. Most of those who got extremely sick and died with Covid-19 were, I'll wager, Vitamin D deficient. A cheap supplement could have saved at least some of them and possibly made the disease far less nasty to many others.

I take Vitamin D, I have done every winter for 12 years, I've never suffered anything other than a minor head cold on the odd day or so in all that time. A pack of 400 tablets of 4000 IU costs about a tenner. More than a year's supply for less than the price of a decent bottle of wine and much less than a bottle of decent whisky. Many people pay far more per month for Netflix or Sky than they'd pay for a year's supply of Vitamin D. Don't wait for the government to supply it, they never will, just get some. Especially if you are in northern England and are not Caucasian . . . or even if you are.

Trust me, you aren't getting anywhere near enough of the free stuff from the pitiful amount of sunlight we get up here in winter.

Also, Vitamin C and Zinc supplements are essential immune system boosters as well. That combination will help against a lot more than just Covid-19.

We have announcements on the same day telling us we're all going to die . . . and we are all simultaneously saved, we are all Schrodinger's cat now, it's as if reality belongs to a different universe.

AndyMac

Strange Headlines

- 1 - Include Your Children When Baking Cookies
- 2 - Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Experts Say
- 3 - Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers
- 4 - Drunks Get Nine Months in Violin Case
- 5 - Iraqi Head Seeks Arms

Litter Pickers

Dear Sir,
I regularly cycle along the railway path between Newton Aycliffe and Shildon stations and over the past couple of weeks have noticed an old couple collecting litter numerous times.
Recently I stopped for a chat and the old guy, who must be well into his 80s, goes out every day with a pushchair and his walking stick and collects sacks of rubbish which he wheels back home.
His name is Rick Hargreaves and I think he must live at the Shildon end of the path as he was heading that way.
These people are absolute stars and deserve some recognition for their efforts.
John Suddes

In Memoriam

John Hilton
(Honest John)

28th February 2020
One year ago today I lost the love of my life. John had a heart of gold, was a good friend of many who each have their own memories of him. Love, remember and miss him every day.
Val xxx

Mary Gallagher

25th February 2011
Your presence we miss, your memory we treasure. Loving you always, forgetting you never.
Love always, Vince, Clare, Paul, Victoria, Amanda and Flynn

Peter Redden

1971-2013
No longer in our lives to share, but in our hearts you are always there.
Love you loads,
All the family.

John Hilton
(Honest John)

28th February 2020
"A working class hero is something to be ..."
(John Lennon 1970).
A good friend for thirty five years, John always left us laughing. Today and always, we remember him and smile.
Roger and family

Derick Young

2nd March 2005
Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words, missed beyond measure.
Love, Michael, June and all the family xxx

John Hilton
(Honest John)

28th February 2020
A kind and generous heart - now at rest. Remembered always.
Paul and family

Congratulations

John Allen

4th March 2021
Congratulations on your 50th Birthday John.
Love and best wishes, Mam, Dad and extended family x

John Arran Hughes
1971 - 1992

You will never be forgotten, for though we are apart, you are always and forever alive within our hearts. Loving you more every day.
Mam, Dad, Garry, Vicky, Paul and Daughter Maxine
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Obituary

Edna May Binderman
(nee Bolton)

On Wednesday 10th February 2021, Edna (81), beloved Wife of Ray, passed away peacefully after a short illness.

She was surrounded by all of her family. Her funeral will be held at Wear Valley Crematorium on Monday 1st March at 2.30pm.

Please do not send flowers, but we would appreciate donations to Cancer Research. Edna will be sadly missed and leaves behind many happy memories.

Acknowledgement

Marjorie Bradley

The family of the late Marjorie Bradley would like to thank friends and neighbours for their messages of condolence; the Co-operative Funeral Service and the Rev. Payne for the lovely Service. Special thanks to Dr. Sattir and the District Nurses, Marie Curie and Macmillan Nurses for their excellent care of Mam in her last few days and for their kindness extended to us.

"Google play Aycliffe Radio"



Google HOME

Golden Anniversary Celebrations



Margaret (nee Bourne) and Alfred (known as Tom) Tomlin will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Saturday 6th March 2021 with a lovely home cooked meal. The family hope to be able to get together to celebrate when circumstances permit.

Margaret and Tom were both born in London and met by chance when Tom was dating Margaret's friend.

The couple spent most of their married lives in Germany connected with the Armed Forces. After leaving the Army Tom was employed by Lyons Brothers Toys and Margaret with Agfa. The couple later started their own taxi business.

They have lived in Newton Aycliffe for over 30 years and have one daughter, Samantha Maloy; two granddaughters, Nataleigh and Tamzin and two great grandchildren, Jax and Alessa.

Tom and Margaret enjoy car boot sales and the company of their three pet dogs.

Virtual Exhibition Tribute to Model Rail Enthusiast

Model-railway club members throughout the Newton Aycliffe area are to honour the memory of former fellow enthusiast Johnnie Jones by featuring his unique large-scale layout in a virtual charity exhibition.

The '00' gauge 'Newton Burrows' display, which was capable of running eight trains at the same time and even featured a working coal mine, was dismantled after Johnnie's death in 2014.

Because of its size, it was never put on public display but thanks to old photographic records and the skills of a new technology professional, the layout has now been brought back to life on film. The 'Newton Burrows' display is likely to be the star of this year's virtual exhibition staged by Rotary Newton Aycliffe and Shildon Model Railway Club. Johnnie (pictured), who lived in Aycliffe Village, was a founder member of the annual event.

Show co-ordinator John Burrows, said this week: "Johnnie's layout was built over several years in an old cricket pavilion by some of his friends and was an outstanding display. Though the original no longer exists, we are now able to recapture some of its magic by making it available in virtual form. The film is our tribute to a much-loved man who is sadly missed by members and many others in this part of the world."

'Newton Burrows' is one of 24 layouts from a range of scales, periods and types, reflecting the very best in quality from not only the North East but also across the country. Traders and preservation societies will also be featured.

To view the on-line exhibition, which opens on Saturday 20th March, visit www.rnarrailwayexhibition.com where access to the exhibitors' page will be made available after obtaining a password via the Just Giving (hopefully donating) link.

Proceeds from the exhibition will be donated to 'Heel and Toe', a charity caring for disabled children across County Durham and Darlington. Further details are available from John Burrows on 07870 210269.



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