

Castle Comfort Clarion

RETURN TO TUNSTALL EDITION

WINTER 2013/2014

WE HAVE FEATURED THE 'MOTHER TOWN' BUT NOW IT'S...

BACK TO THE 'QUEEN' TOWN!

By Rex Roundedge, Potteries Correspondent

The long awaited recent investment and re-generation of many parts of north Staffordshire is certainly paying off. Regular visitors to Tunstall have seen the arrival of many businesses on the eastern side of the town... B&Q, Boots Chemists, Matalan, Next, Argos, etc and soon a Morrison Supermarket, is to be seen on the old site of the demolished H&R Johnson tiles factory.

The hub of the town has for years, been the part-pedestrianised square boasting many successful small shops and Tunstall is quite unique among the five (or Arnold Bennett, is it six?) Potteries towns for its ample parking facilities... often free and unlimited, for those who can walk a short way. Bus services from all directions are excellent.

Yet the "QUEEN" of Tunstall has to be its legendary indoor market. Since 2001, the refurbished market with its hub of specialists, there on just Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, has kept the town going through some difficult times. Markets and fairs have in fact been held in Tunstall since the 14th century at Haymarket, where Roundwell Street joins the High Street.



The CCC team at Tunstall Market

Several years ago, Wolstanton based Castle Comfort Centre – now a leading player, UK-wide in the mobility products world had a promotional stall at the modern day market .. but now with the recent boom in Tunstall they have decided to return. CCC's range of special chairs, beds, stairlifts and other gadgets to make life easier can be seen and tried there. There will be some really great special offers to be had.

Uniquely, a free transport service from Tunstall to Wolstanton and back, is available for those wanting to visit the main Castle Comfort showrooms – or just spend an hour or two browsing and shopping in the busy and thriving villages of Porthill, Wolstanton and May Bank. To arrange a trip, just ask at the stall or call 01782 611411 anytime.



A previous Clarion, read by over **ONE MILLION** folk



Tunstall – a town famous for its market and tile maker, H&R Johnson... But where are those tiles made now? See P3

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Tiles Execs Re-united after 40 years

By Rex Roundedge, Potteries Correspondent

Former colleagues from *H&R Johnson - Richards Tiles* in the 1970's got together to reminisce about some good old days from Stoke on Trent's world famous ceramic tiles industry. Keith Simpson, now the chief of the Castle Comfort Centre Group, along with Gwyn Hamer of Chell and Tony Hart of Woore, both now enjoying retirement, were amongst the 20 - strong team of Home Sales executives based at Highgate, Tunstall. They weren't 'tile makers' as the *Sentinel* reported... the actual vital production experts were dotted around various factories such as Adderley Green, The Valley and at Highgate. Many former production staff will still be in the Tunstall area - and no doubt regular visitors to Tunstall Indoor Market.

Remaining loyal to the 'old firm' when Keith bought an old National Westminster branch at Wolstanton, in 1997, to host the head offices of CCC - he needed tiles for the canteen, toilets and bathrooms. Of course Johnson's tiles were specified, and he visited the Highgate showroom to choose the design - not long before it was closed and demolished (*see photo below*).

When tiling work began it was quite a shock to open the boxes and discover that

the modern day tiles weren't produced quite as close to home as he'd expected. In fact they came from what couldn't be further away - Australia! Well, the thought was there. It's a sad thing, but the majority of mass produced ceramics are now from overseas - but we'll feature in the next *Clarion*, the specialists in North Staffordshire, some large, but many studio potteries which are thriving and ensuring that the best pots in the world - are indeed still from Stoke!

Did you work at H&R Johnson Richards? If so please tell the staff at Castle Comfort's stall at Tunstall Indoor Market - and there is a cup of tea voucher there waiting for you to use in the cafe.



Gwyn, Keith & Tony... four decades on



Those tiles are still made - but sadly, 'down under'!!



The end of an era... H&R Johnson Tiles, Highgate offices, 'under the hammer'... soon to be a pub, a petrol station and a supermarket!



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ONCE A DOCTOR ALWAYS A DOCTOR!

By The Directors, CCC Group

'Once a Doctor Always a Doctor' was the title of a book, but nobody at Castle Comfort knew a decade ago how true the statement is, and how important this particular medic and gentleman, was to become to us. Neil Stirling's involvement with the hands-on running of our services, has helped enormously with our continuing growth and expansion throughout the UK, Ireland and Spain.

We could write another book with the remarkable accounts from many, of his dedicated efforts to help and cure folk. His career in medicine spanned six decades, and then Neil continued work helping and advising us, as specialists in products and gadgets, to make life more comfortable for the local population. In Dr Stirling's own words, as a medical student, his ambition was simple – 'to help get people better' (see – www.stairliftsdoctor.co.uk)

And now, his invitation for all to come and say 'hello' to him at Tunstall Indoor Market, on the first Wednesday of every month, will be accepted by many.



Dr Neil Stirling MB ChB

Graham Boulton of High Lane, is one of scores of former patients who have been to salute Dr Stirling at Castle Comfort's Tunstall Indoor Market branch. Graham said *"no other doctor was interested in my throat problem, and at the age of just 18, I was worried. But Dr Stirling came to my house, and got me into hospital within 24 hours to have my tonsils taken out. For 56 years now – no throat problems. He's the best doctor ever!"*

A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO WATCHING STOKE OR THE VALE?

By Clarion Sports Writer,
Gerry Atrick



'Scouts' from Castle Comfort discovered a couple of seasons ago that **TUNSTALL TOWN FC** had four players over 60. Remarkably, *one of them at 75*, was officially the oldest player in Britain playing 11-a-side league soccer! As CCC dedicate their time to the *slightly* older sector it decided to offer club sponsorship, despite knowing the club had suffered recently some huge defeats. Losing 19-0, 16-0, 13-0 (twice) and in total conceding, during the season – 171 goals – whilst scoring *just three*, must mean things, with the right backing, can only get better!

Sponsorship continues to the present day – and as seen here, the club has acquired a somewhat younger flair – and we wish them well. Follow their results and fixtures on www.clubwebsite.co.uk/tunstalltownfc Why not pay a visit to a home game at Sandyford to roar on some support?