

# Newbury Weekly News 150th Anniversary



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The original offices of the *Newbury Weekly News* in 1867 at 34 Northbrook Street

## 1889: The Broadway clock – Jubilee memorial inaugurated

7 March 1889

AFTER months of weary waiting the Jubilee clock has been suitably inaugurated and the town now possesses a public memorial of Her Majesty's Jubilee.

The scheme was launched several years ago, a committee being appointed to collect the necessary funds.

Various causes have contributed to delay the completion of the work, and therefore the opening of a jubilee memorial may seem a little behind-hand, but all the difficulties having been surmounted the clock now appears as a handsome and appropriate memorial of this historic event.

The clock tower stands upon the site of the Obelisk, which for so many years occupied the centre of the Broadway, and consequently is favourably situated.

Contemporaneous with the opening of the clock, was the mounting of the Russian gun, which after years of neglect, has been placed in a position of honour and dignity.

The opening ceremony took place on Monday afternoon, but a more unfortunate day could not have been selected, as snow fell thickly throughout the proceedings and consequently considerably interfered with the enthusiasm of the spectators.



The Broadway Clock and Russian gun

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# 1914: Local chit-chat – Plenty's lifeboats

14 May 1914

From the *Local chit-chat* column

THE question is often asked why Newbury, an inland town, should evince interest in the work of the National Lifeboat Institution.

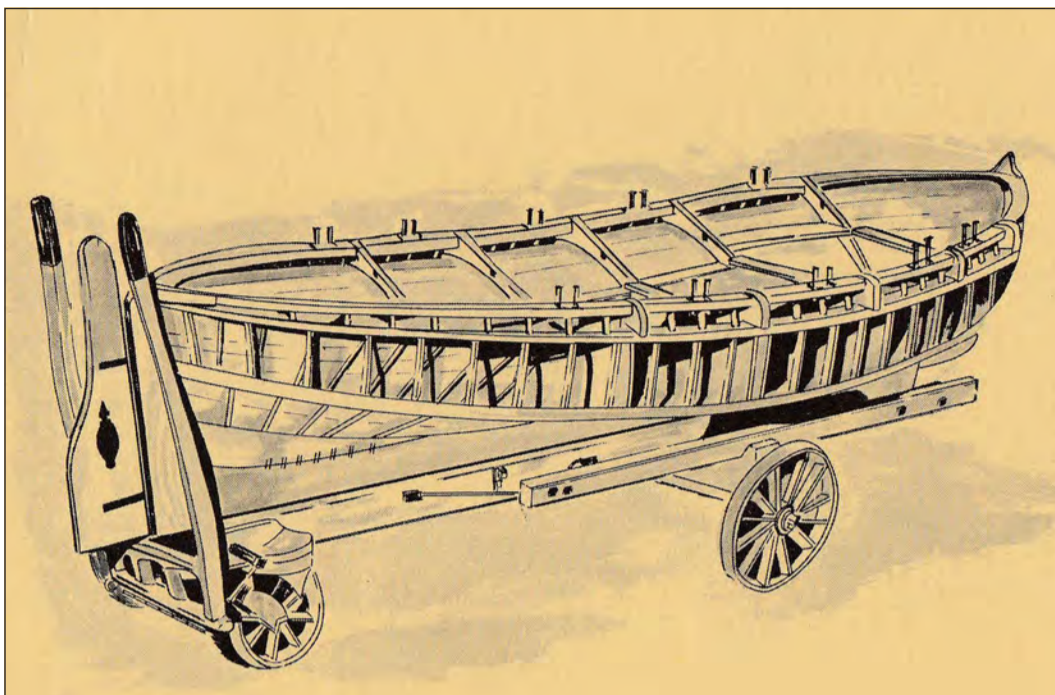
One reason was given at the meeting called by the Mayor in the Council Chamber on Saturday afternoon.

It was stated that of the first fourteen lifeboats placed around the coast in 1824, eleven of them were built at Newbury, so that the town could be said to have as old a connection with the work as any in the country.

Reference to Mr Walter Money's "History of Newbury" shows that on 2 July, 1816 a boat of a new construction for preserving lives, or for general purposes, built by Mr William Plenty of Newbury, a gentleman eminent in his day for his inventive genius and skill in mechanical science, was launched from West Mills in the presence of a large assemblage of persons belonging to the town and neighbourhood.

This precursor of our modern lifeboats was christened "The Experiment", and more than 80 persons sailed down the Kennet and Avon Canal in her, on the way to Reading and the London docks, where her capabilities were exhibited by Mr Plenty before the elder brethren of Trinity House, and the Directors of the East India Company, who pronounced a most favourable opinion of her merits as a life-saving medium.

The famous Admiral Sir Edward Pellew (created Viscount Exmouth, 21 Sept 1816) took a keen interest in Mr Plenty's humane exertions and agreed



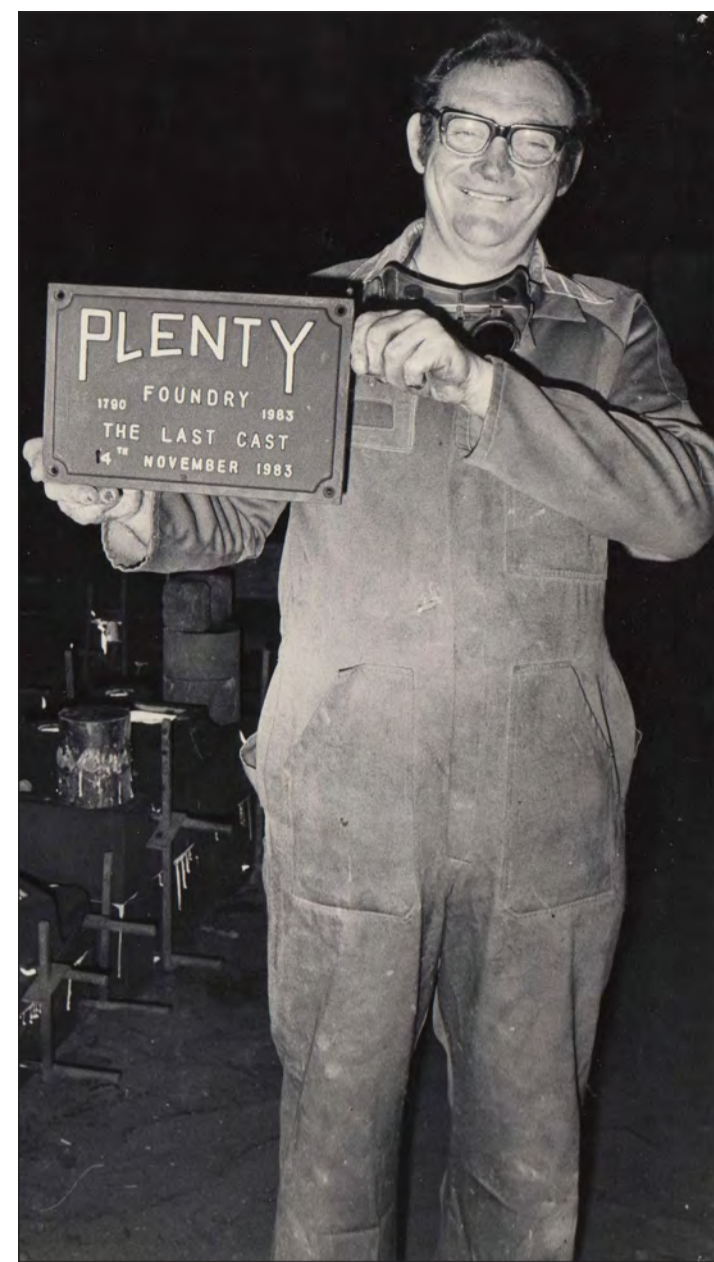
A picture of a William Plenty lifeboat from one of the company's brochures

with other distinguished naval authorities that his boat was built on such a principle of complete safety that it was impossible to sink her, or that she could become water-logged, or even bilged against rocks.

The Lords of the Admiralty and the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Lives from Shipwreck ordered several of Mr Plenty's lifeboats after practical test of their powers, and they were for many years in use at various places along the coast; one at Appledore, Devon and another at Skegness in Lincolnshire having been instrumental in saving 120 lives.



Plenty & Co's New Eagle Iron Works which opened in Hambridge Road in 1965



Pete Johnson poured the final casts at the Plenty's Foundry in 1983





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## 1915: "If a VC was ever earned, it was by him"

A YOUNG officer from Thatcham was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry during the First World War.

Second Lieutenant Alexander Buller Turner had military blood coursing through his veins as his grandfather was Admiral Sir Alexander Buller GCB, commander in chief of the Royal Navy's China Station in 1895 and who presided over the Far Eastern Crisis of 1897/98.

The lieutenant was the eldest son of Major Charles Turner, and the family moved to Thatcham House, in Turners Drive, in 1902.

Alexander was educated at Parkside, Ewell, and Wellington College, and shortly after war broke out, he joined the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. He was sent to France, attached to the 1st Battalion in June 1915.

Turner sustained a head wound from a sniper on August 12, and, after recuperation at home, returned to duty on September 7.

Later that month, the 1st Battalion were involved in the Battle of Loos, on the La Bassée railway in a great slagheap known as Fosse 8.

A brigade of the Scottish 9th Divi-



Second Lieutenant Alexander Buller Turner and, right, his Victoria Cross

sion had reached the foot of Fosse 8 on September 25, but the Germans counter-attacked the same evening and fierce fighting ensued.

On the morning of September 28, German bombers – men armed with hand grenades – attacked and Lt Price Lloyd of the Welsh Regiment recalled: "Gallantly

though they fought, the regimental bombers could not stem the flood, and their colonel called down the trenches for an officer to advance to clear the way.

"His appeal was soon answered – in the British Army, the occasion will always find the man.

"Second-Lt Turner at once came forward, and, stopping only to pick up a bag of grenades, made his way along Slag Alley towards the Germans.

"Calmly he walked straight into that hell of shrieking splinters, and threw bomb after bomb into the press of the Germans.

"For a time they held their ground and hurled back bomb for bomb, but they could not kill this tireless Englishman. Man after man of them fell, and the remnant began to retreat.

"Turner gave them no respite, but up the deep trench, littered with fallen earth and the horrible debris of battle, he followed them swiftly, flinging his deadly bombs before him as he went.

"When his comrades reached him, 200 yards further along the trench, it was only to find that a German bomb had finally found its mark."

Alexander died from his wounds three days later on October 1, aged 22.

A letter in the NWN from Cpl W Hawkings, published shortly after the attack said: "Lt Turner got right up on the German parapet, stood up and hurled bombs at them as fast as ever he could.

"A pluckier deed I never saw. I am proud to have served under such an officer, and I know Thatcham will be proud of him."

Col Carter, who led the rearguard action, said: "His action saved us a loss of from 200 to 300 men, and I was able to order an immediate advance at a time when every minute's delay was a serious matter."

An account from another private said: "If a VC was ever earned, it was by him."



## War stories from the Newbury Weekly News

### Four sons at war

MR JOHN Fox, a well-known Newbury tailor, is proud of the fact that all his four sons are on service, and has reason to be also proud of their patriotic record (*April 27, 1916*).

One of them, Edward, has been a prisoner in Germany for 18 months.

Another, Corporal CR Fox, of the Royal Berks, has been twice wounded in action, and has now been discharged from the Army. He has done 10 years, and went through most of the serious fighting in France.

A third son, AJ, has had a rapid run of promotion. He

had been in civil occupation in France and had a good knowledge of the language.

At the outbreak of war he enlisted as an interpreter and was appointed requisition and supply officer in the ASC.

His promotions came rapidly. Lance Corporal, October; Corporal, November, 1914; Sergeant, December, 1914; Colour sergeant, January; Staff sergeant Major, July 1915.

He has just been granted a commission as second lieutenant and posted to the 6th battalion of the Royal Berks.

He has been home on Easter leave.

### Soldiers up for a scrap

SECOND Lieutenant AJ Fox of the 6th Berks BEF (see above) writes (*May 11, 1916*):

"My platoon is at present resting away from the noise of the guns.

"I would very much like them to have as many sports as possible while they are in rest – I have been able to fit them up well with the exception of a set of boxing gloves.

"Could you put me on the track of anyone with a

cheap second-hand set for sale?

"If so I should be greatly indebted. The local tradesmen are demanding fabulous sums for games, and as they will become useless when we go back to the trenches, I would much rather have a second-hand set.

"I have several Newburians in my platoon, and they are quite happy and fit, and enjoying their rest immensely during the fine weather."



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# 1922: Marvellous discoveries

7 December 1922

THE Earl of Carnarvon has a number of hobbies, and among them is Egyptology.

Every winter he journeys to the near East, not only in search of the sun but to seek for relics of the ancient dynastic King of Egypt.

His Lordship took up the quest some sixteen years ago.

Suffering from the effects of a severe motoring accident, he sought the advice of Sir Ernest Budge, Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum asking him to suggest some occupation that he could take up during a period of convalescence and he introduced him to Mr Howard Carter, and ever since then Lord Carnarvon has been carrying out excavations on that part of the site of ancient Thebes situated on the west bank of the Nile.

Seven years ago work was started in the Valley of the Kings, after other excavators abandoned the Valley.

Here again the excavators had little success.

At times they almost despaired of finding anything, yet they did

not lose heart.

The search was continued and at last the perseverance of Mr Carter was rewarded by the discovery, where the Royal necropolis of the Theban Empire was situated, directly below the tomb of Rameses VI.

Mr Carter covered up the site and telegraphed to Lord Carnarvon, who at once went out from England.

Little however did Lord Carnarvon and Mr Carter suspect the wonderful nature of the contents of the chambers as they stood outside.

The steel outer door was carefully opened then a way was cleared down some sixteen steps along a passage of about 25 feet.

The door to the chambers was found to be sealed, as the outer door had been.

With difficulty, an entrance was effected and when at last the excavators managed to squeeze their way in, an extraordinary sight met their eyes, one that they could scarcely credit.

The "Times" describes the spectacle as amazing. There were gilt pouches, inlaid with ivory and precious stones,

innumerable boxes, inlaid and painted with entrancing hunting scenes; a wonderful throne; a chair encrusted with precious stones and adorned with royal portraits; innumerable statues of a king, chariots, mares, a footstool, alabaster vases and quantities of trussed duck and haunches of venison, left according to the ancient custom, as provision for the great dead.

Beyond the first chamber lay another chamber crowded with a confusion of gold, beads, boxes and alabaster vases and beyond this gain lies another chamber, which may prove to be the actual tomb of the king whose funeral relics lie in bewildering profusion in the first two rooms.

They date back to the days of Tutankhamen, of the Eighteenth dynasty, who reigned over three thousand years ago.

Little was known of him except that he claimed to be the son of Amenhotep III, and that he married the daughter of that strange Pharaoh Akhenaten.

Now thanks to this remarkable discovery we may learn more of the circumstances of the strange ebb and flow of this religious devotion in the days when mankind was still young.

Whatever the chambers may have contained originally, their contents today are sufficient cause for sensation in the Egyptological world.

Experts consider they will probably rank as the most important find of modern times.

The Countess of Carnarvon, in an article contributed by the "Weekly Dispatch," says the discoveries are a fitting crown in 15 years patient labour.

Those who read of them have little idea of the enormous toil



Egyptian workers at the excavation of Lord Carnarvon's first dig at Thebes in 1905

involved. Excavation is both exhausting and expensive, and as we have just seen, it may take a search of 15 years before the pearl of great prize is found.

Her ladyship says: "The recent discovery at Luxor was very dramatic. At the beginning of November 31st, Carter sent my husband word that he believed he was on the verge of a great find.

"My husband decided to go out at once, and arrived in time for the actual discovery.

"Excavating is heavy work, especially for the labourers for the actual excavating is through stone and rock, with huge masses of pressed dust.

"From dawn to dusk we dugged and delved. Only those who have toiled and borne the burden of the day can appreciate the joy such a discovery gives.

"It is just as if you had been seeking a precious diamond. Sure that it is somewhere in the house, you turn everything upside down. "Just when you have almost given up hope you find the diamond. This is how we feel about Luxor.

"Of course you must be totally interested in everything antique if you are to enjoy excavation work.

"Beyond doubt these great discoveries are of untold value to the nation. They broaden the

national mind and prevent us becoming self-centred."

To whom will pass the treasures laid bare after a lapse of 3,000 years?

Sir Ernest Budge, keeper of Egyptian exhibits, at the British Museum says: "The Valley of the Kings is a reserved site belonging to the Egyptian Government and all treasures discovered on it are reserved for the Cairo Museum.

"It depends entirely on Lord Allenby and the Egyptian Government whether any of these treasures pass into the hands of Lord Carnarvon or whether they are deposited in Cairo Museum."



The sarcophagus of lady Irtyru at Highclere Castle's Egyptian exhibition

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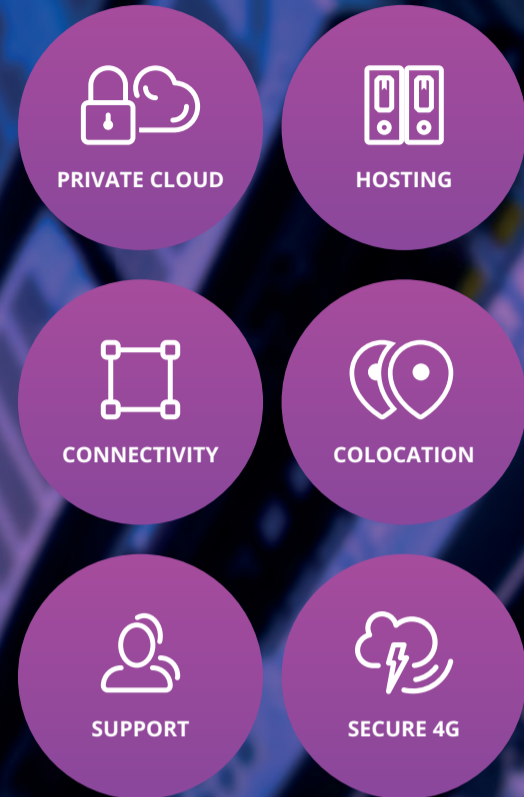
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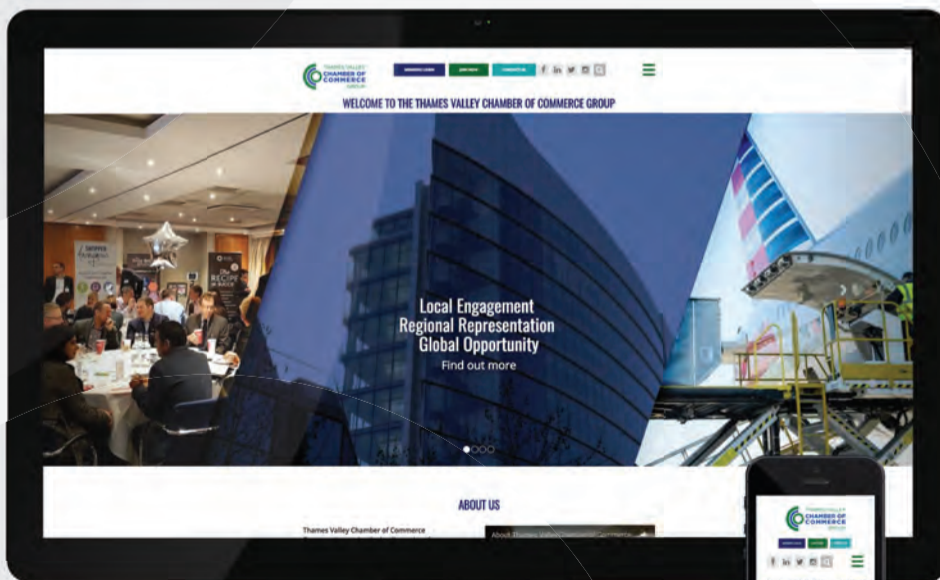
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# 1943: Bomb raid wreaks havoc

11 February 1943

ENEMY planes were active over a number of towns in the Home Counties and Southern England yesterday (Wednesday) afternoon. In a market town in the Home Counties [due to wartime censorship, this was not revealed as Newbury until May 1945] a number of high explosive bombs were dropped.

Among the places which were hit were a large modern school, a church, dwelling houses and some mediaeval almshouses.

The streets were also machine-gunned, most of the plate glass windows in one street being smashed.

At the time of writing there has been a number of admissions to the local hospital, including

many serious cases.

One person was dead when brought in and one has since died.

The portion of the school which was hit was a two-storey building, which was practically demolished.

The children were not at school at the time, having left about an hour before, but a number of the staff were there, including the headmaster and his wife, also the Education secretary, and a woman cleaner.

The headmaster and his wife were seriously injured.

The headmistress of the Girls' school received cuts.

The Education Secretary was brought down from an upper room which was partially

destroyed, and he was found to be suffering from a broken arm and shock.

The Civil Defence Services of the town were quickly mobilised and demolition gangs were at work removing the debris from the school to ascertain if any persons were buried there.

The church, which was on a crossroads, was also completely demolished and for a time the roads were blocked by the masonry.

The vicarage adjoining was damaged by the blast, but fortunately the vicar, who was at home with his sister, was uninjured, although all the windows were blown out.

A row of almshouses which borders Fair Close received a direct hit, several of them being quite destroyed.

Seven or eight persons were taken from the debris to the hospital.

It is believed there were one or two deaths here.

The other almshouses in the rectangular close were naturally very much damaged and the old people are being looked after in most instances by their sons and daughters.

In the case of the dwelling houses, which also received a direct hit, it is known that the occupants, both of whom were single women, were got out alive.

At the present time there is no news of the companion of one of the women, and demolition work is proceeding here.

The roof of a laundry collapsed, but although there was a large number of women working here, no-one was hurt.

Scores of windows were blown in



A rescue party outside the ruins of St John's Church in Newbury



Two women survey the wreckage of St John's Church, which was destroyed by a German bomb

and roofs were damaged over a large area.

Many roofs and windows of houses in the town were penetrated by machine gun bullets.

Mr Cripps, who, with his wife is detained in hospital, told a reporter that they were in a back room of their house, which is now razed to the ground, when they heard a noise and thought that an accident had occurred at the crossroads.

"My wife and I just got to the back door to see what it was, and I was following her, when the house seemed to just fall on us.

"My wife was caught by some furniture and I was trapped by the wall.

"Nothing happened for some time and then we heard noises underneath.

"Somebody called out from the cellar. I answered and they sawed their way to us, when a voice said 'Can you help us to get you out?'

"I pulled myself down towards them by leaving my shoes behind, where they were caught in the wreckage.

"I then pulled my wife after me. We were got out through a cellar to what had been the front of the house."

Mr Cripps was full of admiration for the efficient manner in which he and his wife were rescued.

It is understood that three schoolchildren are dead and six persons are missing.

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# 1950: Princess Margaret at Arlington

20 July 1950

THE event of the week is the visit of Princess Margaret yesterday afternoon to the Mary Hare Grammar School for the deaf at Arlington Manor.

The manor, which was formerly the seat of the late Colonel Fairhurst, was acquired by the governors of the school in 1947, with 154 acres of park and woodlands.

The school removed here last September upon becoming the first Grammar School for the Deaf in the country.

Being announced in the one o'clock news, the visit of the Princess was generally known and there was a crowd of people at the Broadway and other points along the route to Arlington, who waved to her and she acknowledged their salutes.

Princess Margaret had previously lunched with the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire and Mrs HA Benyon at Englefield, Lady Mount forming one of the company.

As she mounted the platform at Arlington, Princess Margaret looked a very youthful figure in her short frock of blush rose voile, with her winged straw hat covered with the same material.

It was noticed she was wearing her hair in a modified version of the new short cut.

When inspecting the form rooms, the kitchens and the dormitories, the Princess was very quick on the uptake in everything she saw. She was specially interested in the girls' fruit preserving and outside in the beekeeping in which both the boys and the girls take part.

It was a very human inspection,



Princess Margaret arrives at Arlington

quite different to what sometimes happens, when the inspecting person hurries through perfunctorily, evidently keen on getting the job over. She chatted to the head boy and girl and was very complimentary to the latter upon her speech.

The Mary Hare Grammar School

for the deaf represents something quite new in education.

It is the first school in the country to provide higher education for children who are deaf.

Superficially, a classroom at Arlington looks much the same

as at any other school, but there is a difference.

The teacher never turns his back on the pupils.

He stands or sits in a place where his lips can be seen by everybody, even if it is sideways.

Special care is given to the lighting.

The classrooms are large and airy.

A science laboratory has been built out of an old coach-house; what was the squash court is now a well-equipped gym, and a barn has been turned into an art room.

George Drewry, head boy, was

born deaf and has been taught to speak. Olga Neale, the head girl, aged 19, is an assistant editor of the school magazine.

Arlington Manor with its 154 acres was purchased for £21,400 and another £5,570 was spent in additions and improvements to make it suitable for a school.

On the other side, £4,210 was realised by the sale of timber.

The purchase of the property was made possible by grants received from the Ministry of Education and from the National Institute of the Deaf.

The school owes its origin to the late Miss Mary Hare whose life work was the oral tuition of the deaf.

She first carried on this work in her own home.

Then she established a private school for it at Brighton.

In 1916 this was removed to Burgess Hill, Sussex, and it became one of the best known private schools for the deaf in the country.

In 1946 the school was approved by the Minister of Education as a Boarding Special Secondary School under the Education Act 1944.

Miss Mary Hare died in 1945 and in keeping with her wishes the school has been reorganised as the first Grammar School for the deaf in the country.

The school caters for boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 19.

Its numbers are now 66 – 26 boys and 40 girls.

The school's continuance at Arlington under the name 'The Mary Hare Grammar School for the Deaf' is a fitting monument to her life and work.

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# 1963: Further outlook: Snow!

17 January 1963

MORE snow is on the way, according to Abingdon Meteorological Office.

Yesterday they forecast two or three inches, with strong easterly winds causing drifting.

Today the freeze-up enters its 23rd day – and the weather continues to overshadow all other news.

Here are some of the cold weather facts.

Out of the 56 schools in the Newbury Divisional Executive's area, only nine were unable to open last week, but on Monday, after more frost, 20 closed down.

Pipes were frozen and toilets unusable.

Saturday brought the first power cut.

There was load shedding from Ashford Hill to Thatcham and the southern part of Hermitage.

Voltage has been down nearly every day especially during morning and evening peak periods.

The SEB repeat they can give no warning of cuts.

The hospitals have not been affected, but in some homes, the television screens have shown only a three-inch picture.

A large number of houses are still are still frozen up, despite two days thaw that gave a glimpse of trouble in store.

Fifty burst pipes in Council houses have been reported to the borough housing officer; one home had six.

About two dozen council dwellings have been completely frozen up – and unfortunately, most of the trouble has been in the old people's bungalows at



Above, children having fun running across the Victoria Park pond, and, right, clearing snow in Bartholomew Street in Newbury

Hutton Close.

Coalmen have been working on Sundays to try and keep pace with the orders.

Many people are out of fuel, and though supplies are fairly good, the weather slows down deliveries.

One merchant is three weeks behind with orders.

Smokeless fuel is reported in rather short supply.

Pigeons have been stripping greenstuffs from gardens and fields.

At Mr Tuersley's Fairfield Nurseries at Hermitage, about a thousand pigeons cleared a two acre field of Brussels sprouts.

Some of the crop had been picked, but Mr Tuersley estimates he has lost about £100.

It is years since the thermometer was below freezing point so consistently.

Last Wednesday night was the coldest in the town.

A colossal call for heaters is reported all round the town.

Toomers sold nearly sixty in the last fortnight.

Vincents were restocking after selling out last week.

Paraffin deliveries have been carried out amid difficulties.

TN Foster report that although many vehicles were stuck at one time or another, distribution was maintained.

Parents began taking children home when they found the temperature in the old community centre annexe, used as a St Nicolas School overflow, was down to 41.

Frozen pipes at schools have caused particular problems.

Mrs T Muston of Coppice Close, Newbury, whose seven year old son is a St Nicolas pupil, told us that on Tuesday 50 girls and four teachers were having to use one toilet as all the rest were out of action.

Some of the lowest temperatures in the whole country have been recorded around Newbury this week and it has been "colder than it is in Moscow" as the great freeze goes on.

About two hundred loaves of bread were specially baked by Whitehorns of Newbury, for three isolated villages on Tuesday at the request of Newbury police.

Americans from RAF Welford took the bread to Leckhampstead, Brightwalton and Stanmore in the afternoon. Whitehorns have had an exceptionally heavy demand.



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*Our congratulations  
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Lockside was established in 1995.



The M4 in Berkshire in 1971 when it was opened by Michael Heseltine, the then Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Transport

## 1964: Newbury – city of future?

19 March 1964

**Newbury may become a city**  
NEWBURY – a major city of the future.

This, the *Newbury Weekly News* understands, is suggested in a development study of South East England, out today.

It is believed the plan – drawn up after a two and a half year study by experts – envisages an initial rise in population to 150,000 in the Newbury-Hungerford area with an eventual population of 250,000.

Present population of Newbury is 20,000 and it is understood the Development study suggests a population rise to 75,000 by 1981.

It is also understood the plan has been broadly accepted by the Government.

Two other cities are also suggested in the study – it is

believed they are in the Southampton-Portsmouth area and at Bletchley Buckinghamshire.

Mr Wyndham Thomas, Director of the Town and Country Planning Association, mentioned the possible expansion of Newbury when interviewed on BBC's "Town and around" programme on Monday night.

Southern ITV, obviously also in the know about the possible content of the study, were busy in Newbury yesterday.

Their "Day by Day" cameras were taking shots of the town streets and filming interviews with the Mayor (Councillor John Marshall) and the Chamber of Commerce secretary Mr WGK Ames.

The proposals to make Newbury a major city may well be linked with the delay and indecision on

the line of the London-South Wales motorway through Berkshire.

The colossal redevelopment envisaged for the town is bound to have a direct bearing on the route of the M4.

A Newbury population is far in excess of anything suggested in the Buchanan Report or the County Development plan.

The Mayor of Newbury made it clear yesterday there would be full opportunity of discussing the study before any of its proposals were implemented.

He said "If expansion comes, we must hope it will be done in the least harmful way to the town and the surrounding countryside, and that it will be accompanied by the facilities for culture and recreation which only a larger community can provide."

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From left, Nigel Fleming, Peter Dann and John Parsons inspect the new recording equipment in 1995



Celebrating the 1,000th edition of Kennet Cassette in 1995 are, from left, Sue Campbell, Laura Pank, Iris Lloyd, Peter Dann and Sara Bartlett. The four women were the volunteer editors at the time and Sue Campbell, Peter Dann and Iris Lloyd are all still involved today

## 1976: Press night for talking newspaper

20 May 1976

IT'S all systems go tonight for the recording of the first edition of a talking newspaper for blind and partially sighted people in the Newbury area.

The initial circulation of the Kennet Cassette will be about fifty and the first tapes should arrive at homes throughout the district on the Saturday morning.

Production of the first tapes comes after a series of trial runs, with several blind and partially sighted people having acted as guinea pigs to advise on the

content.

One of those advisers is Mr Bob Taylor of Cold Ash Hill, a man whose sight became very blurred after an illness several years ago.

"I think the idea is a marvellous one," he said. "It has made a very great difference to my life. The most important thing is it has given me some independence - I don't have to rely on my wife reading the *NWN* to me every week."

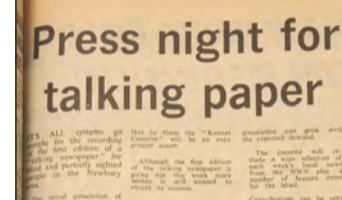
Another great advantage is that Mr Taylor is now able to take part in discussions with friends

and workmates on local events, where previously he tended to feel out of touch.

Although the first edition of the talking newspaper is going out this week, more money is still needed to ensure its success.

£1,400 has now been received towards the appeal target of £1,800 and it is essential that the remainder is raised to ensure that the circulation can grow with the expected demand.

The cassette will include a wide selection of each week's local news from the *NWN* plus a number of feature items for the blind.



How the *Newbury Weekly News* reported the launch of Kennet Cassette in May 1976

Left, Kennet Cassette volunteers recording the 2000th edition in 2014

# Happy 150th Anniversary

We would like to congratulate Newbury Weekly News on their 150th anniversary.

Since its first issue, the *Newbury Weekly News* has witnessed remarkable technological change and it is extraordinary that in 1867, signal lamps were used to transmit Morse code between local towns. Since then, this publication has allowed large groups of the community to share and enjoy local news every week, building relationships between local people and businesses.

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# 1983: 'No to Cruise' for 14 miles

7 April 1983

NWN reporters and photographers were in the thick of the weekend protests by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, watching the blockaders of Burghfield and Greenham Common and the formation of the 14 mile human chain.

Good Friday – day two of the CND protest – dawned dull and cold with a bitter wind sweeping over the 14 mile route of the planned "human chain" linking Burghfield, Aldermaston and Greenham air base.

Veterans of the former Aldermaston marches were joined by representatives of many political groups and protesters of every age group.

Traffic congestion built up rapidly as people began spreading out



along the route, ready for the formation of the chain at 2pm.

At a Press Conference, Assistant Chief Constable Wyn Jones said he

was very pleased with the conduct of the protesters but added "There is some evidence of agitators at Burghfield trying to harden people's attitudes.

"As with all demonstrations you get a small number of extremists."

In addition to police and demonstrators, the event was attended by dozens of press and television crews.

Close to Greenham protesters danced and sang as the chain formed.

At Greenham itself, peace women, after a mass incursion into the base by 20 women at about noon, made regular trips over the wire.

During the day nearly 200 women got in, were detained, and all later released without charge.



Anti-Cruise missile protesters link hands at Ashford Hill



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*Congratulations to Newbury Weekly News in celebrating their 150th anniversary.*

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# 1982: The *Newbury Weekly News* moves to Faraday Road

THE following is an excerpt from a forthcoming book about the 150-year history of the *Newbury Weekly News* called *Still Making History*, written by Brien Beharrell, who was editor of the newspaper from 1997 to 2014. It will be on sale later this month, priced £5.99.



AS the publishing and printing industry and its processes changed and expanded, it became clear that the [*Newbury Weekly News*] site in Northbrook Street, on a plot that extended back to Park Way (then an alternative motor route into central Newbury, complete with parking spaces), was no longer fit for purpose.

The business was outgrowing its site and becoming a bothersome neighbour.

Although opposed by those who wanted the *Newbury Weekly News* to remain at the very heart of Newbury geographically, [NWN chairman] Reg Blake succeeded in his ambition to shift the publishing and printing business to a new, purpose-built factory and offices in Faraday Road.

The move did risk a sense of separation from Newbury, given its offices and press works canal-

side location to the east of the A339 (the busy north-south route for traffic that bisected the town).

In answer to these concerns, the *Newbury Weekly News* retained a front office at 34 Northbrook Street to deal with any customer inquiries.

The move to Faraday Road was a momentous one – the relocation of an enormous printing press, and its associated equipment scattered through numerous buildings on the old site, was no small undertaking.

Astonishingly the majority of the move took place over a single weekend in January 1982, under the expert eye of Graham Brook.

Publishing and printing schedules experienced seamless continuity.

The *Newbury Weekly News* offices and printworks in Faraday Road



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# 1996: Newbury Bypass – the battle begins

11 January 1996

It was only 9.15am but it had become impossible to fell any more trees.

Contractors had chopped down ten trees in just 45 minutes, before some 150 security guards were forced back into a circle to prevent their digger being occupied.

Demonstrators had gradually moved in to the wooded area behind the Newtown straight BP garage.

At first, small groups sat inside the cordon and were dragged away by the security guards to shouts of 'leave your jobs – there are other better things you could be doing for the same money'.

Just as the last of ten trees crashed to the ground just after 9am, more protesters arrived from the field adjacent to the A34.

They tore down the cordon and fought against security guards who tried to stop them throwing themselves on the ground.

By 9.15am security guards had been forced into merely defending the digger and any possibility of work continuing was stopped.

At this point violence flared as groups of demonstrators threw themselves in blocks against lines of security guards.

Other protesters jumped into the huge earth piles created by the uprooted trees.

Several others climbed trees.

The air was thick with confrontation as a dog barked while the protesters argued and insulted the security



Security guards and protesters clash as work on the Newbury Bypass grinds to a halt

guards.

From time to time roars went up as protesters succeeded in jamming themselves under another felled tree.

Even so some demonstrators still joked with individual security guards, or laughed at the masses of overcoated journalists talking into their mobile phones and dodging the mud.

A protester read out a leaflet saying "The Newbury Bypass is the most controversial road project ever".



Police look on as tree surgeons prepare to fell trees standing in the route of the Newbury Bypass

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# 2005: The birth of *newburytoday*

THE following is an excerpt from a forthcoming book about the 150-year history of the *Newbury Weekly News* called *Still Making History*, written by Brien Beharrell, who was editor of the newspaper from 1997 to 2014. It will be on sale later this month, priced £5.99.



BY 2005, moves to create a news website were well underway.

Atomic Media, a company at that time associated with the *Newbury Weekly News* Group, was engaged to design a website and, after much deliberation and testing, *newburytoday* went 'live' in June 2005.

It honoured certain publishing principles from the outset, namely that its content should be updated daily – to differentiate it from the long-established weekly provision by the printed *Newbury Weekly News* – and that it operated under a completely new title – *newburytoday* – reflecting the immediacy of its online content.

Launched within weeks of the traditional *Newbury Weekly News* converting from broadsheet to compact in size, the online provider *newburytoday* was staffed from the outset by three new web journalists under the day-to-day direction of news editor Martin Robertshaw, and supported by the print publication's established team of reporters and photographers.

Such an increase in resources represented a significant investment for the business, but ultimately secured its position as

an established provider of news online locally.

Managing director Adrian Martin recalls that the resulting multi-platform publishing operation created 'quite a buzz' within the business, and that the initial target of 2,000 online visitors per week was very soon exceeded.

Its success also made an impact upon the landscape of local publishing across the country.

The management team was kept busy by other publishers beating a path to Newbury's door, all keen to learn more about the success of *newburytoday*.

Notable awards – in the face of strong competition from national publishers – were won as a result of Newbury's innovation.

One of the key issues of the day was whether the success of *newburytoday* would adversely impact upon paid-for sales of the *Newbury Weekly News*, still the publication generating the greatest revenue for the business.

The reply is a firm 'no' from Adrian Martin, who adds: "Few could have foreseen the impact of the internet on publishing.

"Decisions taken in Newbury – not to insist that online visitors



How *newburytoday* has developed over the past decade – left is how the site looked in 2007 and today's version is on the right

should 'Register' before being able to access the website, and foregoing the opportunity to install a paywall for potential users – were all correct, given the explosion of information online.

"It also ensured that the Newbury publishing business expanded its cross-platform audience, remained the foremost information provider locally, and maintained market dominance."

Even as the newly-formatted newspaper and its online counterpart enjoyed success, new and continuously-developing technologies were changing the face of publishing.



For more than a decade, the



*Newbury Weekly News* had maintained a website featuring a selection of articles cut-and-pasted from the print publication.

Although a very basic online presence by today's standards, at the time even this modest offering was ahead of many of its local and regional counterparts.

Yet again, *newburytoday* demanded a new way of working.

While protection of the paid-for circulation of the *Newbury Weekly News* was important, breaking local news would no longer wait for publication in the main print publication each Thursday.

Already, other local websites were beginning to appear on the scene.

Although none could bring to

bear the news-gathering strength of the *Newbury Weekly News'* newsroom team, some of these smaller websites risked splitting a commercial market in which the *Newbury Weekly News* had previously been overwhelmingly dominant.

*newburytoday* launched in the spring of 2005, and among the earliest news events covered was the London bombings of July 7.

With many people from West Berkshire commuting to the capital, there was great demand for online news of the dramatic events that had brought much of London to a halt that day.

With the capacity now to publish news reports quickly via the internet, *newburytoday* was able to post regular, updated news on its website.

No longer did the newsroom team need to wait until publication of the print edition in order to publish news and information to their loyal readers.

While the ability to publish news reports immediately was professionally rewarding for the news team, much thought and work was required to ensure that local news did not migrate wholly to the website, to the commercial detriment of the paid-for *Newbury Weekly News*.

Thus began a juggling act – choosing which news to publish on the website, and which to hold for the newspaper – that continues to this day.

The rapidly-increasing demand for local news and advertising online generated a tide that could not, and would not, be stemmed.

The three new website reporters were employed specifically to write news and then post it online, often supported by photographs taken by the staff photographers, and sometimes with filmed interviews and video clips captured by the same web reporters.

At one point, this online presence 'Powered by the *Newbury Weekly News*', was supplemented by a 12 noon local news bulletin filmed and broadcast from a studio within the main newspaper's newsroom.

In subsequent years the division between those newsroom staff working specifically for *newburytoday*, and those working for the *Newbury Weekly News* (and its other sister print publications), narrowed and the two newsroom disciplines became wholly integrated.

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# 2008: Red letter day for phone giant

20 November 2008

DELIGHTED Vodafone employees saw the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh last Friday when they paid a Royal Visit to the company's world Headquarters in Newbury.

The Royal couple were there to see the physical and human impact of the unprecedented flooding in July last year, and how the company's Shaw campus has since been restored.

The royal couple were greeted on arrival by Sir John Bond, chairman of Vodafone Group, chief executive Vittorio Colao and community dignitaries, including the mayor of Newbury, Phil Barnett, Newbury MP Richard Benyon and the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, the Hon Mary Bayliss.

They were then introduced to the life president of Vodafone, Sir Ernest Harrison, who received the first mobile phone call in 1985, and to the current chief executive of Vodafone UK, Guy Laurence.

After viewing a brief history of the mobile phone, The Queen and Prince Philip then met employees of the company personally affected by the floods, and spoke to them about their experiences.

The property relationship manager for Vodafone UK, Ed Large, said: "It was an absolute pleasure for me to meet the Queen and I feel very privileged. She talked to me about the flood recovery and seemed very interested."

Music was played for the royal visitors by pupils from Trinity School, which neighbours the campus.

Trinity's headteacher Deborah Forster was among the community guests introduced to



The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh arrive at Vodafone's HQ



the Queen and Prince Philip, together with the High Sheriff of Berkshire Carolyn Boulter, chairman of Shaw-cum-Donnington Parish Council John

Edwards, neighbour and landowner Genevieve Mather, of Shawdene, the chairman of West Berkshire Council Keith Chopping, West Berkshire

Council chief executive Nick Carter, Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Sara Thornton and editorial director of the *Newbury Weekly News* Group Brien Beharrell.

After a four-course lunch for 120 guests, which included Vodafone staff ranging from trainee to executive level, together with Newbury community representatives, the Queen witnessed a video link-up between Vodafone employees in Newbury and Mumbai, India, and learned of Vodafone's developments in social networking and was shown the M-PESA money-transfer service.

The Duke of Edinburgh officially unveiled a plaque to open the fitness and well-being centre, which has been restored since it was badly damaged in the floods. He was also shown examples of

future mobile internet technology by Vodafone's research and development teams, including the development in widgets.

The Queen then activated the Vodafone Foundation's 'World of Difference' mural and Sir John unveiled a bronze statue of *Generous*, the 1991 winner of the Epsom Derby.

The royal party then signed the visitors' book, before departing. Newbury's mayor, Phil Barnett, said: "This has been a wonderful occasion for Newbury, great for Vodafone and great for the county of Berkshire.

"It has been an excellent opportunity for people to see their sovereign and for Vodafone's employees to be recognised for their work around the world."

Vodafone's 3,000 staff were

clearly excited to catch a glimpse of the Queen, lining pathways inside and outside the buildings with their phones and cameras at the ready, waiting to capture the moment.

The team secretary for the Vodafone Group's fraud, risk and security team, Alex Russell, aged 24, said: "It's great to see the Queen and everyone has been very excited in anticipation of this visit."

Her colleague, Jackie Aley, said that she felt honoured to have seen the Queen.

"For the Queen to be showing an interest in Vodafone helps put us on the map and is amazing for the company," she said.

"This is a normal working day, but we are working around her visit as this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us."



The Queen chats to Emma Jenkins as she met staff involved with Vodafone Foundation and the 'World of Difference' winners

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# 2012: Olympic torch lights up Newbury

11 July 2012

IT WAS Newbury's time to shine. Even an hour before the torch arrived, crowds thronged Northbrook Street, three and four deep, while schoolchildren banged drums and waved flags.

Police motorcyclists grinned and touched the outstretched hands of youngsters lining the route.

Then came the last outriders and, finally, the torch.

Newbury MP Richard Benyon, who was among the crowd, said later: "It was electrifying. The hairs on the back of my neck stood up. Newbury is an exceptional town and this was Newbury at its best."

Gillian Coles and Susan Smith from Newbury, who took the day off work at Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service, both agreed the relay was a "once-in-a-lifetime event".

Employees from Bayer in Newbury took time out to witness the relay, including Emma Fountain, Angela May, Catherine Salt and Matt Willis.

Mr Willis said: "This really is a major event for the town and it's quite an experience to witness it first hand"

Neil Tomlinson, the general manager at the Red House pub restaurant, Marsh Benham: "It's a big day for the town and the turnout is incredible."

Imogen Frazer, the event manager at The Chequers Hotel, Newbury, said: "I've taken the day off because I think it's important to support the town we love and work in and this is a fantastic event."

Jade Foster, from Speen, took daughter Jezzabell, aged five, to witness the relay.

She said: "I hope it's something she'll remember for the rest of her life."

Karen Saunders from Greenham said: "It's way better than I expected - lots of razzamatazz and a real party atmosphere."

Joy Cooper, also from Greenham, agreed: "It's a fantastic atmosphere - and I've never seen such happy police officers! It's lovely to see all the generations come together, from little children to grandparents."

Pattie Mhlanga, from Newbury, brought son Benjamin, aged 11 months, while her friend Irene Pettit took two-and-a-half-year-old daughter Ellie.

Ms Pettit said: "I hope the children will remember this day and say 'I was there'."

The licensee of The Monument in Northbrook Street, Neal Anderson, passed out free bacon sandwiches and the sun lifted spirits along the route.

After the historic relay, families packed into Market Place to watch stilt walkers and urban sports such as skateboarding and stunt cycling, while others picnicked and carried on the party in Victoria Park.



The crowds lined the streets to watch the Olympic torch being carried through Newbury, with Clare Balding leading the way



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# ARTS

## 1979: Second century for town orchestra

December 13 1979

PROBABLY the only good thing to come out of 1879 was Newbury Symphony Orchestra, claimed Col. the Hon Gordon Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, at Saturday's centenary concert.

It had been a bad year for the country, which had been torn apart by the Zulu war, suffered a great trade depression, and experienced unusually severe weather conditions.

"However you measure it, 100 years is a long time," he said. In 1879, Queen Victoria was on the throne, Disraeli was just finishing his last term of office as Prime Minister, and Winston Churchill was still confirmed to his nursery. Composers such as Holst, Sibelius and Debussy were all under 17, Elgar was 22 and even Tchaikovsky was relatively unknown.

One of the oldest amateur orchestras in the country, it survived thanks to the dedication of those people who had played such a valuable part in it, many from generation to generation.

Despite all the sophisticated methods of recording which exist today, there is still nothing like a live performance, stressed Col. Palmer.

"Music is still the most common bond between peoples and has no boundaries."



The former Arts Workshop in Northcroft Lane

# 1998: Art lovers fight to save Workshop

5 November 1998

THERE was standing room only on Tuesday, when about 100 art lovers packed out Newbury Town Hall to deliver a simple message: "Save the Arts Workshop."

The meeting was called by Newbury MP Mr David Rendel to discuss life after last week's closure of the 20-year-old venue - but it soon became clear that what people really wanted was for the workshop to be saved.

Speaker after speaker praised the Northcroft Lane venue for giving ordinary people access to arts facilities, for its handy location, and its intimate atmosphere.

They also warned it would be impossible to recreate the knowledge of the local arts

scene and the exchange of creative ideas the workshop offered if its work had to be done in several different venues.

"The Arts Workshop is not just a place, it's a whole ethos," one man told the meeting.

"It's greater than the sum of its parts - you can't just take bits and move them here and move them there."

Mr Stuart Hillman, a member of the Newbury Youth Theatre company which recently won rave reviews at the Edinburgh Festival, said the group depended on the Arts Workshop building and the back-up provided by dedicated staff like its former artistic director, Ms Trish Lee.

Ms Lee and the workshop's other member of staff, Miss Amanda Campbell, were served with redundancy notices last Friday.

"If we have to raise extra for a rehearsal and performance space, we are generally going to fail to function," Mr Hillman said. "The loss of the Arts Workshop ... is going to be a major problem for us."

Mrs Suzanne Arnold, from Chaddleworth, was applauded when she concluded that art lovers "should be trying to keep it [the Arts Workshop], not look for alternatives".

Eight people, including Mr Hillman, said they would serve on a steering committee that would work

to rescue the Arts Workshop, and perhaps act as a new governing body if it could be saved.

But the meeting also took the precautionary step of listing possible long and short-term homes for the work of the Arts Workshop, if it disappeared.

These included New Greenham Park, where the Greenham Common Trust has offered to turn one of its buildings into an arts centre, Shaw House Mansion, the library building in Newbury's Carnegie Road, and the Waterside Centre.

It also drew up a list of possible sponsors, including Vodafone, Lord Lloyd-Webber and Trencherwood.

## 1993: Exchange's £3.5m facelift

31 August 1993

NEWBURY'S Corn Exchange has been officially handed back to the council, after contractors finished a £3.5 million refurbishment scheme.

A ceremony to mark the hand-over of the building - now transformed into a showpiece arts centre - was held on Friday when Newbury District Council took the Corn Exchange back from builders Alfred McAlpine.

The re-fitted building opens to the public on

Saturday, having undergone a year-long refurbishment to transform it into a complex housing a 466-seat auditorium, two bars, meeting rooms, a café and a fully computerised booking office.

The Corn Exchange is holding a series of open days in the first two weeks of September, laying on a series of backstage tours, children's events, live music, film, circus and dance.

Facilities in the Corn Exchange provide a

venue for performing artists and companies, as well as resources for local performance groups and meeting and conference space for the local business community.

The future of Newbury's historic Corn Exchange building was in grave doubt when it was closed down five years ago.

Then, Liberal Democrats on Newbury District Council backed the top-level refurbishment scheme, which has just been completed.



Work is carried out to completely refurbish the Corn Exchange in 1992



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# SPORT

# Then, now and probably forever – unless it's snowing!

**SPORT in the past was pretty much like sport in the present – a lot of thought and comment, sometimes about very little action!**

Yet it did then what it does now, unite millions in discussion, argument and the pursuit of excellence.

From the start, the usual

It is some years since boxing was staged in Newbury, and the fact that it has an appeal for a large number of Newbury people was proved by the big crowd which attended the show in the Corn Exchange. Frankly, after all that had been said about the show, I was not impressed with the quality of the fare. The white-haired veteran, George Baker of Reading, won an uninteresting fight against Jack Runham, also of Reading.

Just a word of council to the Newbury team. Whether it is their modesty that prevents their doing it I know not, but they hardly ever appeal for offside. I am sure it would pay them and had they done so last Saturday their opponents' third goal would most probably have been disallowed under that rule. Other clubs are exceedingly sharp on this rule.

suspects were there, and in the late 19th century the NWN's sports coverage was not devoted to what many would think were Victorian interests; beating servants; downtreading the poor; cap-doffing to the wealthy. In fact, a typical issue on February 6, 1890, was entirely devoted to football and summer issues carried cricket. Not in a designated sports section, but within the general news content in page 3.

By 1936, coverage had broadened to include darts, billiards, cycling, rifle shooting, badminton and rugby football, all very much with us still.

But what about those sports that have had coverage, but no longer grace the pages?

Softball, water skiing, quails all had their slots. Are you still competing out there? Aunt Sally popped up and, yes, subbuteo too! Pigeon racing was with us for a long time, and it still is in areas

On Saturday next the Newbury team will journey to Reading by the "Awfully aesthetic" the "two-two" train, to play their semi-final round with Marlton, for the Berks and Bucks Junior Cup. (The right back for Newbury was the Rev. Denning.)

far removed from the old grubby loft attended by Wally Batty. We had the Newbury and District Homing Society and the Thatcham North Road club among others, run by dedicated fanciers sending birds around the country and abroad and returning. Where did they all go? Apart from the bird eaten by one of our composers (don't worry! It was from Waitrose!). And whither the Hungerford

Newbury and Thatcham renewed old rivalry and spoke volume of the 'turn in the two clubs' fortunes' when Thatcham won by the unbelievable score of 7-3. Why is that a village club can build up a team which is able to beat so convincingly a side representing a town the size of Newbury?"

Panthers Cycle Speedway Club? In February 1963, in the big freeze – no, not the few flakes that bring chaos today, caused 10 weeks of sporting postponements and killed my pet rabbit, we reported:

"This coming season Hungerford Panthers will enter all competitions available in the county, including the revived Berkshire League. The senior team has entered for the national team championships and the club will also promote the Berkshire Grand Prix, as well as the annual fete and gymkhana."

Maybe the club went the same way as my old local club track and adjoining cyclo-cross course; swept away for the London Olympics velodrome. Two with unlimited access for local kids, one with none.

FOR the first time in history, Newbury will stage an international sporting event – an England v America table tennis tournament in the Corn Exchange on March 29th. Both teams will be making their final appearance before leaving for the world championships in Prague. Allocation of the game is a great tribute to Newbury and District Table Tennis Association. The Corn Exchange is considered by many stars as a miniature Wembley.

Where did the TV All Stars XI go? For a long time in that winter, nowhere at all. The original February date went back and back until the end of April, when at least there were more stars in show than the team that played at Slade Prison in Porridge: Bernard Bresslaw couldn't make it, but Mike and



**Snow-time!**

'He's a sports reporter with the Newbury Weekly News. Wants to know if he can cover our game?'

Bernie Winters, Jess Conrad and 'ballad monger' Michael Cox could. Cox? One-hit wonder with 'Angela Jones' for Joe Meek, but nobody knew that then. And he's still working in New Zealand.

And what happened to Sports Jottings, a mainstay of the sports pages for a long time – see the insets on this page.

A reader survey in the 1990s revealed that a high percentage regularly devoured Sports Jottings. So much for audience data – it had not appeared since 1962!

THREE STAIWARTS of Newbury Rugby Club, Messrs, W.C. Howells, T.A. Langdon and G. W. Lloyd, travelled to Cardiff on Saturday and saw England defeat Wales by 13 points to 6 in a brilliant game of football.

Reminds me of a complaint received from the referee on the Excelsior v Reading Castle match. He urges that last week's report is inaccurate as regards play continuing after "time" and says the two umpires agree with him that all the goals were scored before time was called.

So we brought it back for a lengthy run, and following it came John Taylor's Local Heroes, and the past was revisited and revered regularly.

And that is one thing that connects the sports readers of 1867 with those of 2017. For every sporting hero of today, there are thousands from yesterday, and the NWN has featured, and shall continue to feature as many of those as we possibly can, for at least another 150 years, we hope!

Sports Bloggings anyone?



Grappling fans were once well-served in Newbury, and not just at 4pm on a Saturday. Mick McManus was here (boooo!) and so was Big Daddy (hooray!)



Tactical advice from the empty-legged 'Big Bird' Joel Garner to Beefy before a benefit football match at Hungerford Town, where Viv Richards was once on the books!



"Wishing Newbury News a very happy anniversary. It is a privilege to be working with you and we would like to wish you many more years of continued success"

Tom Bartleet, CEO, Erskine Murray.

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