

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



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for school run drivers

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Mayor elected

Organisers prepare
for park music events

Estates Committee makes pledge to owners after angry AGM

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New Estates Committee chairman pledges to improve communication with owners

Darras Hall Estates Committee has recently been under fire after an expensive legal wrangle failed to prevent a controversial housing development. Newly elected Acting Chairman Andrew Mate is pledging to mend the fractured relationship with owners.

After more than 100 comparatively calm years of quietly protecting a Trust Deed which is increasingly being challenged by more than 200 planning applications a year by developers and owners, the committee found itself at the centre of a storm last summer when five of its 15 members suddenly resigned.

They disagreed with a decision by committee colleagues to reverse their initial refusal of permission for a five home development on a six acre site on the corner of Runnymede Road and Fox Covert Lane.

Developer Lugano Group had threatened legal action against the Trustees and the Estates Committee saying it would seek damages of more than £19,000 a week following the refusal decision. After advice was sought by a barrister familiar with the Trust Deed and legal costs of more than £63,000 were incurred, the Estates Committee backed down.

The five members who resigned issued a statement alleging "a lack of transparency", "a lack of accountability" and "lack of consultation" by the committee. Then in March a packed and heated AGM at the Memorial Hall saw angry owners demanding answers on the handling of the Runnymede Road planning application, some of whom have written to Pont News.

Seven existing members were re-elected, and seven new members elected, with one additional existing member not due for election - meaning the committee again has a full complement of 15 members.

Former chairman Michael Dainty has stood down from the position after 18 years but remains a committee member. He has been replaced by Andrew Mate and David Gambles, who are currently sharing the role of Acting Chairman.

Andrew said the newly elected committee is keen to draw a line under the recent controversy and work on improving communication with estate owners.

He said: "Half of the committee is new and we want to be more transparent, forward thinking, more communicative and develop a stronger bond with owners. We want to address the issues that have given owners a problem; there has been some valid criticism.

"We have certain rules and regulations which are in place to protect and preserve the unique infrastructure of Darras Hall. But sometimes the community thinks we have greater powers than we actually have. For example, we cannot dictate the style houses are built in.

"We need to affirm what the Estates Committee actually does and what we are trying to achieve."



Man on a mission...Andrew Mate, newly elected Acting Chairman of Darras Hall Estates Committee. Photo by Trevor Walker.

Plans include a revamp of the Estates Committee website, to include a Q&A area for the estate's 2,500 owners to ask questions, and a new email database so owners can receive regular updates electronically.

Andrew, 63, who has been married to Doreen for 35 years and has three children and three grandchildren, is now semi-retired having spent three decades running a Newcastle based advertising agency. He has converted its former offices into an aparthotel.

The couple have lived in Ovington for the past six years, where Andrew served on the local parish council and was chair of the Community Group. They previously lived in Runnymede Road for nine years and are currently renovating a property in Greenacres ready to move into soon.

Andrew added: "The new members have brought a breath of fresh air and delivered new impetus to the Estates Committee, which we want to take a more pro-active role in the community. I have family living in Darras Hall and my grandchildren are growing up here – it's very important to me that the future of the estate is as good as it can be."

What would you like the Estates Committee to do differently?

Write to *Your letters* at pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk

See *Your letters*: page 8



Haveli's head chef Imamuddin Khan



Unique accolade for Haveli's head chef

Diners at Darras Hall's stylish new restaurant Haveli have been congratulating head chef Imamuddin Khan after he was shortlisted for the prestigious North East of England Chef of the Year Award.

Chef Imamuddin beat off competition from hundreds of entrants to be the first ever Indian chef to be named a finalist at the North East Culinary and Trade Association show held at Newcastle's Civic Centre last month, where he lined up against six of the finest chefs in the region from top class venues including the Assembly Rooms and Close House.

Originally from Delhi, Chef Imamuddin honed his culinary skills at some of India's top restaurants, among them celebrity favourites the Radisson Hotel Delhi, the ITC Maurya Sheraton Delhi and the TajHotel Chandigarh, before moving to London to work at the acclaimed Cinnamon Club.

It was from here he was enticed by Haveli owner Sunil Mehra's vision of serving modern Indian cuisine with an authentic heritage, inspired by the finest kitchens of India, in a comfortable setting accessible to all.

Chef Imamuddin said: "We both have a passion for wonderful food and our aim is to change North East diners' perception of Indian food as they know it. In doing so, Haveli will establish a trademark for the modern Indian dining experience."

Haveli, which in Hindi means a private mansion, usually with historical and architectural significance, officially opened at the end of March and is gearing up for a busy summer.

World Cup parties

The private dining room upstairs, which caters for up to 16 diners, is taking bookings for special World Cup parties in June and July where football fans can enjoy three or four course meals as they watch the action on the big screen from just £20 per person.

8-course tasting menu

Guests preferring an uninterrupted fine dining experience may prefer the 8-course tasting menu at £60 (an additional £25 with paired wines).

Takeaway service

And if a night in is on the menu, a takeaway service has even been launched offering exquisite restaurant food direct to your dining room to entertain friends or enjoy with your family.

Tables can be booked online via the restaurant's website at haveliponteland.com or by calling (01661) 872727.

Opening times: Mon-Sat 6pm to 11pm.

Find us on Facebook at [facebook/haveli.net](https://facebook.com/haveli.net) and Twitter @haveliponteland

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Retiring Mayor Peter Cowey hands over the chains of office to Coun Carl Rawlings. Photo by Trevor Walker.

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR 2014-15

Councillor Peter Cowey retired from the position of Mayor which he had held for three years. In his handover speech he thanked his fellow councillors and the staff for their help and support during his time in office. Coun Cowey was presented with a gift from colleagues and staff and flowers for his wife Sheila for her support during his term of office. On behalf of the Council, Coun Carl Rawlings thanked the outgoing Mayor for all his hard work and efforts during the past three years. Coun Rawlings was elected Mayor of the Town Council for 2014-15. Coun Joyce Butcher was elected Deputy Mayor.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Council approved the appointment of councillors to their committees, working parties and representation on various outside bodies.

DATES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2014-15

The Council approved the dates of Town Council meetings to be held on the second Wednesday of each month beginning at 6.45pm with public question time. Details of the dates can be found on the Town Council's website.

GRANT APPLICATION

A grant of £100 was approved following an application from Community Action Northumberland.

PROJECTS REPORT

Pathway lighting to the park

This proposal had been part of the budget in 2012-13, and a scheme had been drawn up and prices had been obtained for both a mains supply and a solar powered option. The report also referred to glow in the dark surfacing suggested by the Rotary Club. The Council is interested in the proposal but in view of the costs involved agreed to not proceed with this project at present.

Replacement of equipment

The Council considered a report regarding various items of equipment due for replacement this year, including CCTV cameras, IT upgrades and PCs and various other small items of office equipment. Members agreed to replace the items, with the costs met from the council's asset replacement fund.

HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

Members of the Working Party, who had met on April 16th, reported concerns about cracked paving outside the One Stop shop on Thornhill Road, Ponteland, and the Town Council agreed to raise the issue with the County Council with a view to extending the tarmac to cover the paved area. Coun Dodd agreed to look into this as this scheme had been funded from his small schemes allowance.

WAR REMEMBRANCE WORKING PARTY

Members of the Working Party, who held their first meeting on May 7th reported on the exhibition planned for the week beginning

November 3rd in the lounge in the Memorial Hall, which will run until Saturday November 8th. The Chairman of the Working Party is writing to local schools to see if they wished to be involved and also visit the exhibition. An article will appear in the July edition of Pont News asking people if they wished to display items at the exhibition and further meetings will be held in the near future.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Coun Dodd reported that work is continuing regarding the parking situation and consultation will be carried out. He reminded councillors that the West Area meeting will be held in Ponteland on the second Tuesday in June.

STEP INTO SPRING

Coun Greenwell reported that the above event held on May 10th had been very successful, with 168 people taking part.

This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on May 14th.

MP RECOUNTS TIME AS A JOCKEY AT ROTARY CLUB LUNCH

MP Guy Opperman recounted his previous life as a National Hunt jockey and barrister as he joined members of Ponteland Rotary Club for lunch at Ponteland Golf Club.

Mr Opperman also discussed his time as a director of his family engineering business, his charity fundraising and the customs and habits unique to the House of Commons and how MPs adapt to them.

Peter recently presented past President Stewart with a Paul Harris Fellowship in recognition of many years hard work and loyal service.

Members of the club's International Committee are currently making final arrangements for the ever popular family day out, the Duck Race, which will be held in Ponteland Park on the afternoon of Sunday August 31st. A date for your diary!



Fresh warning to school run drivers

By PC Rob Anderson
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



In the period between April 15th and May 14th we have had six crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- One theft from a motor vehicle
- One theft from a shop
- Two house burglaries
- One shed burglary
- One damage to a motor vehicle.

Enquiries are ongoing in relation to the crimes.

Parking still remains a problem on Thornhill Road during school times despite numerous reminders and the efforts of police and council enforcement officers. Here is a list of dos and don'ts to remind you and pass on to your friends who live outside the area and travel in:

1. Don't park on the yellow lines. These have restrictions attached to them and council enforcement officers will issue fixed penalty notices for any infringements.

2. Park on the road and not on the pavement. It is understood why drivers park their vehicles half on the road and half on the pavement to avoid causing an obstruction on the road but please remember pedestrians have the right of way which should be respected.

3. Don't obstruct residents' driveways.

4. Use the car parks provided in the area to park and then walk to the schools.

5. Keep your speed down to 20mph in the residential area.

6. Don't use the Blackbird car park as a short cut between Thornhill Road and North Road.

There have been some recent complaints regarding a driver visiting the Medburn area and passing unwanted comments to walkers and horse riders. If you have any information regarding this person please contact us.

If you would like some crime prevention advice please contact PC 613 Davison or myself, PC 395 Anderson, on 101.

Local police surgeries will be held on the following dates:

- PC Lee Davison 7th June 11.30am - 12.30pm at Belsay village shop
- PC Rob Anderson 21st June 10am - 11am Waitrose, Ponteland
- PC Rob Anderson 21st June 11.30am - 12.30pm Co-op, Broadway
- CSO Paul Cotterill 28th June 9.30am - 10.30am Merton Hall, Ponteland

We also have engagement days at these venues and dates:

- 18th June 10am – 12noon Merton Way, Ponteland
- 18th June 1pm - 3pm Broadway, Ponteland
- 25th June 1pm - 3pm Stamfordham/ Belsay/Matfen

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Your letters

The Editor
Pont News & Views



More criticism of Darras Hall Estates Committee in this month's letters...

Estates committee should be disbanded

Three cheers for John Worth (letters May).

When I wrote to Mr Dainty (former chairman) a while ago asking just what we got for our money he said it was spent on wages, postage, stationery and the upkeep of the expensive bungalow they have for their 'office'.

When I included in my letter that I thought that the committee was not much use he was very affronted. I wonder why?

On a previous occasion when they went to court they won the case but had to meet their own costs. What happened on that occasion? They put up the rents, a clear indication that the committee does not

know how to run a business properly.

After the recent fiasco and spending the vast sum of £63,740 on legal expenses, the committee should be disbanded immediately.

Pauline T Royle
Errington Road
Darras Hall

New Estates Committee chairman pledges to improve communication with owners: page 3

Letters on all issues are welcomed by Pont News & Views but the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher. The Editor reserves the right to amend any submitted letters for legal or other reasons. All letters submitted should include the writer's name and address.

July issue deadlines: Delivery of the July issue will start on Thursday June 26th. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Friday June 13th. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the July issue.

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Both playing & social memberships are currently being offered at Ponteland Golf Club. Membership categories start from the age of 10 and there is a range of payment options currently available for both ladies and gentlemen. There is currently no waiting list for ANY category. The club is actively looking to recruit young adults and has recently introduced intermediate membership categories. For information contact:

Secretary Greg Waugh at:
secretary@thepontelandgolfclub.co.uk
Tel: 01661 822689

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What's on...

County Council surgeries

Your local Northumberland County Councillors Richard Dodd, Peter Jackson, Veronica Jones and Eileen Armstrong are available to meet constituents on the first Saturday of every month from 10am-11am at Waitrose supermarket, Ponteland and Broadway, Darras Hall. Their next surgery is on Saturday June 7th.

Impossible God: Ponteland Methodist Church - Saturday June 7th

A play re-enacting the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, performed by just one actor, is coming to Ponteland as part of the celebration marking 200 years of Methodism in the town. Actor Mark Topping is staging Impossible God at Ponteland Methodist Church on Saturday 7th June as part of a nationwide tour of the play. In the drama numerous characters, with all 18 of them played by Mark Topping, relive their experience of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The performance starts at 7pm and tickets costing £7 can be obtained from Syd Cowan on (01661) 824459. See article on page 14.

Party in the Park: Sunday June 8th

It's Party in the Park again on Sunday June 8th from 1.30pm. Admission will be £1 whilst children under five will be free. This year the event will be opened by our local MP Guy Opperman and entertainment will include Whistling Sheep, Coates Middle School, Ponteland Community Band, Ponteland Repertory, Jill Errington Dance School and Birds of Prey.

Ponteland Ramblers

Ponteland Ramblers have organised walks on the following dates in June: Sunday 8th in the North Tyne valley and Sunday 22nd from Warkworth. There will also be Wednesday walks on 11th and 25th, details still to be finalised. For more information contact Steve Edwards on (01661) 886310.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday June 9th is Nigel Wilkinson, whose talk is entitled 'Policing in the North East'. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every month in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm.

Memorial Hall's Fratelli fundraiser

Ponteland Memorial Hall is holding a fundraising meal at Fratelli's on Monday June 9th. There will be a comprehensive menu available and tickets, costing £17.50, are available from the Hall Secretary, Vicky Robson, tel. (01661) 822603.

Ponteland WI

Our next meeting takes place in the Memorial Hall on Tuesday June 10th at 7pm. We are having an international cookery demonstration by Christine Rogers, an interesting and entertaining speaker. Visitors will be most welcome.

Darras Hall WI

The next meeting of Darras Hall WI is on Thursday June 12th when our speaker will be Mrs Ann Wilson. Ann will be talking about Guide Dogs for the Blind, and she may even bring a furry four-pawed friend. The competition this month is for 'A dog - any medium'. Visitors are most welcome to attend the meeting at 2pm in the URC Hall, Broadway, Darras Hall.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

The club is hosting John Dalton on Tuesday June 17th. John is an area demonstrator who has chosen the very topical subject 'Flowers for a Summer's Day'. The event starts at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Ponteland. On this occasion members may bring a friend for free.

Embroiderers' Guild Ponteland branch

Meetings are held in the Memorial Hall, Darras Road, on the 4th Monday of each month from 2pm to 4pm. (On Bank Holidays the meeting is held the previous Monday). The programme is varied and can feature traditional techniques, contemporary approaches, machine and computer technology, fashion and accessories, patchwork, quilting and embroidery from other cultures. On Monday June 23rd our speaker and topic is Ailish Henderson - 'From sketch to stitch using textiles to embroider your story'. Membership of the branch and the Embroiderers' Guild to open to all, from the leisure stitcher to the talented professional and keen student. It is a myth that you have to be an expert to join, and everyone, whatever their level of experience, is very welcome at meetings and workshops. You can become a member, or join us for a meeting as a visitor (£2) and never even pick up a needle! Contact the secretary at eg_ne_ponteland@btinternet.com or on (01661) 881395.

Music in the Park: Sunday June 29th

Ponteland Town Council's Music in the Park event is being held in Ponteland Park on Sunday June 29th from 2.30pm to 5.30pm. Compered by BBC Radio Newcastle's Jonathan Miles, acts include singer Sonia Michelle, North Tyneside Steel Band, Rendezvous Jazz Band, Ponteland Community Band and The Jill Errington School of Dance. Entry is free. In the event of bad weather the event will be at the Memorial Hall. See event poster on page 12.

1st Ponteland Girls' Brigade celebrates its 50th anniversary

1st Ponteland Girls' Brigade is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. We are holding a celebration service on Saturday July 5th at 2pm in Ponteland Methodist Church followed by refreshments and displays in the church hall and garden party and BBQ in the church garden. We will then end the celebration weekend with a Family Service and Parade on Sunday July 6th in Ponteland Methodist Church, starting at 10am. We invite all past members of 1st Ponteland Girls' Brigade to join us in celebrating 50 years of the Girls' Brigade in Ponteland, for more information please contact pontelandgb@hotmail.co.uk



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Ponteland Golf Club pro Alan Crosby (centre) is pictured on the practice green with Richard Winter (left) and Kevin Higgins. Photo by Keith Robertson.

Golf club tees up sponsorship deal with dental practice

Ponteland Golf Club has teed up a sponsorship deal with neighbouring dental practice Higgins & Winter.

Keen sportsmen Kevin Higgins and Richard Winter were delighted to support the golf club's efforts to develop young talent, signing up to a three year sponsorship deal for the practice green.

Kevin said: "This latest joint venture recognises our commitment to supporting local organisations and charities. We really believe in supporting the local community. Following our recent sponsorship of a

book of poetry by a local author in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, the Ponteland Triathlon Club, Village in Bloom, Ponteland Rotary events and our work in the local schools, this seemed like a great opportunity to support a fantastic local club."

Richard added: "Having played a lot of courses around the North East, Ponteland Golf Club has some of the best greens we have played on; the course is in great condition. As well as forming a partnership with the golf club we will be seeking to bring colleagues over to Ponteland to see just how good it is and to promote the area further.

"If you haven't played at Ponteland already - do it! We have previously supported the club by arranging social and golfing events here and we couldn't have asked for a friendlier welcome."

Club Secretary Chris Espiner said: "Ponteland Golf Club has several local partners who support the club and particularly its junior players. Higgins & Winter are the latest to join with us. We hope for a long and happy relationship!"

Kevin and Richard are partners at the Higgins and Winter Dental Practice and Implant Centre on Bell Villas, Ponteland.

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MUSIC IN THE PARK

Sunday 29 June
from 2.30pm to 5.30pm
at Ponteland Park

Opening by: **BBC Radio Newcastle's**

Jonathan Miles

Music from:

Sonia Michelle

North Tyneside Steel Band

Rendezvous Jazz Band

The Jill Errington School of Dance

Ponteland Community Band

Bring a picnic and enjoy a fantastic
afternoon's outdoor entertainment
with friends and family.

In the event of poor weather, the event will be held at the Memorial Hall.

**FREE
EVENT**

Two events to party on in the park to

Ponteland Park is hosting two of the village's most popular annual family events this month, with both the Party in the Park and Music in the Park being held there.

The first is the Party in the Park on Sunday June 8th from 1.30pm. Admission will be £1 whilst children under five will be free.

This year the event will be opened by MP Guy Opperman and entertainment will include Whistling Sheep, Coates Middle School, Ponteland Community Band, Ponteland Repertory and Jill Errington Dance School.

Friends of Ponteland Park will be at the meadow with the Falconry Days birds of prey display. Come to the meadow and meet, amongst others, owls, hawks and falcons and at 2.30pm enjoy their thrilling flying display.

The event is organised by the Christian Churches together in Ponteland, St. Mary's, St. Mathews Catholic Church, Ponteland Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. The objective is to create a social gathering for the families and children of Ponteland and to support local charities.



Record crowds...at last year's Party in the Park. Photo by Trevor Walker.

On Sunday June 29th it is Ponteland Town Council's Music in the Park, from 2.30pm to 5.30pm, compered by BBC Radio Newcastle's Jonathan Miles. Acts include singer Sonia Michelle, North Tyneside Steel Band, Rendezvous Jazz Band, Ponteland Community Band and The Jill Errington School of Dance. Entry is free.

In the event of bad weather the event will be at the Memorial Hall.



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Kirkley Hall Gardens & Floristry Event

Sunday 15th June 10am-4pm

Kirkley Hall gardens will be hosting a one day event dedicated to horticulture. With garden tours, expert advice, floristry demonstrations and entertainment for the children, as well as our Orangery Tea Room this event will bring out the gardener in everyone. Entry £2pp.

The Proms on the Lawn

Friday 18th July 7pm for 7:30pm

Kirkley Hall are hosting their very own night at the proms, with live music from Ellington Colliery Band ranging from modern hits to old classics. Sit back, relax and enjoy the show amongst the beautiful surroundings at Kirkley Hall, don't forget your picnic and blankets. £14.95pp including a glass of sparkling wine on arrival.

Tel: 01670 841235

Visit: www.kirkleyhall.co.uk

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Ponteland mum meets the young African girl her charity saved

A Ponteland businesswoman has visited Kenya to meet a young orphan girl saved by the charity she helps run.

Business consultant Alison Ferry travelled to East Africa to meet seven-year-old Diana, one of more than 100 children whose lives have been transformed by the Eating Stones children's home, which was set up by her son Chris, a student at Leeds University.

Diana was a very sick and frightened two-year-old when she was taken to the Eating Stones children's home after both her parents were killed in Kenya's post election violence in 2008. She was severely malnourished and shied away from everyone she met.

It took her a long time to recover her health and even longer for her to begin to communicate and trust the people around her. There were grave concerns that she would never recover from the trauma and ill health she'd suffered from a young age, but with a lot of love and care, she began to turn a corner.

Mother-of-three Alison said: "I've followed Diana's progress closely for five years, so I was eager to meet her. When I went into her classroom, I recognised Diana immediately from her photos. I was delighted to see her join in with the other children and answer questions in English and Swahili. Her cheerful personality really shines out.

"She's developed a keen curiosity for everything going on around her and she ran to greet me every time I visited Eating Stones during my two-week stay in Nairobi.

"At Eating Stones, we depend on the help we get from people in Ponteland and across the North East, who support us because they like the close personal relationship we have with the children and their carers in Nairobi. We can tell donors about the lives and



personalities of our children, or even details like what they ate for dinner last week".

Alison can be contacted through the charity website www.eatingstones.co.uk and is happy to talk to anyone who would like to know more about her trip to Kenya, or find out how they can help Eating Stones.

Impossible God tour comes to Ponteland



Actor Mark Topping as John Wesley

A play re-enacting the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, performed by just one actor, is coming to Ponteland as part of the celebration marking 200 years of Methodism in the town.

Actor Mark Topping is staging Impossible God at Ponteland Methodist Church on Saturday 7th June as part of a nationwide tour of the play.

In the drama numerous characters, with all 18 of them played by Mark Topping, relive their experience of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Rev. Tim Thorpe, the Minister of the Church said: "The play has been well received in many places throughout the country and the church community is looking forward to the visit. This is one of

a number of celebratory events during the year to mark the 200 years of Methodism here in Ponteland."

Mark Topping has toured the UK for the last five years playing John Wesley in An Evening with John Wesley and My Own Familiar Friend. The devotional book 'An Impossible God' was written and adapted for the stage by his father Frank, an author, actor, broadcaster and Methodist minister formerly of Blackhall, East Durham.

Mark said: "The drama is a powerful exploration of events at the heart of Christianity. You are taken on an imaginative journey and challenged to look again at Jesus of Nazareth and reflect on what it might all mean."

The performance starts at 7pm and tickets costing £7 can be obtained from Syd Cowan on (01661) 824459.



Store donates £468 to mental health charity

A Tyneside mental health charity was presented with a cheque for £468 by Ponteland Waitrose from the supermarket's Community Matters scheme.

Stuart Dexter, CEO of Tyneside Mind received the cheque from the store's Customer Service Manager Alan Allsopp and fundraiser Gillian Hunter, of Darras Hall, who nominated the charity.

Gillian is collecting plastic tops from milk bottles - which display a number 2 inside a recycling triangle on the underside of them and are easily recycled - to raise funds for Tyneside Mind.

The tops can be recycled for use making items including watering cans, children's toys, garden furniture, plastic bottles and pipes. Any families, individuals, offices, schools or businesses wishing to collect the milk tops for Tyneside Mind can contact Gillian on (01661) 823078.

BEER FESTIVAL SET TO BECOME ANNUAL FIXTURE

Ponteland Beer Festival is set to become an annual fixture after the inaugural event was hailed a huge success.

More than 1,000 people sampled some of the 45 beers on offer as well as ten different ciders and a choice of lagers and wine. There were also a range of locally sauced sausages and live music.

The two day event was organised by Ponteland Rugby Club and held in a marquee next to the 1st XV pitch.

Organiser Andy Maidwell said: "The huge support from local businesses, residents, supporters, current and former players was overwhelming and made the two days a huge success. There are now plans to make it a regular event.

"We would like thank everyone who came along and all those who helped behind the scenes. It was a team effort in every sense and we are already organising for 2015."

The festival took place on April 25 and April 26 and everyone got a commemorative glass to mark the occasion.

GAGGLE OF GOSLINGS: THIS MONTH'S COVER SHOT

Thanks to reader Jessica Keating for the lovely cover shot of a pair of Canadian geese with their goslings, taken on a sunny morning walk with her grandad at Bolam Lake on May 14.

Another one for Jessica's impressive photo collection!



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