

New session of adult classes

A new programme of adult education classes organised by Durham County Council is starting in Tessedale. Most will last 10 weeks at a fee of £14, or £5-90 for pensioners, the unemployed and students under 18.

They start next week, apart from a few which start this week, where stated. The full list is:

Barnard Castle Primary School: Knitting by machine, Tuesday 7-9 p.m.

Tessedale School: Beginners' typing Monday, advanced typing Wednesday, both 7-9 p.m., both start this week; art Wednesday 7-9 p.m.; dressmaking beginners Monday, intermediate Wednesday, both 7-9 p.m.

Witham Hall: Art Tuesday 2-4 p.m.; flower arranging Thursday 2-4 p.m., starts this week.

Cotherstone School: Yoga Wednesday 7-9 p.m. Cotherstone Village Hall: Flower arranging Monday 7-30-9.30 p.m.

Romaldkirk Reading Room: Ladies' keep fit Wednesday 7-30-9 p.m., starts this week.

Evenwood Community Centre: Cake decoration Monday 7-9 p.m. Ingletton Community Centre: Yoga Monday 7-30-9 p.m.

Motorist could not sleep after a bump

A motorist who had a sleepless night after colliding with another vehicle pleaded guilty at Teesdale Court on Wednesday to failing to stop after an accident.

The court was told that William James Moffat, 29, of George Street, Barnard Castle, drove off after hitting a car on The Bank.

In a letter to the court, Moffat said he was dazzled by the headlights of a car and veered too far to the left, where he hit another vehicle.

This was his first accident and he was unaware of what to do. His conscience would not allow him to sleep that night, so the next morning he went to the police station to report the incident.

He was fined £75 and six penalty points were added to his licence.

Costly baby talk

When police officers stopped a married couple in a car for not wearing seat belts, they were given a strange reason for the offence.

Alan and Rachel Blenkinsop, who were stopped in Montabro Road, Barnard Castle, said they forgot to belt up because they were discussing the arrival of a friend's twins.

The pair of Pilmore Drive, Richmond, wrote to Teesdale magistrates pleading guilty to the offence and were each fined £15.

Lenten lunches organised through Barnard Castle Christian Council were well attended. They raised £303.50 for Christian Aid. Thanks were given to members of all the churches taking part.

Mr G. Welch has been told he can form a new access for vehicles on to the A67 road west of Mount Pleasant, Bowes Road, Startforth.

ALARM OVER PLAN FOR VILLAGE LORRY DEPOT

A lot of worry has been expressed over a plan by Mr John Toulson to transfer part of his thriving haulage firm from High Force to Middleton.



Jovial John Toulson at his High Force depot, where he has worked hard over the years to build up his firm. He has problems maintaining and repairing his lorries there because of lack of space, so most have to be sent to Darlington to have the work done at great expense.

He wants to use a piece of farmland at the end of Gables Lane, not far from his own home, as a lorry park and maintenance depot.

His idea is to employ two men there doing repairs and servicing on his wagons—tasks currently done for him by another firm in Darlington—as well as two women carrying out office duties.

He feels there will be little impact on the village, as no more than six vehicles will be there at any time, and his expensive garage equipment will be safer than at High Force, where there have been thefts and vandalism.

But when he applied to Teesdale plans committee for consent on Wednesday, Mr Michael Pease, chief planning officer, said he should be turned down as the scheme was against the county structure plan.

He pointed out that the site—between the new factories in Gas Lane and the Tees—was outside the village, very open to view from the surrounding area and extremely difficult to screen.

Mr Pease commented that Mr Toulson: "If anyone has seen his depot at High Force and shuddered at it, they will realise that to put another depot like it here would be absolutely crazy."

Residents from the New Town area wrote protesting that the land was totally unsuitable for a lorry park. They claimed noise and pollution, especially in the early morning, would be unacceptable.

They felt lorries going in and out would be a traffic hazard at the main road junction, and would be bad for the school and village hall. They feared that once established the business would grow on the site.

But Coun. John Gwillim said lorries had been going up and down the lane for many years without problems, and if the depot was allowed it would not be harmful to anyone.

There were already lorries going past on the main road every morning, not far from his own home, but the noise did not annoy him as he knew it meant people were working.

He pointed out that Mr Toulson employed 30 men at the moment and would take on four more people if this was approved. But if it was not he might take his whole operation away to the east of Darlington.

"I have been elected to fight for homes and work for Upper Teesdale," declared Coun. Gwillim. "I move that planning consent be given to Mr Toulson in his endeavours to keep Teesdale at work."

Another problem at High Force is lack of security. In the last 14 years the depot has been burgled an average of twice a year, so tools and other equipment are now taken home each night.

"If I can have a depot in Middleton my business will be more viable," said Mr Toulson. "Valuable welding and repair equipment could be kept in it, and I would save on the expense of sending vehicles to Darlington. But I will still go on operating from High Force."

He claimed that Mr Toulson had applied for a site at Middleton road, Middleton, but had been turned down by English Estates.

Coun. Ken Saxby commented that the Middleton road site, which has been earmarked for new factories, would be far better for a depot like this, and access would be much easier for long lorries.

Coun. Alfred Stoker agreed with that, but said if that site wasn't possible the large disused quarry opposite it would be ideal for a lorry depot. He had been told this had been turned down on ecological grounds as the quarry was a nature reserve, but still felt it would be ideal if the authorities would agree.

Coun. James Dykes suggested that before making a decision a group of councillors should look at the farmland site along with any other possible plots, plus Mr Toulson's present depot at High Force.

They would then be in a better position to know how a new depot might look and where it would be best sited.

Members agreed with this idea, and the visits will be made before the depot plan is discussed again by the committee next Wednesday.

Mr Pease asked the committee to disregard the suggestion that Mr Toulson might pull out of Teesdale if he was not given approval. It would be wrong to bow to that sort of threat, he felt.

Coun. Gwillim replied that Mr Toulson did not want to move away and neither did his wife. But if he was not able to have a depot in Middleton he would move—and the council would then be able to sit back and clap its hands at the thought of putting 30 men on the dole.

Mr Michael Pease, chief planning officer, said he did not think it reasonable for him to pay only half the cost of solving a problem which was caused by his hobby.

Coun. Ken Coates said it was

Coun. Eric Close said at the start of the discussion that he had been approached by Mr Butler, and felt that consent should be given as the problem could be remedied.

But after hearing the objections and other comments he withdrew his support, and the committee voted to refuse consent.

One neighbour, Mrs A. Henderson, wrote saying it was interfering with a computer and radio alarm clock at her home. Referring to the radio clock she commented "It is unnerving to be wakened at midnight by a strange man's voice coming from your bedside."

Man stole £70—to keep out of jail

When Raymond John Lee Simpson fell behind with the payment of his fines he believed he might go to prison. So he stole cash from a charity collecting box.

Simpson, 22, of Manor Road, Ingletton, went into his village post office and helped himself to £70 from the box which was on the counter.

Teesdale magistrates were told on Wednesday that the money was being collected to buy a gift for the retiring G.P. Dr. Bill Neville of Gainford.

Simpson took four £10 notes and six £5 notes and hoped no one would notice. But later after a search of his home police officers found the money.

He pleaded guilty to theft and explained that he took the £70 because he had got behind with some fine payments.

He told the magistrates he had wrongly understood he would have to go to prison for not paying. After hearing these details the bench adjourned the hearing for three weeks for reports.

Radio ham is given signal he didn't want to receive

Radio ham Mike Butler, who sends messages around the world and gets many in return, has received one he definitely did not want to hear.

The signal from Teesdale plans committee on Wednesday was that it will not allow him to keep the tall mast he has installed in his rear garden at 14 Fairfield Road, Barnard Castle.

For months local residents have been protesting that it interferes with their TV sets, wirelesses, computers, telephones and radio alarm clocks.

After receiving letters from some neighbours and hearing reports about the trouble, the committee voted overwhelmingly to refuse consent for the mast, and to take action to have it removed.

The mast is 21 ft. tall when not in use, but when transmitting is being done it is extended to 34 ft.

Mr Butler, who had tried to overcome the problems, said he would pay half the cost of any work carried out by an independent TV engineer to cut out any interference.

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Rescue team plans its annual walk

The annual sponsored walk of the Upper Teesdale and Weardale fell rescue team will take place at Hamsterley Forest on Sunday, 15th May.

A 15 mile route will pass through the forest and go on to open moorland, giving excellent views of Teesdale and Weardale before returning to the forest to finish.

The walk will be well marked and refreshments and first aid back-up will be available along the route.

The walk will be started by a special guest (so far not named) at 10 a.m., but walkers may start any time between then and 11-30 a.m.

The sponsored walk is the main fund raising event of the year for the rescue team.

Sponsor forms can be obtained from Mrs D. J. Toward, social officer, of 25 Stainton Village. It is hoped there will be strong support for the team, which does a lot of valuable work in the area.

Soldier drove off after a collision

A soldier serving in Germany pleaded guilty in a letter to Teesdale Court on Wednesday to a series of driving offences. Michael Willans, 17, admitted driving a car without due care, and failing to stop and report an accident.

Mr David Robertson, prosecuting, said the accident occurred when Willans reversed his car into a stationary car in Dawson Road, Barnard Castle. He drove off with no attempt to contact the police or the car owner.

Willans asked the court not to disqualify him, as it would seriously affect his army career and end his prospects of promotion. Part of his job involved driving a heavy goods vehicle.

He was fined a total of £200 and six penalty points were added to his licence.

Charges delayed

Elizabeth Hirst, 48, of Barnard Street, Staindrop, failed to appear before Teesdale magistrates on Wednesday to face charges of obtaining a £100 cushion by deception, and obtaining services to the value of £201 by deception.

In a letter to the court she stated that she intends to plead not guilty. The case will now be heard on 27th April.

Assault alleged

Mrs Hillary Poc, 33, of 34 Galgate, Barnard Castle, appeared before Teesdale magistrates on Wednesday accused of assaulting Darren Lee Gilbert.

Her solicitor asked for the case to be adjourned so that he can look into the details of the alleged incident. The hearing was rearranged for 4th May.

Mr R. E. White has been given consent to erect a conservatory on the south gable of Field House, Bedburn.

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