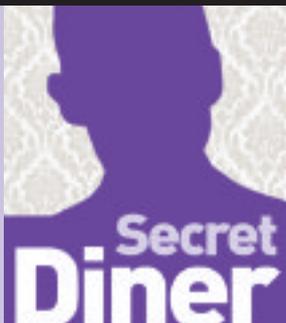




PUBS PINTS & PIES



JACK AND THE WORLD TEA CUP



INSIDE taste 7 GREAT PAGES OF FOOD & DRINK

MPs' blow for Boris is a boost for us



Airport plans would help the North East

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MPS are today unveiling a report that boosts the chances of a new runway at Heathrow - with far-reaching effects for the North East economy.

The Transport Select Committee says ambitious plans for "Boris Island" - a new airport in the Thames estuary that has been vigorously promoted by London mayor Boris Johnson - should be ditched.

Their solution to the lack of runway capacity in the South East - more runways at Heathrow - would enhance connections to the North East, opening the way for more trade and jobs.

The MPs also criticised Air Passenger Duty, which has hit airports like Newcastle and which The Journal has campaigned against.

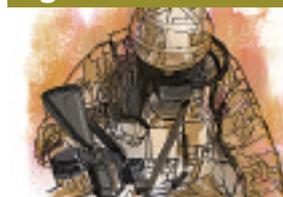


HALL TOGETHER NOW...



AND THE BAND PLAYED ON Former Hetton Silver Band members Julie Carmichael, left, and Glenis Smith play a tune outside their old band hall. But the hall itself has been given a new lease of life - by being dismantled, moved several miles to Beamish Museum and painstakingly rebuilt. **FULL STORY:** Page 8

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Charge of the fight brigade

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Music



Screaming for more

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The Queen, Alison Moyet and yo-yo dieting

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RAW MATERIAL Plantations which supply a factory owned by Stassens, a large and respected tea producer in Sri Lanka

Tea time with a legend

THE face staring out of the photograph is unmistakable, whether you're a football lover or not.

In flat cap, tea mug in hand, a smiling Jack Charlton declares, tongue firmly wedged in his cheek, "The best cup since 1966!"

Legendary footballer and one of Northumberland's most famous sons, the 78-year-old (he celebrated his birthday on May 8) is recognised across the globe.

It made the Ashington-born sportsman the perfect choice to be the 'face' of a new and unique tea which, it is hoped, will do for

A Northumberland couple are hoping to brew up a winner, put the county further on the foodie map and raise thousands for a local cancer charity with their new tea venture backed by 1966 World Cup hero Jack Charlton. JANE HALL reports

England's Border County what the beverage has done for Yorkshire.

His image is appearing on boxes of Northumberland Tea, the brainchild of former coffee shop owners Bill and Helen Logan which is launching in cafes and independent retailers next week.

Each packet proudly declares "made by Northumbrians for tea

lovers everywhere!" and is an exclusive blend of three teas – Assam, Kenyan and Sri Lankan (Ceylon).

Husband-and-wife Bill, 55, and 45-year-old Helen, who live in Corbridge, hope that with Charlton's help their special brew could see their home county become as well known for its tea as

Yorkshire.

Indeed, it was while watching Yorkshire Tea's cult TV advert following Little Urns trip across America that they were first inspired to set-up The Northumberland Tea Company.

"We thought if Yorkshire can do it, why can't we?" Helen says.

Friends and family were sceptical,

but less than five months on things are heating up nicely, with cafés, restaurants, independent food shops and delicatessens across the region wanting to offer the North East's first specially branded tea.

They have even been in discussions with Tesco and Asda – where Helen once worked – about stocking it.

If those grocery giants come on board it will give a much needed boost not just to Bill and Helen's pledge to advance Northumberland's foodie profile, but also to the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation as for every

box of 80 tea bags sold, 1p will go to the cancer charity.

From **<<24**

The Logans hope to raise as much as £10,000 in their first year alone for the foundation which helps detect and treat all types of cancer.

But Bill says: "If we can get into the supermarkets and if the tea was to go beyond the North East that figure could be...well, we just don't know."

The first box of Northumberland Tea to come off the production line will be presented to Sir Bobby's widow Lady Robson. It will be a poignant moment for Helen whose parents both died of lung cancer in the last three years.

Mother Margaret Pattison passed away at the age of 66 in April 2010, while her father Michael, 70, died last July, having spent much time at the Freeman Hospital and taking part in some Bobby Robson Foundation cancer research trials.

Helen - who looked after her parents throughout their illnesses - says her dad loved tea. "When I was looking after him I must have made him about 40 cups a day. We haven't set up The Northumberland Tea Company because of him, but he would have been so excited and very proud of what we are doing."

Bill - who previously worked for Associated British Foods before launching his own company, the Coffee Beans Café Ltd - has been looking for another business endeavour.

He explains: "We saw a gap in



SOURCE Glentilt Tea Plantation in Sri Lanka, one of places the Northumberland Tea Company gets its tea

the market with tea. While there are lots of local Northumberland food products from chillies to biscuits and cakes there is no 'local' tea.

"There are other counties doing tea and being fiercely proud here in Northumberland we feel there is a market for a Northumberland tea. Yorkshire Tea has turned out to be a national and even an international brand and helped put the county on the map, and we would love to do the same.

"Yes, there are other tea firms up here, but no one is doing a Northumberland tea and marketing it in that way."

Of course, the tea isn't from Northumberland. "You can grow the tea plant *camellia sinensis* in the UK but our weather in the North East is far removed from the perfect growing climate," Helen says with a laugh.

They are fortunate to know James Pogson, a tea importer and blender in Chesterfield, and worked with him to create their blend.

Helen says people "are loving" the chosen formula. "We are extremely proud of it and having tested it extensively we know it's a great blend of tea. Combined in the correct proportions, this blend should manifest a bright, brisk tea of character and strength."

Bill and Helen believe it will be a hit in a region said to drink more tea than the national norm - on average 3.8 cups each per day.

Northumberland Tea is making no claims to be Fairtrade. But the Logans are confident the tea they are using is from plantations where workers are looked after.

If Northumberland Tea is the success they may look at doing their own Earl Grey (the great British reformer's ancestral seat

was at Howick Hall near Alnwick) and perhaps even a special blend coffee.

Would they stick with the light-hearted Jack Charlton World Cup connection? "He is well known, well respected, a good ambassador for Northumberland and very keen to promote the area," Bill says. "And it's a bit of fun".

Certainly Jack's image on the classy black and gold boxes makes the brand stand out.

But even before it's been properly launched, Helen and Bill's cuppa-friendly idea has been creating a stir.

Helen says: "We've been getting calls all the time asking 'when it's going to be ready' and 'where can we buy it.' We've even had a few Chinese restaurants contacting us.

"Who would have thought that one day we might be selling tea to China!"

- The Northumberland Tea Company will be at The Journal Taste of the County event at the Northumberland County Show on May 27 selling and doing tastings.
- For information on where you can buy Northumberland Tea go to www.thenorthumberlandtea.com

THE STORY OF TEA

THE story of tea begins in China.

According to legend, in 2737BC the Chinese Emperor Shen Nung was sitting beneath a tree when some leaves from a *camellia sinensis* tree blew into drinking water being boiled by his servant.

A renowned herbalist, Shen Nung decided to try the accidentally created infusion and the resulting brew was what we now call tea.

Northumberland Tea is a blend of three types - Assam, Kenya and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

Assam: From North India, Assam gives a "real old-school flavour" and is popular in blends and alone. Estate names like Hajua, Behalo, Hunwal and Attareekhat are among the best small leaf teas from this area, and are often used in the Assam blend.

It has been used in Northumberland Tea to add strength, pungency and maltiness.

Kenya: Kenya has only been producing teas since the 1950s, with the best growing



areas in an area called the Rift Valley Province which has everything the tea plant needs to flourish - altitude, lots of sun, a balanced acidic soil pH and plenty of water.

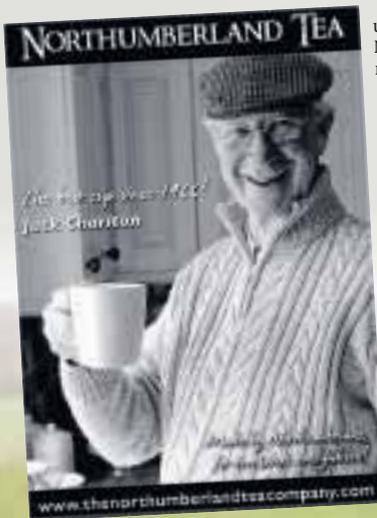
The teas are bright liquoring, brisk in flavour, cleanly made and exceptionally black.

Tea from Kenya makes up a large proportion of that now consumed in the UK.

Sri Lanka (Ceylon): An island about 80 miles off the Ramanathapuram coast in India, Sri Lanka produces some of the world's best teas and Bill and Helen say they add a dimension to Northumberland Tea that many other blends lack.

They are 25% more expensive than Kenyan and Assam teas and Helen says: "I suspect that is why many of today's blends are designed by accountants!"

A true connoisseur's tea, the Ceylon one used in Northumberland Tea is either from an estate called Alton or its sister plantation Stockholm.



NEW VENTURE
Bill and Helen Logan of the Northumberland Tea Company

