

# Lemington-Newburn



## Information Pack

This Information Pack has been produced by Newcastle City Council and funded by Preparing for Change in order to provide visitors and community residents with a taste of the rich heritage in the area between Lemington and Newburn. More information can be found on the web at [www.lemingtoncentre.co.uk](http://www.lemingtoncentre.co.uk)



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# INTRODUCTION

This pack has been produced to raise awareness about the Lemington - Newburn area. It will be of use to teachers who wish to use the area as a teaching aid or project for their pupils. It comprises a brief history of Lemington and Newburn, fact sheets, activity sheets, a Lemington - Newburn trail, photographs and maps. All material can be photocopied.

The pack will also be of use to anyone interested in the history of the area, as well as to those who wish to walk the old railway line, now the Hadrian's Way national trail and cycleway.

Copies of the pack have been distributed to local schools and copies are also held in The Lemington Centre.

Anyone who wishes to add further information to this pack should contact The Lemington Centre who will be able to make the additions and distribute them to the pack holders.

Copies can also be downloaded from [www.lemingtoncentre.co.uk/wb/index.php](http://www.lemingtoncentre.co.uk/wb/index.php)

The pack was compiled by the Education Project Team of the North East Environmental Education Forum (NEEEF) and designed by Steve Pardue of Differentia Ltd.

We hope you enjoy using this pack.



An old glass works schedule of property listed, "Two roomed cottages with piggeries, coal houses etc. attached".

(Pic - BYGONE Bell's Close & Lemington, A.D. Walton)

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF LEMINGTON

**Lemington, Bell's Close and Sugley were adjacent villages which developed in the 19th century around the new industries which took advantage of the coal and clay deposits as well as the nearby water transport.**

They were all part of the parish of Sugley. In the 16th century there was a Laman Mill, Lamedon and Lemanton and in 1638 the staithes at Lemendon are recorded. There was also a brickyard, tile shed, blacking factory and boatyard at Bell's Close at this time.

1787 the Northumberland Glass Company obtained a lease on some land at Lemington from the Duke of Northumberland and set up four glasshouses. Glass manufacture continued on the site until 1882 when it stopped and the land was leased to Spencer's Iron Works. Glass making moved to a different site in Lemington.

In 1797 the Tyne Iron Works was established in Lemington for 'the cast iron extracting by the action of fire in large furnaces from ironstone..... to produce everything from an anchor to a needle' but in 1869 it was taken over by John Spencer & Sons and reopened as the Tyne Haematite Iron Company in 1871 using Spanish ore. The furnaces finally closed in 1886 and in 1903 the Newcastle & District Lighting Company erected a power station on the site.

Lemington Staithes and Lemington Point were the termination of many coal waggonways including the Wylam and Wallbottle waggonways. The coal was delivered to the staithes and then dropped into the many waiting keel boats to take it out to the collier ships anchored in the River Tyne.

In 1876 with the coming of the railways a new Lemington developed up the bank north of the railway line. In the same year the Tyne Commissioners cut a new channel in the river near Blaydon and the entrance to Lemington Loop was cut off and silted up. This area is now called The Gut. Continuous dredging was needed to keep the staithes clear.

By the mid 19th century Lemington Point was the finishing line for skiff races starting at either the Tyne or Scotswood Bridges. The famous local oarsman, Harry Clasper, frequently entered these races.

There was an island at Lemington Point which was locally known as Canary Island during World War I because the cordite turned the skins of the munitions workers yellow. The land was reclaimed after World War Two and in 1958 the Anglo Great Lakes Corporation Ltd. built a plant for the conversion of carbon into graphite for use in the nuclear industry. This was the beginning of the Lemington Industrial Estate.

Holy Saviour Church was originally called Sugley Parish Church when it was built in 1837. It was designed by Benjamin Green and is unusual because it is oriented north-south, rather than east-west, to avoid an unused pit shaft underneath it. The Parish Day School was attached until 1937 when it closed. There were three other churches in the area. In 1838 a Wesleyan Chapel was built by the keelmen who ferried the stone from Heworth in Gateshead, in 1863 the Lemington Primitive Methodist Church was built and in 1868 St. George's Roman Catholic Church was built with an attached school, which is still in use.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries Lemington was a hive of industry which gradually dwindled until, by the late 20th century, there was very little left. However, today there is a general regeneration of the area taking place.



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF NEWBURN

## **Newburn has its origins in Saxon times.**

In 1067 the Earl of Northumberland, Copsi, was burned alive in St Michael and All Angels Church.

The Percy family of Northumberland acquired Newburn in 1367. It comprised a dovecote, two watermills, a brewery, a salmon fishery, a coalmine and a stone quarry for stone slates. By 1613 all the local woods had been used for pit props in the local mines. From the 12th century the Manor of Newburn contained Newburn, Newburn Hall, Throckley, Wallbottle, Butterley and Whorlton. Newburn Haven was still used in the 17th century to send goods by water to Newcastle.

1640 was the date of the famous Battle of Newburn when the Scottish army, under General Leslie, defeated the English army and laid siege to Newcastle which he later occupied for a whole year.

Newburn was always an important crossing point on the River Tyne because its' fords provided river crossings at the tidal limit. There were three fords: Newburn Ford to the west; Kelshaw Ford to the east and the Riding Ford in the middle. Romans, Saxons, Scots and English used these fords.

In 1723 horse racing took place on Newburn Sands for a four guinea Plate.

The 1828 Directory reported that Newburn had many extensive iron works, coal staithes, brick and tile yards, chemical works, a crown glass house, two corn mills, a paper mill and a coalmine.

In 1894 Newburn Urban District Council was formed and the new iron bridge was erected in time for that years Blaydon races. This was a Toll Bridge until 1947.

George Stephenson lived in Newburn and both his marriages are recorded in the Church registers. Newburn was a great mining and railway area with Duke Pit, Blucher Pit, King Pit plus North Wallbottle and Coronation Pits nearby.

The remains of Newburn Hall, a 15th century Pele Tower to which a 16th century dwelling was added, are embedded in what was Spencer's Steel Works immediately north of the railway line.

William Hedley, the inventor of 'Puffing Billy', one of the first locomotives, was born in Newburn in 1779. 'Puffing Billy' was used on the Wylam waggonway, from 1813, to transport coal from the mines to the staithes at Lemington. This waggonway eventually became the Scotswood, Newburn, Wylam railway in 1872 as a branch line for the North East Railway Company. This railway line closed in 1968.



# FURTHER READING

**Bygone Bell's Close & Lemington**, A.D. Walton, Tyne Bridge Publishing, Newcastle City Libraries.

**Bygone Newburn**, A.D. Walton, Tyne Bridge Publishing, Newcastle City Libraries.

**Waters of Tyne**, T.H. Rowland.

**Victoria County Histories**, Newcastle City Library Local Studies Department.

**Newburn in Old Postcards**, N.G.Rippeth.

