

Football and rugby clubs launch £1m clubhouse campaign

New late buses from Newcastle to Darras Hall

Former WWII radar operator celebrates centenary

Rhys designs new logo for Dalton Park





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Darras Hall schoolboy designs new logo for retail park

A Darras Hall schoolboy has won a competition to design a brand logo for a shopping centre's new £60,000 play park.

Talented Rhys Savin came up with the winning entry for Dalton Park with his 'Shop and Slide' concept.

His artistic flair and clever play on words caught the attention of the judges and was chosen unanimously from more than 120 entries to the 'Leave your mark, name the Play Park' competition, launched by the outlet shopping destination last October.

His artwork was unveiled in a special ceremony during the Easter holidays and the eight-year-old Darras Hall Primary School pupil also received a winner's hamper packed with art goodies from Dalton Park.

Proud mum Donna said: "Rhys loves having his design in the play park and can't wait to show it off to his family and friends, and maybe his own kids one day!

"He opened all the art materials in his winner's hamper once he got home and said thank you very much as he loves art, especially drawing and painting. He also made the school newsletter when he won. They are very, very proud of him."

Sophie Robinson, Placemaking, Marketing & Communications Manager at Dalton Park added: "We're thrilled with our new Shop and Slide Play Park logo designed by Rhys.

"His artistic flair really impressed the judging panel and they loved his imaginative design concept, perfect for a place where our guests love to use their imaginations through play.

"It was brilliant to unveil Rhys' plaque to him and his family over the Easter holidays – we hope it will continue to be a legacy piece for many years to come, and we see a very bright future in art and design for Rhys. Well done from everyone here at Dalton Park!"

Competition judges included Sophie Robinson, former Centre Manager Jerry Hatch and Murton Parish Councillors Julie Griffiths and Robert Adcock-Forster.

Dalton Park, located in Murton, County Durham, is the North East's largest outlet shopping and leisure scheme, with more than 65 stores.



Rhys Savin with parents Donna and Scott and brother Theo with his winning design.





Staff mark Lent with £600 donation to food bank

Kind-hearted staff at a Ponteland business marked Lent with a donation of more than £600 in produce and cash to a Northumberland food bank.

Twenty colleagues at Taopix collected more than 380 items of food and other essential items including toiletries as well as £50 in cash, which they delivered to grateful volunteers at the Trussel Trust's Cramlington Foodbank.

Liz Spooner, Content Marketing Specialist at the Meadowfield Industrial Estate-based photo personalisation software provider, had the idea for the collection.

She said: "As a Ponteland business, we wanted to aid causes which are local to us and will have a direct impact on the people around us who need help the most. With the excruciating rise in cost of living and the snowballing demand for food bank services, we agreed that this would be a more than worthy cause."

In a letter of thanks to Taopix,

Trussel Trust Project Manager Joyce Docherty said:

"Thank you very much for your generous donation to Cramlington Foodbank.

"Your kind donation weighed in at an extremely impressive 236kg and is already going into parcels being given to local families. It is a gesture that is very much appreciated in these difficult times of rising costs for everyone.

"Without bighearted donations like yours, it would be impossible for the volunteers here at the Foodbank to provide for the many local people who are in need of such help. We are truly grateful to have your support."

Taopix, which was launched by James Gray in 2007, sells white label photo personalisation software internationally.





New late bus services from Newcastle to Darras Hall introduced

New evening bus services from Newcastle to Darras Hall have been introduced by Stagecoach as part of a £4.5m subsidy package by public transport operator Nexus.

The X78 service now runs from Eldon Square Bus Station at 9.10pm, 10.10pm and 11.10pm, returning from Darras Hall at 9.36pm and 10.36pm. The new services run seven days per week.

Nexus said it is underwriting the cost of the new evening services using funds from the Tyne and Wear local councils to maintain local public transport links from Ponteland through Woolsington into Bank Foot and Newcastle at all times of day.

Nexus announced the £4.5m rescue package in March to stave off the worst impact of cuts made by commercial bus companies in the wake of the pandemic.

A spokesman said Nexus hopes the additional evening services will be permanent, but added they would be reviewed from time to time to see that they offer value for money compared to other routes they fund in the region.

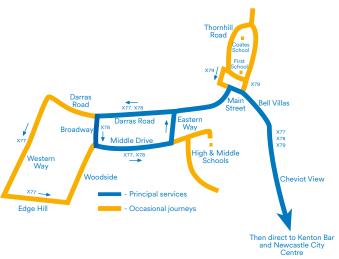
Until March Nexus funded an hourly bus along Ponteland Road which then turned through Prestwick to Dinnington. The new evening journeys on the X78 route replace this, but offer a new service for people in Ponteland and Darras Hall by running right through the village, and Nexus hopes this will prove popular and help support the costs of the whole route.

Huw Lewis, Customer Services Director for Nexus, which plans local transport for Tyne and Wear, said: "We are working in partnership with Stagecoach to provide an evening bus route from Darras Hall and Ponteland through Woolsington to Kingston Park and on to Newcastle.

"There are new homes and business developments along Ponteland Road and we want people to have good public transport both day and night, by bus or Metro, as they move in. It makes sense to match the whole X78 daytime route into Darras Hall because we want as many people as possible to use the route."









Superfit Sarah competes for Team GB in European Triathlon Championships



Superfit mum-of-three Sarah Hamilton completed an Ironman challenge in Mallorca as she finalised training for the European Triathlon Championships in Poland.

The 48-year-old, from Darras Hall, was due to compete at the Olysten event from May 27-29 after qualifying for the GB triathlon team, having completed the Ironman 70.3 challenge in Alcudia earlier in the month in an impressive six hours and five minutes.

Sarah has been training for five years and has completed five Ironman competitions around Europe, previously winning her age group in the Lakesman event in Keswick in 2019.

She trains a minimum three hours each day, which Sarah fits in around her children Max, Louisa and Sam and her job working as an NHS Training Manager, supported by husband Scott.

Sarah said: "Ironman Mallorca this year was tough. It wasn't so much the heat, but the wind that held us back a bit and I finished in 6 hours 5 minutes. It was great to have Scott alongside to help organise and support me on the day."

Scott added: "Sarah is relentless. I'm so proud of the sheer effort she puts into training, whether it's running, cycling or swimming in all sorts of weather. You never hear any complaints from her; she just gets on with it."

Sarah in Alcudia after completing the Ironman 70.3 challenge on May 7.



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Dogs set to make a splash at Kirkley festival

Dogs will be making a splash at an annual canine gathering in Kirkley this September with the addition of a new water attraction.

For the North East Dog Festival will welcome K9 Aqua Sports, Europe's largest independent canine aquatic and dock diving events and competition provider.

Canine aquatic sport, also known as dock diving or dock jumping, is a sport in which dogs jump from a deck (dock) into a large swimming pool or body of water and compete against each other in a long jump, high jump and for speed.

Making its first ever appearance in the North East, the new addition is set to attract visitors from all over the North to the hugely popular dog festival. Tens of thousands of dog owners and their canine companions are expected to descend on Kirkley Hall on the weekend of September 3 to 4.

Director Rebecca Ashworth Earle said: "Our team has always known that the next big step for the event is the K9 Aqua Sports Pool and we've worked hard with their team to ensure we can make the pool happen this year. The pool, which holds 100,000 litres, has never been in the North East before and we expect the crowds and the dogs to love it."

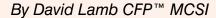
As well as new attractions there will be returning favourites including the Kipperbridge Gundogs with Adrian and Caroline Slater, sheepdog display, birds of prey, demonstration arenas, have a go activities, wellness marquee, shopping villages and charity dog shows.

Tickets are on sale now via the website northeastdogfestival.com and trade stand applications are also being taken until the end of June.



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 These could include a season ticket loan to reduce travel costs, claiming tax free childcare, switching to a low emissions company, or (my personal favourite) buying a bike on the right to work scheme.

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 This can include maximising your personal savings allowance, making the most of your ISA allowance, using the starter rate for savings.

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Cut tax on your investments

 This may include maximising your dividends, using your capital gains tax allowance (and avoiding CGT by investing in ISAs), transferring assets to a spouse, investing in junior ISAs and switching investments to capital boosting investments. For the more adventurous, investing in enterprise investment schemes or venture capital trusts may be an option, along with bank shares through your company.

Save property income tax

 By using the rent a room relief or claiming landlord's expenses.

Save inheritance tax

 This has been described as a voluntary tax paid by those who dislike their children even more than they dislike the Inland Revenue.
 A lot of potential tax can be saved with good planning.

Make charitable donations

 Doing this via gift aid can help if you are subject to higher or additional rate tax. The charity can also benefit from reclaiming tax on the donation.

Score your financial planning at lambfinancial.co.uk/scoremy-financial-planning.



Former WWII radar operator celebrates centenary

A former WWII RAF radar operator who took part in the invasion of North Africa has celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends in a special celebration.

John Sleight marked his centenary at Newcastle Golf

Club, where he was a member for more than 50 years, club captain in 1977 and is now an Honorary Member.

The grandad-of-two, who was married to Lorna for 64 years until her death ten years ago, moved into Grange Lea Care Home in Ponteland last January, having previously lived at Brunton Park, Gosforth.

His early life included five

years with the Royal Air Force, where he took part in the invasion of North Africa in 1942 as a Radar Operator.

His journalistic career had started prior to his RAF service as a junior reporter at the Dewsbury News in West Yorkshire. After WWII he returned to Civvy Street and joined the Falmouth Packet in Cornwall, marrying Lorna in 1948.

John was headhunted by the Evening Chronicle in Newcastle in 1950, where reporting roles included educational correspondent, before he was approached by the newly launched Tyne Tees Television and took a job in the news division. He remained at the station for more than 25 years, including time as a senior producer and political editor.

John and Lorna had two sons, Christopher and Robin, and granddaughters Rebecca, who lives in New Zealand, and Amy who lives locally.

His golf-themed birthday cake was made by Grange Lea chef Alison, part of the catering team who cook for the home's 18 residents.

Officer-in-Charge Doreen Senior said: "John said he had never tasted such a nice cake. He is the youngest 100-yearold that I have ever met."







Sports clubs join forces to launch £1m community clubhouse appeal

Two neighbouring sports clubs have joined forces to launch an ambitious £1m fundraising campaign to develop a community clubhouse.

Ponteland Rugby Club is the only league rugby club in Northumberland not to have its own changing rooms and social facilities, while Ponteland United FC cannot progress further up the national leagues without them.

The two clubs have set up a new joint company to manage the project, have already commissioned an architect and started consultations with county planning officials about the much-needed sporting facility prior to the submission of a planning application.

The new clubhouse would be located on land between the rugby and football pitches adjacent to Ponteland Leisure Centre on Callerton Lane and include changing rooms, a social space and viewing balcony.

It would be open on matchdays, for training sessions and club social events, as well as for wider community use. Ponteland Rugby Club has three senior teams (1st XV, 2nd XV and 3rd XV), ten junior teams from age six to 18 and a newly formed Ponteland Tigers ladies' team and girls' section. The 1st XV play in Northumberland & Durham Division 1.

Ponteland United FC has 51 teams playing league football, including 48 junior teams from under-7s to under-23s and three adult senior teams. There are also 12 girls' teams and a senior women's team.

Ponteland United First Team competes in the Premier Division of the highly respected Northern Football Alliance League. Having won promotion in their inaugural season, Ponteland Women are progressing up the women's football league in style.

The football club's senior teams are returning to the Callerton Lane site for the 2022-23 season after four years, having relocated during the development of the new Ponteland schools and leisure scheme.

David Comeskey, President of Ponteland Rugby Club, said: "We want the whole Ponteland community to get behind us and support this ambitious initiative to create a superb new sports facility. We are the only rugby club in



Visual of the new community clubhouse

the county without our own changing rooms and social facilities and are determined to create a superb community sports venue."

The clubs have set up a Crowdfunder page for donations and will be carrying out fundraising activity at events including the popular Ponteland Beer Festival, taking place on the rugby pitches on Friday and Saturday June 3-4.

Supporters can 'buy a brick' which will be personalised and included in a display in the new clubhouse, and anyone donating £1,000 or more will be eligible for an Honorary Vice Presidency with a season of VIP treatment at home and away fixtures.

Paul Brooks, Chairman of

Ponteland United FC, added: "We have more than 50 teams playing league football from under-7s to adults but without this new facility further progression up the national leagues will not be possible. The scheme is not eligible for various national sporting funds, so we need to raise the entire amount ourselves. Please help us achieve our dream!"

Anyone wishing to donate to the campaign can do so via the Crowdfunder page at crowdfunder.co.uk/p/pontclubhouse-appeal

Pictured (I-r) at the site of the proposed clubhouse are: John Chappell, Chairman of Ponteland Rugby Club; Paul Brooks, Chairman of Ponteland United FC; Alan Birkinshaw, Secretary of Ponteland United FC; David Comeskey, President of Ponteland Rugby Club; and Paul Ely, Ponteland United FC committee member and architect. Photo by Barry Pells.



Your letters

Another warm welcome for a new special school in this month's letters...

I also welcome new special school to Ponteland

May I fully endorse the views expressed by Jennifer Hardy in her letter in the May edition of Pont News & Views welcoming all those connected with the special school in Ponteland.

I do sincerely hope that the schools concerned realise their great fortune in being situated within a relatively affluent catchment area and that their objecting attitude towards the opening of the special school is not accompanied by a similar attitude to children with special needs within their own school environment.

Geoffrey James

Langton Court, Ponteland

Have you lost a vintage walking stick?

Whilst in Ponteland last week I found a walking stick lying in Thornhill Road just up from the Blackbird by the car park.

It has to be a treasured item and I would like to return it to its owner. You can contact me through Pont News & Views for its safe return.

Richard Pattison

Brunton Ave, Fawdon, Newcastle

July issue deadlines: The deadline for all copy and adverts for the July issue is Monday June 13. Door to door distribution will be from Monday June 27 to Friday July 1. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the July issue. Please visit ponteland-tc.gov.uk/pont-news-and-views for online issues and all updates.

Ponteland prepares to party the weekend away

The people of Ponteland are ready to party!

A right Royal celebration is being held throughout the first weekend of June, with four days of activities ahead to mark the Queen's 70 years as sovereign.

From Thursday June 2 to Sunday June 5, people throughout Britain and further afield will be enjoying parties and activities, with an extra day's bank holiday to help everyone to celebrate.

Ponteland has a wide range of celebrations over the long weekend, starting with a celebration on Coates Green from 8.30pm on the Thursday on Coates Green, with music from North Tyneside Steel Band. A piper will also play as the beacon on the top of St Mary's Church is lit at 9.45pm, part of a chain of beacons across Britain.

Ponteland Rugby Club will be holding its annual Beer Festival at the Leisure Centre on the Friday and Saturday from noon to 11pm on both days.

The Leisure Centre will be holding an open day on the Saturday, with free classes, displays and competitions from 10am to 3pm. There will be free soft play sessions from 10am-12noon, followed by free sessions on the climbing wall

The special weekend will end on the Sunday with Ponteland's popular Party in the Park, starting at 1pm. There will be lots of stalls and activities plus a children's fancy dress parade for any royal costume - from princess to knight in armour, king to court jester. There will be a small prize for every entrant, sponsored by Ponteland Town Council. The day will end with a Duck Race at 4.30pm, organised by the team at Ponteland Rotary.

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.

What's on...

Ponteland u3a

Meetings and talks at St Mary's Parish Centre are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 2pm. Our next talks will be on June 1 – 'Air Traffic Control' by Steve Cox and on July 6 'Cragside – Upstairs/ Downstairs' by Geoff Hughes. Contact the membership secretary on 01661 824953.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee afternoon tea party

Ponteland Methodist Church welcomes you to an afternoon tea party on Saturday June 4 from 1pm until 3pm to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Come to the church hall for delicious cakes and a visual display of the Queen's reign.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Strawberry Tea

We are holding a free community Queen's Platinum Jubilee strawberry tea at Merton Hall on Monday June 6 starting at 3pm. All are welcome. Details of other Jubilee celebration events on page 10.

Callerton Garden and Flower Club

Our meeting this month will take place at 2pm on Wednesday June 8 at Ponteland CIU when our demonstrator Patti Dawson's theme will be 'Fabrications'. Visitors this month are most welcome - free of charge!

Gatherings for Christian meditation

A welcoming group meet in St Mary's Church for short times of meditation from 2pm to 3pm on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next date is June 8. All are invited to join us. We hold the space for each other in meditation, and explore together some of the rich inheritance of this Christian tradition which reaches back to the early church.

Friends of Kirkley Hall

At 7pm on Wednesday June 8 we have a presentation 'Beautiful Northumbria' by Geoff Hughes. This is a chance to see some of the most beautiful photographs of different parts of Northumbria and discuss how they were taken with the photographer. Free to members, £3 to non-members. All welcome, no booking necessary. Visit friendsofkirkleyhall200.org.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

David Gold will address us on the subject of 'The Great Moguls of India' at our next meeting in the Memorial Hall at 2.30pm on Monday June 13.

Ponteland WI

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday June 14 at 2pm in Merton Hall. At this special time of year we are having a cookery demonstration entitled 'Celebration' hosted by Christine Rogers. This month's competition will be for a commemorative item. Light refreshments will be available, there will also be a raffle and a stall. All visitors are most welcome.

Ponteland Village WI

We will be celebrating the Queen's Platinum celebrations with a Jubilee Games Night on Tuesday, June 14. If you want to try us out, email the committee at pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com. Our busy sub-groups include walking group, dining out, walking for softies and book club. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month in St Mary's Parish Centre at 7.30pm. For more information, email us or look for Ponteland Village WI on Facebook.

Go Tri events

Ponteland Runners will be hosting their ever popular Go Tri events which give people a chance to test out triathlon over a short distance. The events include a 200 metre swim, 9km bike ride, and 5km run. No experience is necessary and our supportive marshals will cheer you on. The next events will be held at 7pm from Ponteland Leisure Centre on June 15 and July 13. You can book onto the events at gotri.org or contact triathlon@pontelandrunners. org.uk to find out more.

Ponteland Friendly Stitchers

On Monday June 27 from 2.15pm to 4.15pm at The Hive Bar, First Floor,

Ponteland Leisure Centre we will have a talk on the 'History of Embroidery' by Hilary Fielding. Membership of the group is open to all, whatever your level of experience. You can become a member or come to a meeting as a visitor for £5. For further information contact Secretary Penny Ford at pontelandfriendlystitchers@mail.com.

Creative writing classes

Suitable for both beginners and more experienced writers, these classes will inspire and encourage you to write poetry, short fiction and memoir and to share and develop your writing through stimulating workshop sessions in a friendly and supportive group. We meet on Wednesday mornings in members' homes in and around Ponteland. Email claire@claire276. plus.com for more information or to arrange a free taster session.

Rotary Ponteland

We meet at The Britannia Hotel each Tuesday, alternating lunchtime and evenings. Visit rotaryponteland.org.uk

Ponteland Methodist Church

Sunday worship 10am and 6.30pm - all welcome. Monday 1pm to 4pm 'Open Door' café. Tuesday Boys Brigade with a Girls' Association. Thursday Toddlers, Men's Forum, Women Together. Saturday walking groups. Various Bible study and House groups. Prayer and Fairtrade groups. Pilates, Zumba, dance. Room hire. Contact anncooperx@gmail.com or call 01661 824347.

Inner Wheel Club of Ponteland

Part of a women's voluntary organisation we are a small club founded on friendship. Meetings held on the first Monday of the month at St Mary's Parish Centre at 2pm include members spending social time together and talks, and occasional meals in a local restaurant and small fundraising events for charities are also held. New members and visitors are always welcome - contact 07568 743653.

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Firefighters deliver more help to Ukraine

Firefighters from Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service have made another gruelling trip across Europe to help their colleagues in Ukraine.

A team made the 1,500-mile trip to handover another fire appliance, together with an incident response unit and a 4x4 paramedic unit donated by the International Fire & Rescue Association, to help Ukraine's emergency services.

The team is part of the larger convoy carrying thousands of items of life saving kit to support firefighters in the war-torn country.

It was the third humanitarian convoy to leave for Ukraine with donations from fire and rescue services around the UK including vehicles, hoses, helmets, thermal imaging cameras, generators, ladders, rescue equipment and protective equipment. The total number of vehicles handed over is now at 60.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service's Area Manager Rob Clow said: "The handover to our Ukrainian colleagues was an emotional occasion, when the full magnitude of what the team had achieved sank in.

"Having driven almost 1,500 miles, the team will be making their way back to the UK over the next couple of days. This has been a fantastic effort, as part of a national convoy of 24 vehicles led by the National Fire Chiefs' Council and Fire Aid."



Learn to Dance



Strictly Starters Autumn Term

New adult beginners dance classes starting in September on a Wednesday evening in Ponteland

This class is ideal for adult couples of all ages who want to have an enjoyable time together learning to dance some basic Ballroom and Latin American Argentine Tango and popular Sequence dance routines.

Our lessons are fun to attend and give you the opportunity to laugh, learn and exercise both body and mind with likeminded people in a friendly and social environment.

Places will be strictly limited and we apply a first come first

served policy. So, if you are interested in coming along, and want to register your place in our Autumn Term, then please visit our new members page on our website www.strictlystarters.com; or email us at strictlystarters@btinternet.com



Or visit our Facebook page: @strictlystarters



Or call Malcolm on 07768 596380

Legion recruiting for new Ponteland branch

The Royal British Legion has launched a recruitment drive as it plans to open a new branch to cover the Ponteland area.

The largest military charity in the UK, RBL supports serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families. Its services include community re-engagement and psychological reassurance, rehabilitation to recovery, housing and basic living support.

The RBL also runs a network for carers project, funded by the Armed Forces covenant fund trust through its 'Tackling Loneliness' programme. Working closely with other organisations, the charity ensures that those in need, have access to every available resource necessary for their wellbeing.

Debbie Owens, Northumbria County Recruiting Officer for the RBL, said: "The RBL Northumbria covers an area from Berwick to Cleveland, the Pennines to the East Coast and has more than 30 branches.

"In order to continue providing the vital support and benefits that the RBL offers to our Armed Forces community, as with any voluntary organisation, it needs that vital human element of members and volunteers."

Anyone can become a member of the Royal British Legion - it's not just for people with a military connection. Youth membership is free to children aged 12 to 18 with parental consent and the RBL can offer opportunities to support the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Serving members of the UK Armed

Forces or reservists can register for Military Membership for free.

Staff from the Northumbria branch will be available to give more information on the recruitment drive for Ponteland, Dinnington, Hazlerigg and surrounding areas at:

- Dinnington Jubilee Strawberry Fair at St Matthew's Church, Dinnington, from 2pm to 4pm on Saturday June 4
- Party in the Park in Ponteland Park from 1pm to 4pm on Sunday June 5
- Information evening at Dinnington Social Club at 7pm on Tuesday June 21.

For more information contact County Recruiting Officer Debbie Owens by emailing Northumbria.CRO@RBL.Community.



Ponteland's Remembrance Service last November.

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