

NDJ-E01-S2

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## Festival music at Petroc's 'factory'

PETROC is taking part in the North Devon Festival in June with a range of events including live music from internationally-renowned artists.

Live events at Petroc's new performance venue The Factory, at the former Brannam's factory in Roundswell, include music from Canada to Cuba, and the return of reggae legends Toots and the Maytals.

From Monday, June 7 Petroc's final year foundation degree students put on their end of year show.

Actor and explorer Brian Blessed joins the college for an evening on June 5.

And on June 18 Toots and the Maytals will perform.

On June 19 Petroc's first "holistic fair" will give members of the public the chance to sample treatments, art, tai chi and dance.

Visit [www.petroc.ac.uk/festival](http://www.petroc.ac.uk/festival) for more information.

## Council vacancy

THERE is a vacancy on Barnstaple Town Council after Carl Williamson resigned from the central town ward seat. There will be an election to fill the vacancy if ten parish electors formally request one via North Devon Council by May 19. If not the vacancy will be filled by co-option by the town council.

# Took 10 years for diagnosis of Bob's rare heart condition

By JOEL COOPER

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A BARNSTAPLE man wants to raise awareness of an irregular heart condition after his 10 year wait to be correctly diagnosed.

Bob Dove, 65, of Newport, suffers with Atrial Fibrillation (AF), a condition which causes the heart to beat in an uncoordinated and disorganised way, resulting in an irregular heart beat.

AF is the most common heart rhythm disorder and affects one in 25 adults over 60 in the UK.

The condition can lead to serious complications including strokes and the deterioration of heart function. In fact, experts say that one in every six strokes is caused by AF.

Bob's experience with the condition started in 1997 when he woke up in the middle of the night feeling like an elephant was sitting on his chest.

Bob was admitted to the coronary care unit at Broomfield hospital in Essex the following day where he underwent several tests but left undiagnosed.

Bob said: "Since that time I've had several flutters when I could feel my heart beat racing. It can also leave me feeling quite faint.

"I've been prescribed various different drugs, undergone numerous procedures and at one point my GP even thought it might have been the result of eating a big meal.

"However, no one could give me a definite answer as to what exactly was wrong."

Bob moved from Essex to Barnstaple in 2004 and started renovating his bungalow at Venn Road near Newport.

While working on the house Bob experienced several more attacks and decided to see his GP in Barnstaple.

Bob said: "Fortunately, the doctor's mother had suffered with AF for some time so she recognised all the symptoms straight away.

"She referred me to North Devon District Hospital where I underwent the usual stress and blood tests. Two weeks later, when the results came back, I was told I had been suffering with AF for some time.

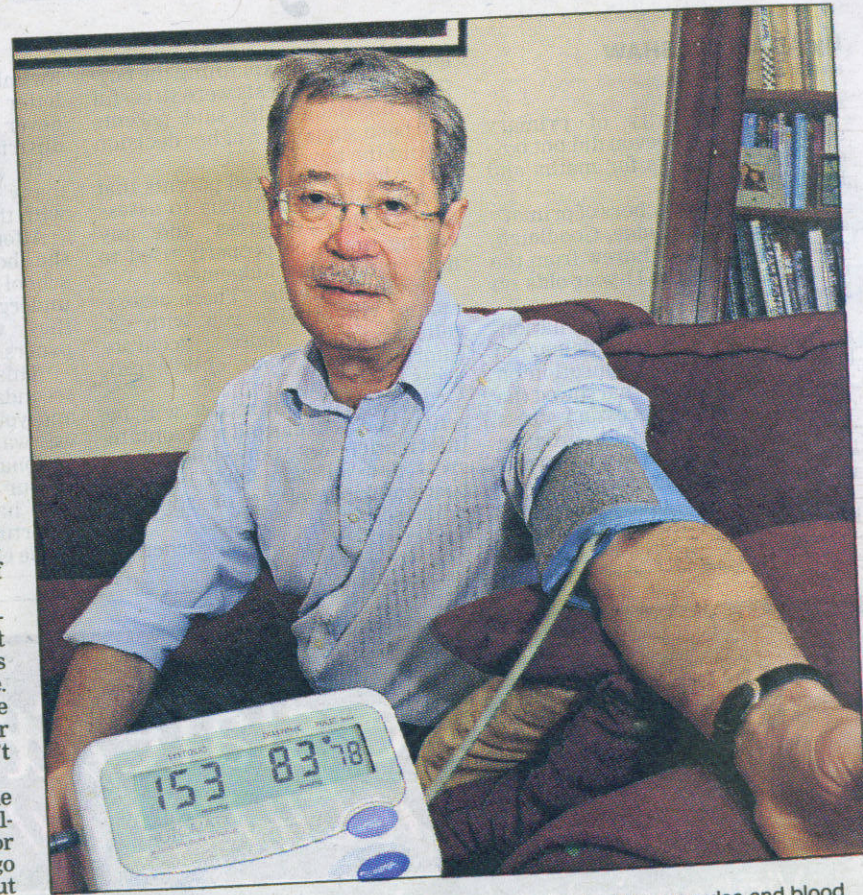
"Had it not been for my GP's personal knowledge of the condition I might never have been diagnosed."

Bob has since been prescribed numerous drugs designed specifically to deal with AF, as well as having an ablation — a surgical procedure to create scar tissue in the heart in the hope of promoting an even beat.

Bob added: "Since my various treatments, my attacks have calmed right down and I would even go as far as saying I don't suffer with AF any more. I really want to make people aware of the condition, just in case someone is ever in the same situation as I was and didn't know what was wrong.

"If you have experienced any of the same symptoms — such as heart palpitations, chest pain, breathlessness or light-headedness — I suggest you go straight to the doctor and enquire about AF."

For more information you can visit: [www.atrialfibrillation.org.uk](http://www.atrialfibrillation.org.uk).



■ MONITORED: Bob Dove, of Barnstaple, who has to take his own pulse and blood pressure at home. Picture: Mike Southon 1005-25\_02

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