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Issue No 301



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TOP AWARD FOR 'INSPIRATIONAL' FERRYHILL YOUNGSTER

A Ferryhill youngster has been honoured with one of the country's top awards after achieving remarkable exam results despite battling with horrendous ill health. Melissa Wright, of Haig Street, Ferryhill Station was diagnosed with Stomach Cancer in June 2005 and the subsequent chemotherapy took its toll and effectively destroyed her heart! The plucky youngster then survived with a mechanical heart whilst she waited for a suitable donor to allow her a heart transplant. Throughout her horrendous illness however, Melissa was apparently determined to do well in her GCSE Examinations. She attended College whenever possible and didn't want any fuss. Her courage, determination, cheerfulness and sheer "True Grit" led to her being awarded the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Award recently. Last week, Melissa went to the Town Hall with her Head Teacher and College staff to receive the framed award

from Ferryhill's Mayor, Cllr Ronnie Greenwell. The Mayor heard that Melissa suffered the illness during her last two years at Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College and was absent for most of the final year. Despite everything, the incredible teenager passed six GCSE's with flying colours. Because of her illness, the College had reduced the number of subjects Melissa was allowed to take to six. Her results were remarkable, despite the period after her transplant being particularly fraught and the conditions for recovery very stringent. Melissa achieved a "B" in English Language, a "B" in English Literature, a "B" in History, a "B" in Mathematics, a Science double award "CC" and a "C" in French. Those attending the presentation ceremony heard that, whilst Melissa was in Hospital, she would send emails enquiring how everyone else was, whilst assuring everyone that she was



Melissa Wright receives the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Award from Ferryhill's Mayor, Cllr Ronnie Greenwell. Phil Bowden, the Head Teacher at Ferryhill's Business and Enterprise College, looks on.

alright. Her Head Teacher, Mr. Philip Bowden, said, "This was a truly remarkable achievement that has inspired all, Melissa's courage and determination is an example for all to aspire to." "In November she was presented the Headteacher's award for determination and courage at the College's annual award ceremony. To be presented with the Diana, Princess of Wales Award is a further accolade to her qualities and we are delighted with her."

Mr. Bowden concluded by saying, "She is a perfect student who sets an example to other student not to give up when the going gets tough." Special mention was made of College Teachers Mrs. G. Roddam, Mr. W Pollard, Mrs. L Clark and Miss J. Quigley, for their special dedication to Melissa. The 16 year old is now studying to be an accountant at New College Durham, where she is taking a 1 year Business Administration Course.

The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Award was launched nationwide in April, 2000 to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions made by many secondary school students to their

schools for Youth participation or volunteering, or selfless service to others, or showing outstanding qualities in overcoming adverse circumstances.

LITTLE FINGERS

Ferryhill Library is holding story and craft sessions for the under 5's every Friday starting on February 9th. The sessions, entitled "Little Fingers", run from 10.00am until 11.00am.

POLICE SURGERIES

Local police are opening their doors to the public so that residents can discuss their concerns in confidence. Ferryhill Police Station will be the venue for four 'surgeries', with the first taking place on Thursday, February 1st from 2.00pm until 4.00pm. Subsequent surgeries take place on Wednesday February 14th, from 4.00pm until 6.00pm, Friday, March 2nd from 1.00pm until 3.00pm and on Monday, March 19th from 1.00pm until 3.00pm.

CHIP PAN FIRE

Firefighters and an ambulance attended a fire in Bessemer Street, Ferryhill on January 26th.

No-one was injured in the incident, which was caused when a chip pan caught fire.

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION A.G.M.

The Dean Bank Residents' Association AGM will take place on Monday 5th of February 2007 at 7.00pm in the Dean Bank Institute. "Everyone is welcome," says Derek Bradley, the Association's Chairman.

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The Chapter is published by the Ferryhill and Chilton Community Newspaper Association, a non-profit making community enterprise with charitable aims.

In Memoriam

SARA STONELEY
Happy 21st Birthday
on 5th February
*Love, your little Princess
Paige, Mam, Dick
and family*
x

Good Luck

GOODLUCK



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Birthdays

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Happy 16th Birthday,
*Love,
Mam, Dad and Hannah.*

ADAM CROWTHER



Happy 16th Birthday,
*Love,
Nanna and Granda*

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OPEN

The offices of the Chilton Community Partnership at Henderson House, Coleridge Road, Chilton, will be open on Mondays and Tuesdays from 1.00pm until 3.00pm starting on February 5th and every week thereafter.

An officer will be in attendance to speak to anyone with any projects, or wishing to join.

Good Luck

LUKE STOREY



Good luck in the Navy.
All our love

Mam, Dad, Kate and all the family

And many thanks to everyone who came to the farewell party and for cards and gifts.

TEARAWAYS PREPARE FOR NEXT PRODUCTION

Having just completed another successful production, the local Youth Theatre group, the "Tearaways", are now starting rehearsing their next production, "The Sound of Music".

The group, which has members in the Ferryhill and Chilton area, are now looking for more young people, aged 10 to 16 years of age, who are interested in singing,

dancing or drama, and who would be interested in joining this talented young people's group.

The Tearaways meet every Monday evening between 6.30pm and 8.30pm.

"The Sound of Music" will be performed in May at the Civic Hall in Shildon and details of the production and rehearsals can be obtained over the phone on 01388 774838.

SANTA AND FRIENDS HELP THE BUTTERWICK

Despite being busy over the Christmas period, Santa Claus and his friends found time to get out and about in Chilton, raising funds for a local charity.

Santa and his friends raised £222 for the Butterwick Children's Hospice at North

LAST CALL FOR STRAY CAT OWNERS

A reader who took in a stray cat which she found homeless recently is making a last appeal for its owner to come forward.

The dark grey and white, large male cat looks as if he once wore a collar due to marking around the neck.

It was found in the Broom Road area of Ferryhill on Saturday 13th of January.

"The cat is lodging with me at the moment, so if he's yours, please ring Lesley on 01740 655496," says our kindly reader.

FAMILY DISCO

Mainsforth Community Centre is holding a family disco on Saturday 3rd February, and, say the organisers, "It's a perfect chance for the whole family to spend some quality time together."

Entertainment is by the "Hi Lite Disco", which includes family fun and games.

There's a family quiz, with "A cool prize".

The bar will be open from 7.00pm until 11.30pm and admission is £3.00 adults and under 18's £1.00 on the door. "So come along on the night for an evening full of games and laughter", say the organisers.

FURNITURE SCHEME CLOSED FOR STOCKTAKING

The County Durham Furniture Help Scheme, which is based in Chilton, will be closed next Tuesday 30th January, Wednesday 31st January and Thursday 1st February for stocktaking. Services will be fully restored on Friday 2nd February says Chris Palmer, the Project's Managing Director.

The County Durham Furniture Help Scheme can be found at Unit 20, Avenue 3, Chilton Industrial Estate, DL17 0PB, telephone: 01388 721509.

Its office hours are 10 am until 2.00 pm Mon-Sat.

The Scheme takes in unwanted furniture and household goods and distributes them to families who want them.

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**THE LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF A
PREMISES LICENCE UNDER THE LICENSING
ACT 2003**

Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute applied to Sedgfield Borough Council on 26th January 2007 for a licence to use the premises at St. Cuthbert's Terrace, Ferryhill, County Durham, DL17 8PP for the provision of regulated entertainment between the hours of 08:00 and 24:00

Representations should be made in writing to the Licensing Section of Sedgfield Borough Council, Council Offices, Spennymoor, DL16 6JQ by 26th February 2007.

Persons wishing to inspect the Licensing Register may do so at the above address between the hours of 9.00 a.m and 5.00 p.m Monday to Thursday and 9.00 a.m to 4.30 p.m on Friday. It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application which carries a maximum fine of £5,000.00.

Dated 26th January 2007

ONE SINGLE COUNCIL FOR COUNTY DURHAM BUT "RUSH" OR "NO RUSH"?

The Government has decided to change the way that local government is organised and is indicating that they would like to see Borough, District and County Councils replaced by one large council, with their services complemented by the existing Town and Parish Councils.

In a 'White Paper' they requested submissions of ideas about which way the plans could be implemented, leading to local Councils hurrying to send off their plans by the 25th January deadline.

This week, six of the seven District and Borough Councils in County Durham revealed their joint submission.

The six includes Sedgefield Borough Council which serves Ferryhill and Chilton. The six districts believe that a 'Pathfinder' approach to a 'Unitary', single council is the best way forward. They favour not rushing into reorganisation, suggesting that a 'Transition

Board' be set up to work towards a unitary, single authority, in 2012.

The County Council however thinks that a single unitary council run from County Hall at Durham is best, set up quickly, with elections to the new council in 2008 and with everything fully integrated by 2009.

The single local authority voice in County Durham against a unitary council is that of Durham City, which administers the area to the North of Ferryhill including Coxhoe and Croxdale.

Councillor Frazer Reynolds, the City Council's Leader, says: "In theory, there should be savings but there is no evidence that large unitary authorities will ultimately save money. Most re-organisations don't."

"Residents who appear to be happy with the current arrangements will be faced with years of upheaval, uncertainty and disrupted services."

"There does not appear to be any appetite for change by residents in County Durham," he says.

Both the County Council and District and Borough Councils however claim



Bob Fleming from the Borough Council (2nd Right) with representatives from other councils at the launch of the response to a Government White Paper

there are saving to be made. The County Council admits that the unification of the local authorities will cost £12.4 million but it claims that the costs of reorganisation would be paid back in three years.

The last time local government was reorganised was in 1974 when the present system replaced a local network of county boroughs, municipal

boroughs, urban district and rural districts.

Ferryhill and Chilton were administered by the old Sedgefield Urban District Council.

That authority, along with Spennymoor and Shildon urban districts and parts of Darlington Rural District became Sedgefield District Council which, in turn, became Sedgefield Borough Council in 1996.

POLICE CELL LEFT IN DISGUSTING STATE

Following a night out drinking in Ferryhill in mid-January, an apprentice joiner ended up in a cell at Newton Aycliffe Police Station.

He had been arrested for being abusive and attempting to punch a Police Officer. A Court heard that when he was released from custody, the cell was found to be in a disgraceful state and drenched with vomit and urine.

South Durham Magistrates, sitting at Newton Aycliffe last week, were told by Mrs. Alison Nunn, of the Crown Prosecution Service, that 21 year-old Andrew Anthony Blatchford, of Abbey Road in Bishop Auckland, had no previous convictions of any kind.

The Court heard that Blatchford had been refused entrance to the Black Bull public house in Ferryhill by doorstaff after they deemed him in too much of a drunken state.

Blatchford became particularly abusive, resulting in the doorstaff flagging down a Police Patrol.

He continued to be abusive to the doorstaff and the Police and swung a punch at head height at one of the Officers, although this missed its intended target.

Even after his arrest, the Court, heard Blatchford continued to struggle.

Mrs. Nunn concluded by

telling the Court that Blatchford's cell at the Police Station was left with tea and coffee stains and vomit on the floor and walls, together with urine on the floor in and around the toilet area.

Blatchford, who was not represented in Court, apologised for his behaviour and accepted that he was drunk.

He stated that he was currently employed as an apprentice joiner and was scheduled to qualify in May of this year.

The sitting Magistrates imposed a £100 fine for the offence of 'using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour' and ordered to pay compensation of £150 for the cell to be cleaned. He was also ordered him to pay Court costs of £43 and to pay the sum total of £293 within 14 days.

TABLE TOP SALE

There will be a Table Top Sale at Ferryhill Methodist Church on Friday 16th March from 10am until 12noon

Readers who are interested in having a table to sell their own goods should telephone Margaret on 655611 to book. Bookings taken on first come-first served basis.

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COUNCIL RETAIN "INVESTORS IN PEOPLE" STATUS

Staff at Ferryhill Town Council are busy celebrating after receiving confirmation that they have, once again, been successful in retaining their status as an Investors in People organisation. The Town Council, who were first recognised by the award in December 2000, were thrilled by the news that they had retained their status for a third time. The Council underwent a similar review three years ago in December 2003, at which time they also

retained the Investors in People status. The Investors in People Standard, which is a business improvement tool, is designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people. It was first developed in 1990 to help organisations improve their performance and realise objectives through the management and development of their people. Twelve members of Ferryhill Town Council, comprising a full cross-section of the

Council's staff, were interviewed by an Assessor from Assessment North-East Ltd in early December 2006. A report was compiled which assessed the Council against the criteria used in the Investors in People Standard. Overall, the report was very positive and, in particular, praised the Council for its refreshed approaches to learning and development and recommended that the Town Council continue to be recognised as an Investor in People organisation.

SURE STARTS ARE BECOMING CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Sure Starts are becoming Children's Centres and there

are a number of new centres coming on stream across the

Sedgefield Borough area. There are a series of open events/fun days planned to promote all the centres and give local people the chance to have their say about what happens in them and the first of those is on Monday 5th February at Chilton.

ALLEGED LCD T.V. THEFTS

A 29 year old West Cornforth man was amongst defendants who appeared in Court recently. Four men appeared in front of South Durham Magistrates' Court in Newton Aycliffe last week, when it was alleged that two of them stole LCD Television sets valued at £2115.01 from Currys PLC and that two of them falsified tachograph records. The West Cornforth man, Alexander James Dyce, of Lichfield Road, is charged alongside Barry Mark Lax, aged 32, of Dumfries Street in Darlington, with stealing five of the television sets on the 30th of June last year. He is also charged by himself with altering a Community Recording Equipment record sheet, allegedly on the same day. In the dock at the Newton Aycliffe Court alongside Dyce

and Lax were 26 year-old Brett Davison Asbery and 37 year-old Russell William Asbery, of Brockwell Close and Callerton Rise in Newton Aycliffe respectively. Both face a charge of stealing six LCD television sets from Currys PLC valued at £3504, whilst Russell William Asbery is charged with a similar tachograph falsification charge as is Dyce. Mr. Graham Ablett, who represented all four men, successfully requested an adjournment on the grounds that it was necessary for him to review videotape evidence, as well as make four Legal Aid applications. The sitting Magistrates agreed to Mr. Ablett's request and, as a result, all four men, who were granted unconditional bail, will return to the Newton Aycliffe Court on the 7th of February.

PLEAS WITHHELD IN CASE OF ASSAULTS AND DAMAGE

A 20 year-old Ferryhill man withheld pleas to a number of charges when he appeared in Court recently.

of March at the Newton Aycliffe Court.

TALK AT THE LADDER

"Romans around" is the title of a local history talk presented at the Ladder Centre on the Lakes Estate on 13th February at 10.00am.

The talk is a look at the evidence of what life was like locally in first century A.D. Details of the talk is available from the Ladder Centre in Coniston Road, Ferryhill.

Anthony Foster, of Duncombe Terrace, who was represented in Court by Mr. Robert Willoughby, is alleged to have committed five offences during September of last year, including 'assault occasioning actual bodily harm', two of 'assault by beating', 'criminal damage' and 'causing a fear of violence', all the offences allegedly being committed in Shildon.

The Magistrates agreed to set a pre-trial review for the 1st

DEAN BANK MAN TO BE SENTENCED ON TEESIDE

A 27 year-old Dean Bank man will be sentenced on Teesside for offences committed in Ferryhill earlier in January. Dean David Williams, of Davy Street in Ferryhill, appeared before the South Durham Magistrates sitting at Newton Aycliffe last week to face charges of 'dishonestly causing to be wasted or diverted a quantity of electricity'. He is also charged with 'obstructing a Police Constable in the execution of his duty'. The sitting Magistrates agreed to adjourn the matter to allow the Teesside Magistrates to sentence Williams when he appears before them towards the end of January.

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Readers and their youngsters are invited to pop into Chilton Sure Start Children's Centre between 2.00 - 5.00 on Monday for fun for the children.

On offer are Face painting, Magic, Puppets, Crafts and the chance to have your say about the changes.

All ages of children welcome with an adult.

Refreshments are provided. For more information call 01740 658080

CHILTON MAN SET FOR MAGISTRATES' COURT TRIAL

A Pre-Trial Review in a case involving a Chilton man was listed to be heard at the South Durham Magistrates' Court in Newton Aycliffe last week. At an earlier Hearing in the same Court, 19 year-old Jonathon Andrew McKenzie, of Prospect Terrace, Chilton, had pleaded 'Not Guilty' to a charge of 'acquiring criminal property, namely a Green Kawasaki Motor-Cycle valued at £1400'. The offence was allegedly committed in Chilton at the end of August last year. McKenzie will face a Magistrates' Court trial at a venue and on a date or dates to be determined.

CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL

Hutton House, Durham Road, Chilton, DL17 0EX

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on

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MAGISTRATES NOT TAKEN IN BY DEFENDANT'S STORY

Local Magistrates told a Defendant that they were not taken in by his story when he appeared before them last week.

24 year old Anthony Alan John Smithson, of Field View Close in Port Clarence in Teesside was originally charged with 'possession of criminal property'.

His legal representative, Mr. Constable, told the Court that his client would be prepared to admit a charge of 'theft'. After a short intermission, it

was agreed that a 'theft' charge could be substituted and it was to this that the defendant entered a plea of 'Guilty'.

The alteration in the charge meant that Smithson admitted stealing tractor weights valued at £475 in Ferryhill at the end of January last year and also a charge of 'failing to surrender to bail'.

Mrs. Nunn, for the Crown Prosecution Service, told the Court that there were two other men involved in the

matter and that they had already been dealt with.

She stated that a Ferryhill farmer saw a Transit Van on his land with three men in the vicinity loading tractor weights into it.

The farmer blocked the van's exit and immediately called the Police and then approached the men, whereupon he was offered £20 by Smithson to let them go.

When the police arrived, Officers discovered several tractor weights in the back of the Transit Van and, consequently, arrested the men.

In interview, Smithson told the Police that he had taken a wrong turning and asked the Police to pass on his regrets for his actions to the farmer. His Barrister, Mr. Constable, told the Court that whilst Smithson's record goes back five years including three convictions for theft, it was some 14 months since his last Court appearance.

Mr. Constable went on to tell the Court that, on the day in question, Smithson and the other two men had gone for

a drive in the van with the intent of going to Acklam, however they became lost and ended up in the Ferryhill area where a wrong turn was taken, resulting in the van getting stuck in mud on the farmer's land.

The Court heard that Smithson saw the tractor weights on the ground and only put them in the back of the Transit Van to enable it to achieve 'traction' and extricate it from the mud.

In conclusion, Mr. Constable added that Smithson was a man of limited education who was unable to read or write. He stated that the Defendant currently resided with his partner and that they are currently both operating on a 'bare threshold of subsistence'. With regard to the offence of 'failing to surrender to bail', Mr. Constable told the Court that, at the time, Smithson's grandfather was ill and, as a result, his attention was distracted from his impending Court appearance.

The sitting Magistrates, after some deliberation, told Smithson that they were certainly not convinced by

his story of getting lost and getting the van stuck in mud in a field.

They added that it was somewhat inconceivable that he, by chance, ended up some 25 miles away after setting out to travel to another area of Middlesbrough.

Smithson was ordered to pay fines of £50 and £40 on the two charges, however no order was made with regard to Court costs due to his lack of means.

HALL OF DANCE

Ferryhill Methodist Church is happy to welcome Hall of Dance to the Dean Bank Institute on Tuesday 6th February.

The children from the School of Dance will entertain with tap, ballet, modern and other kinds of dance.

"The School was greatly

enjoyed at Spennymoor Town Hall recently, so do come along and support the children," say the organisers. Drop into the 2J's or Friday's coffee morning at the Methodist Church for tickets, which are only £3, and which includes tea/coffee, and entry to a special door prize draw.

LOCAL HISTORY TALK AT THE LADDER

The Ladder Centre on the Lakes Estate in Ferryhill is presenting a series of local history courses.

On 6th February at 10am there is "Dark deeds, dodgy dealings and disasters" which

is a chance to re-examine events which occurred in the area from the Middle Ages to the middle of the 20th century including the brass murders, and the Lloyds Bank Murder.

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MAN HAD DRUGS BUT SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW THEY WERE THERE!

When Police Officers executed a Search Warrant at a house in Ferryhill in May of last year, they discovered a man trying to leave the premises by a rear door. When they apprehended him, he was found to have 115 milligrammes of Amphetamine – a Class B drug. The man, Ashley William Coglan, aged 43, who gave an address in Durham, admitted possession of the drugs when he appeared before the South Durham Magistrates sitting at Newton Aycliffe last week. Mrs. Alison Nunn, for the Crown Prosecution Service, told the Court that this was a

somewhat protracted matter due to the fact that Coglan had served two terms of imprisonment in the intervening period, the last occasion being for an offence of dishonesty. Ms. Nunn added that when Coglan was interviewed by Police, he stated that, whilst he accepted the drugs were in his possession, he had no idea that they were on his person. Mitigating, Mr. Grainger told the Court that Coglan was only arrested when he called at a Police Station to collect some belongings following his spell in prison. He said his client fully believed that this matter had been dealt with in 2006 when, in a short space of time, he appeared before Magistrates sitting in Houghton-le-Spring and Sunderland and was handed prison sentences. Mr. Grainger added that, in truth, this was a matter that should have been dealt with last summer along with other matters and that it was no fault of Coglan's that it was not.

After ordering the forfeiture and destruction of drugs, the sitting Magistrates handed Coglan a 12 month conditional discharge but made no order as to Court costs due to Coglan's financial state.

A MARKET PLACE MEANDER

Ferryhill's Ladder Centre is organising a local history walk round the Town Centre on Tuesday 20th February at 10.00am. The circular



Letter to the Editor....

"All the thieves had to do was ask", says this correspondent who had a washing machine stolen from her back yard recently....

Dear Editor,
Could you please include this letter in your next issue.
"To the thieves that stole a

washing machine from my back yard on Wednesday 24th January, all that was required was to knock on my front door and you could have had it gladly!

Instead you have been watching and waiting to sneak the chance to climb into my back yard. Whereas I always felt safe, now I don't, and all you needed to do was ask."

Yours
Avril Trott
Lightfoot Terrace,
Ferryhill.

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TELLING TALL TALES!

To kick-start celebrations in advance of National Storytelling Week on 27th to 28th January, Locomotion, the National Railway Museum down at Shildon, is holding family storytelling sessions for children aged up to 7 years. Admission to the event is free, with sessions lasting 15 to 20 minutes from 12.30pm-2.30pm. Sessions can be booked by calling (01388) 777999 or by Emailing info@locomotion.uk.com. Visitors will be able to meet

walk from the Manor House will look at the buildings of Ferryhill to discuss some of the occupants and how the village has changed.

the Explainers and board a 1930s railway van displayed in the collection building and hear stories of railway adventures.

Sara Fawcett, Events Officer at Locomotion, said: "We are very excited about the storytelling sessions." "It is a great activity for children and allows us to explore ways in which we can interpret our collections through the art of storytelling". Museum opening times are from 10.00am to 4.00pm Wednesdays to Sundays.

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COMMITTAL POSTPONED IN INDECENT IMAGES CASE

A Dean Bank man who allegedly had 2,000 indecent images of children on a computer, should have been sent for a Committal Hearing by the Magistrates' Court in

Newton Aycliffe last week. The Court heard, however, that it wasn't possible to proceed with the case when Mr. Jonathan Bambro, appearing on behalf of the Crown Prosecution Service, stated that the relevant Committal papers hadn't been prepared. As a result, the matter was adjourned administratively and the Committal to the Crown Court is now scheduled

to take place on the 1st of February. The defendant in the case is Gair McNicol, aged 49, of Davy Street, Ferryhill. He faces 19 specimen charges of making indecent pseudo-photographs of children and one charge of possessing an indecent pseudo-image of a child, these offences alleged to have been committed in June and July of last year.

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RACE IS ON TO RECYCLE OLD YELLOW PAGES DIRECTORIES AND CREATE NEW WOODLAND

Schoolchildren across Sedgefield Borough, including those in Ferryhill and Chilton, are joining the race to recycle old Yellow Pages directories and help increase woodland in England – one of the least wooded countries in Europe.

Over the next seven weeks, thousands of pupils from across Sedgefield Borough will be taking part in the Yellow Woods Challenge – the environmental campaign for schools run by Yellow Pages, working with the Woodland Trust, Sedgefield Borough Council and the Butterwick Hospice at Bishop Auckland.

Yellow Pages is offering a share of £600 in cash prizes to schools that recycle the most old directories per pupil, plus a bonus prize of £100 for the school that builds the best local giant sculpture using old Yellow Pages directories.

For every pound awarded to schools, Yellow Pages will give a matching pound to the Woodland Trust – the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. Youngsters will learn about recycling and woodland conservation through educational materials in the classroom and games on the Internet (www.yellow-woods.co.uk).

Kirk, the campaign mascot and woodland minibeast, features on all activities and helps make learning fun for children.

Schools are also encouraged to enter the national Yellow Pages Sculpture Competition 2007, where up to £1,000 is on offer for schools that create the best giant sculpture using the old directories.

Last year's national winner was Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School, which



The Mayor of Sedgefield Borough, Lucy Hovvels, joins the 2006 winning pupils from Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School - (Left to Right) Calum Dunlop (the skier was his idea), Joe Potts, Patrick Duffy, Jamie Dalton (crouching), Jack Tinkler, Ross Draper, and Charlie McMillen (lower down)

received £1,000 from Yellow Pages for their cleverly designed 3D sculpture of a 'Downhill Skier'.

Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Mayor of Sedgefield Borough, said: "Congratulations to Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School for their success in the national sculpture competition – a tremendous achievement."

She added: "This recycling competition is a great way of diverting old directories away from landfill while educating youngsters about the wider environment. I urge you to support your local school by giving a pupil your old Yellow Pages directory when the new edition is delivered".

Sedgefield Borough residents can also recycle their old Yellow Pages directories at any of Sedgefield Borough Council's paper banks, located at supermarkets and car parks throughout the Borough.

Funds raised through the Yellow Woods Challenge will be invested in the Woodland Trust's most ambitious

children's tree planting campaign ever launched – 'Tree For All' – which aims to plant 12 million trees by 2009.

Ferryhill Station Primary School were finalists in last year's Yellow Woods national sculpture competition and are entering the competition this year with renewed vigour.

Mr. & Mrs. Farry of the Post Office in Ferryhill Station, & the West End Post Office in Darlington Road, Ferryhill and Tony Smith of Clarke's Taxis in the Village have all agreed to act as drop-off points for any old Yellow Pages.

Clarke's will deliver the directories to Ferryhill Station School, who are recycling them.

"We have been lucky enough to be in the first 2 in previous years and are really trying to win this year," says the School.

"Please help us to win by leaving your old Yellow Pages book at one of these drop off points or by ringing the School on 01740 651291."

FAMILY LEARNING

Chilton Primary School have won funding to run two or three Family Learning Courses in the near future, taking place either during, or after, school time. The School is now anxious to learn what sort of courses readers would like to take part in, at what time and on what days.

On offer is a choice of Sports/Exercise classes, Learning a new Language, Cookery, Arts and Crafts, Skin or Beauty Care or Sign Language. Readers can also suggest a

course that's not on the list. Choices of available times are also suggested, during school hours, 4.00pm until 5.00pm, 5.00pm until 6.00pm or 6.00pm until 7.00pm.

Readers are also asked to specify a day of the week. Those who wish to respond and may be interested in taking part in a family learning course are asked to ring the School on 01388 720255.

"The courses are a great way to learn and have fun with your child, and its free," say the organisers.

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- Ensure that the Town Hall premises are adequately heated at all times.
- Ensuring rooms in the Town Hall are set out correctly for booked meetings and functions.
- All such other duties relevant to the Town Hall premises, which the Executive Officer may direct from time to time.

For an application form please contact Ferryhill Town Council, Town Hall, Ferryhill, Co Durham DL17 8JL. Tel: (01740) 652157

Closing date for applications is
Friday 9th March 2007.

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BALLOON LAUNCH SUCCESS ON WINDY WEEKEND

Windy weather was just what was needed for local youngsters last weekend.

Saturday saw the launch of celebrations to mark a hundred years of Scouting, and local youngsters did it in style with almost 400 balloons released on a breezy morning.

Each balloon represented a member of Bishop Auckland Scout District and the youngsters who launched them are hoping that the balloons will travel far and wide from the launch site at Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College.

200 people were present at the launch, including local Town Councillor, Zena Rodham, and the youngsters themselves launched the balloons with the help of a loud countdown

District Commissioner, Ian Johnson said: "It was dark when we started but the team worked well together and we were finished with plenty of time to spare."

"Every one of our nineteen

DEADLINE

The deadline for the Chapter is Saturday Noon at the Library or Monday Noon by email. Articles received after this time will go in the next available edition.

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training Sections and our Scout Fellowship came along to see the balloons off," he said.

"It was a great sight and a tremendous start to the year."

Each of the balloons has a tag attached with a unique number.

Anyone finding a tag is asked to make contact using the details on the tag as every Member of the District is waiting to find out if their balloon has travelled the furthest.

The local Scout District has

seen its numbers increase for the past four years and members will be taking part in a number of special activities during the year including a centenary camp for 2500 in May as well as joining with millions of Scouts around the world for a sunrise ceremony in August.

More information on the Scout Movement, including opportunities for young people and adults alike, can be obtained locally from Ian Johnson on 0845 0944 084 or from bishopauckland@durhamscouts.org.uk



Local Scouts launch balloons, one for each of their members, from the Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College at the weekend.

PATIENTS HAVING THEIR SAY OVER EASE IN BOOKING DOCTORS' APPOINTMENTS

Patients in County Durham are having their say on how easy it is to book a GP appointment to fit in with their busy lives in the biggest national survey ever conducted, sent out last week. The GP patient experience survey, the biggest patient survey of its kind targets 4.9 million patients across the country.

It is asking patients directly about their experiences of accessing services.

According to figures from the Healthcare Commission in 2005, in County Durham all patients who wished to, could book a GP appointment within the 48 hour target. This compares to 74% nationally.

Cameron Ward, director of commissioning and market development for County Durham Primary Care Trust,

said: "Members of the public regularly tell us that access to GPs is one of their top priorities."

"Our predecessor PCTs worked very hard with practices in County Durham to make it easier for patients to access a GP - for example by extending opening hours - and to see a GP within 48 hours."

"It is therefore vital that we ensure that our practices can be accessed when needed and that patients are satisfied with the quality of service received."

"The results from the survey will give us a better

understanding from a patient perspective of how well national priorities are being implemented in our general practices."

Posters and leaflets informing NHS patients and staff about the new survey have been in GP surgeries since December, but last week a postal survey was sent to around five million patients.

The survey questionnaire includes questions on flexible booking, telephone

access, opening hours and satisfaction levels.

Questions cover for example: Whether people are satisfied with how easy it is to get through to the surgery by phone; Whether it is possible to book ahead for an appointment; Whether it is possible to book an appointment with a particular doctor and Satisfaction with GP opening hours.

Taking part in the survey is completely voluntary for patients, who have been randomly selected.

Advice/help-lines are provided for those individuals needing additional support such as translation, support for the visually impaired and other special needs groups. Advice is available from local GP practices.

The results of the survey will be out by late May 2007, following which, PCTs and practices will work together to make further improvements.

RACIAL THREATS ADMITTED BUT SENTENCE DELAYED

A Chilton man admitted making racially-aggravated threats in Ferryhill when he appeared in Court recently, but sentence won't be passed until next month.

18 year-old Liam Francis Goodchild, of Pennine Way in Chilton pleaded 'Guilty' to a charge of 'using racially-aggravated threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent to cause harassment, alarm or distress' when he appeared before the South Durham Magistrates sitting at Newton Aycliffe last week. The sitting Magistrates agreed to an adjournment in the matter in order that it could be dealt with on the 7th of February when Goodchild is due to appear before the Newton Aycliffe Court in connection with other matters and when he is scheduled to be sentenced following a pre-sentence report.

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