



Timelines

Durham Rural Community Council has been promoting voluntary action across rural County Durham since 1935. To mark our 75th anniversary, we delved back through the archives to check out some of the events that have made headlines across County Durham, Britain and the World during almost eight decades. Here is a selection of some of the events that made history.



The 1930's

1935	Community Service Council for Durham County Limited founded (forerunner of DRCC)
1936	Abdication of King Edward VIII
1936	Jarrow Crusade to London to protest against poverty & unemployment
1936	Start of the Spanish Civil War
1937	Hindenburg Disaster
1938	Neville Chamberlain announces 'Peace in Our Time'
1939	King George VI & Queen Elizabeth visit Tow Law
1939	Gone with the Wind wins 10 Oscars and enjoys huge cinema success
1939	Outbreak of World War Two



The 1940's

1940	Battle of Britain
1941	Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour
1942	Murton Colliery Disaster
1944	D-Day landings
1945	End of World War Two
1946	End of bread rationing
1947	Louisa pit disaster, Stanley
1947	Mines nationalized to create the National Coal Board
1947	2 New Towns established in Co. Durham - Newton Aycliffe & Peterlee
1947	Street parties celebrate Princess Elizabeth's marriage to Prince Philip
1948	End of sweets rationing
1948	Israel becomes an independent state
1949	Clothes rationing ends



The 1950's

- 1950 End of points rationing
- 1950 Start of the Korean War
- 1951 Winston Churchill returns as British Prime Minister
- 1951 Easington Colliery Disaster – 83 killed
- 1951 Festival of Britain
- 1951 Oxford boat sinks during the Oxford & Cambridge Boat Race
- 1951 More than Category D villages identified in County Durham
- 1952 Death of King George VI – Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen
- 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth 2
- 1953 Sir Edmund Hillary & Tenzing Norgay conquer Mount Everest
- 1954 Roger Bannister becomes the first person to run a four minute mile
- 1955 Anthony Eden becomes Prime Minister – he is from a well known Durham family with links to Windlestone Hall
- 1956 Hungarian uprising
- 1956 Suez Crisis
- 1958 Lego bricks are sold for the first time
- 1959 Fidel Castro seizes power in Cuba
- 1958 Opening of Britain's first stretch of motorway – the Preston bypass
- 1959 Launch of Tyne Tees Television



The 1960's

- 1960 The Beatles began in Liverpool & went on to enjoy worldwide acclaim
- 1960 Coronation Street launched on ITV
- 1961 Berlin Wall completed
- 1963 Beeching cuts leads to the closure of numerous railway lines
- 1963 Kings College breaks away to become Newcastle University
- 1963 President John F Kennedy assassinated in Dallas, Texas
- 1964 BBC2 launched
- 1965 First section of the A1 Motorway in Co. Durham opened
- 1966 Barclaycard is launched – Britain's first credit card
- 1966 England wins the World Cup
- 1967 Britain's first cash dispenser installed at Barclays in Enfield
- 1967 Colour television launched in Britain on BBC2
- 1967 The Tyne Tunnel was opened by The Queen
- 1967 World's first heart transplant completed by Dr Christian Barnard
- 1968 The Durham Light Infantry was disbanded

1969
1960s

Neil Armstrong becomes the first person to set foot on the Moon
Mine closures across County Durham, including Bowburn, Dean & Chapter (Ferryhill), Tanfield Lea, and Wheatley Hill



The 1970's

1970 Beamish Museum opens
1970 Cow Green reservoir completed in upper Teesdale
1971 Britain changes to decimal currency
1973 Britain joins the European Economic Community (EEC)
1973 Value Added Tax (VAT) introduced at a rate of 10%
1974 Miners Strikes lead to electricity shortages & the 3 day week
1974 Harold Wilson returns as PM – elections held in February & October
1974 Local Government reform reshapes the boundaries of County Durham.
1976 The long hot Summer leads to a severe drought
1977 The Queen's Silver Jubilee
1977 Death of Elvis Presley
1978 Cambridge boat sinks during the Oxford & Cambridge Boat Race
1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes Britain's first female Prime Minister
1970s Mine closures include Fishburn, Langley Park & Thornley



The 1980's

1980 Ronald Regan elected US President
1980 John Lennon assassinated in New York
1980 Killhope Lead Mine opened in upper Weardale
1981 Royal Wedding of Prince Charles & Lady Diana Spencer
1981 IBM launches the first Personal Computer
1982 ET, the Extra Terrestrial was a huge worldwide cinema success
1982 Falklands War between Britain and Argentina
1982 Launch of Channel Four – Countdown was the first programme
1983 100th Durham Miners Gala
1984 Closure of Shildon Wagon Works
1984 Bhopal chemical leak killed thousands in India
1985 Community Service for Durham County changed its name to Durham Rural Community Council
1985 Launch of the County Durham Rural Initiatives Fund by DRCC
1985 First episode of EastEnders was broadcast on BBC1
1986 Nuclear disaster at Chernobyl
1987 Durham Cathedral was recognised as a Unesco World Heritage Site

- 1988 Pan Am flight 103 bombed over Lockerbie
- 1989 Fall of the Berlin Wall
- 1980s Further pit closures including Bearpark, Blackhall, Horden & Seaham



The 1990's

- 1990 Margaret Thatcher steps down as Prime Minister after 11 years
- 1990 Gateshead National Garden Festival
- 1991 Pit closures at Dawdon and Murton
- 1991 Break up of the Soviet Union
- 1991 Outbreak of war in the former Yugoslavia
- 1993 Closure of Easington Colliery and Vane Tempest at Seaham
- 1993 DRCC moves to new offices in Lanchester & Wheatley Hill
- 1994 Opening of the Channel Tunnel
- 1994 Nelson Mandela was elected President of South Africa
- 1995 Durham City celebrated its 1000th Anniversary
- 1995 Launch of DRCC's Hands on Health project which is still running today
- 1997 Tony Blair elected Prime Minister ending 18 years of Conservative rule
- 1997 Princess Diana was killed in a car crash in Paris
- 1998 The film Titanic enjoys huge worldwide success
- 1998 Angel of the North statue completed
- 1999 The Euro currency was launched



The 2000's

- 2000 The world heralded a new millennium & survived the Millennium Bug
- 2001 The Foot & Mouth crisis devastated rural communities across Britain
- 2002 The Queens Golden Jubilee
- 2006 DRCC launched the Rural Social & Community Programme
- 2007 A financial crisis led to the worst recession for 60 years
- 2008 DRCC launched East Durham LEADER
- 2008 Barack Obama was elected the first black president of the USA
- 2009 Durham became a unitary authority; seven District Councils abolished
- 2010 General Election resulted in a Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition
- 2010 Durham Rural Community Council celebrates its 75th anniversary