

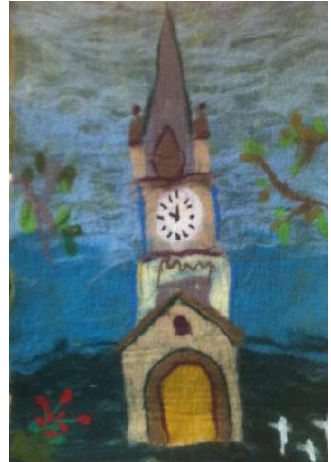
NEWSLETTER

May 2024

SUMMER EVENT

Tuesday 25th June 2.30pm

St James' Church, Benwell



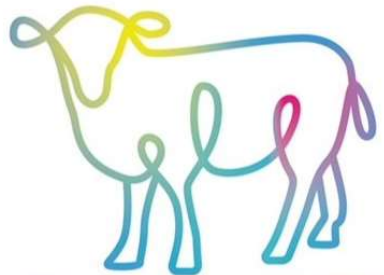
STRAWBERRY CREAM TEA - BOOK LAUNCH - GUIDED TOUR - FILMS

Annual meeting with review of the year

Booking essential

INSIDE

Meet our sheep this summer
Picnic in the Nature Park
Walks and talks
Recent activities - and more



Some of our recent activities



Work has continued on our film about the hidden history of Scotswood. Here we are filming one of the stone supports of the old Chain Bridge which is hidden in woodland.

This group in Denton Burn Library is searching old photographs and sharing memories of Scotswood.



St James' Graveyard looks beautiful in the autumn when the trees are full of golden leaves, but it makes a lot of work for the volunteers. We are very grateful to the visitors who helped us clear the leaves.



We ran several guided tours of St John's cemetery and Westgate Hill cemetery in partnership with the Stories in Stone project which aims to improve these sites.

Left: Did you know that the man who invented kippers is buried in St John's cemetery in Elswick?

Right: Westgate Hill is one of the oldest private cemeteries in England. It is quite dilapidated and badly in need of restoration.



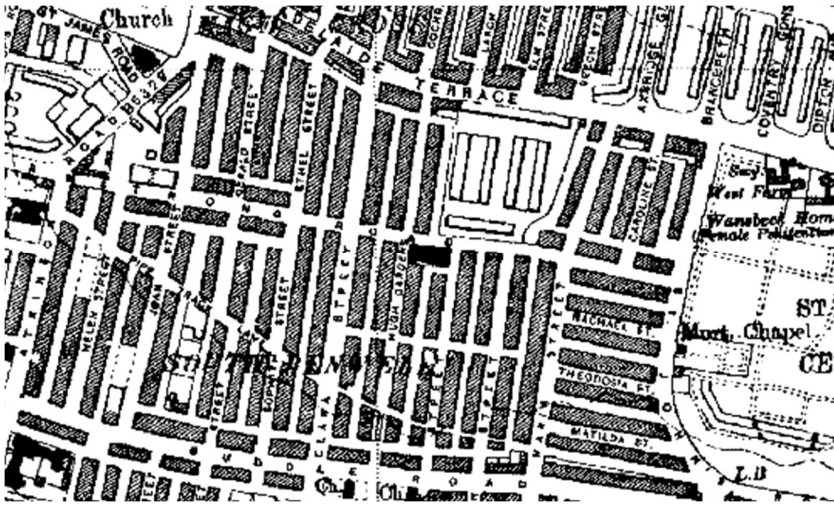
Last year's Winter Event was attended by almost 60 people. Activities included wreathmaking, cardmaking, an illustrated local history talk and quizzes.

The event ended with a spooky performance by storyteller Pascale.



Picnic in nature and history

Did you or your family live in the terraces below Armstrong Road in Benwell?



This map shows the old streets, with Pipetrack Lane running diagonally across.

When these homes were demolished in the 1970s, new houses were built on part of the site and a Nature Park was created at the western end. This picture shows the pond being constructed in the 1980s. It was one of the country's first urban nature parks and was a well-used facility for schools and the local community. Later this became the site for a new school – West Newcastle Academy – who now manage the Nature Park.



You are invited to join us for a picnic in the nature park, hosted by the school. Explore the park, enjoy an afternoon tea, and share memories with other former residents and with pupils.

Picnic in the Nature Park - Tuesday 9th July 1.30pm

Numbers limited - Booking essential

To book email stjamesbenwell@gmail.com or tel 0191 2528675

Local History Mondays

TALKS AT THE WEST END LIBRARY, CONDERCUM ROAD

Monday 3rd June at 1pm

The Pope who came to Newcastle

John Griffiths will tell the story of the career and undercover visit to Newcastle of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini - scholar, poet and secret agent.

Monday 1st July at 1pm

Out and Proud

Join Richard Bliss for a talk about LGBTQ history on Tyneside.

Monday 2nd September at 1pm

Summerhill Revealed

Illustrated talk by Olive Taylor about the historic suburb of Summerhill in West Newcastle.

Monday 7th October at 1pm

Exploring the Streets of Pendower: What's in a Name?

Join Richard Bliss to hear about the stories and characters behind the street names on Pendower Estate.

Monday 4th November at 1pm

From Ireland to Newcastle

Illustrated talk by Rosie Serdiville about the history of Irish Centres in the west end and wider Tyneside.

Booking essential – email stjamesbenwell@gmail.com or leave a message on 0191 2528675

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

Our programme of activities this year is supported by grants received from the National Lottery Community Fund and the Benwell and Scotswood Ward Committee.



Summer Walks and Tours

Friday 14th June at 10.30am

Up the Hill from Paradise

Guided walk up the hill from Paradise on the banks of the River Tyne, passing important historical site, and ending at the West End Library, where we will listen to a talk by local author Michael Chaplin over scones and coffee.

Starts at the junction of Scotswood Road and Atkinson Road

Friday 21st June at 10.30am

The Theatre Royal

On this guided tour, you will visit parts of the this iconic theatre that you have never seen before. Note that the full tour will involve climbing stairs.

Starts at the entrance to the Theatre Royal

Friday 5th July at 11am

Fenham Features

Guided tour exploring the social history of Fenham. Find out about a mining magnate, a talented heiress, a Hollywood star in a convent and a link to a beloved poet.

Starts at the entrance to St James' and St Basil's Church, Fenham Hall Drive

Thursday 9th July at 1.30pm

Picnic in the Nature Park

Join us for a picnic in Benwell Nature Park as guests of West End Academy, the school which manages the site now. We particularly welcome people who used to live in the streets where the Park stands or had family living there.

Enter the Nature Park from Pipetrack Lane.

Booking essential for all these events as numbers are limited – email stjamesbenwell@gmail.com or leave a message on 0191 2528675

**More walks and tours are planned for the summer and autumn.
Find out about these by joining our emailing contact list**

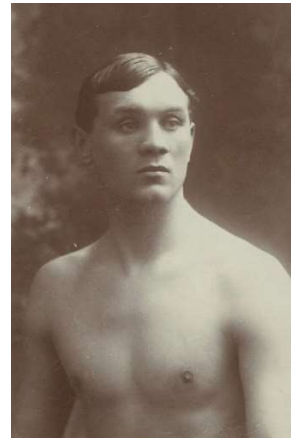
Guided Tours of St James' Graveyard

Why not join us for a guided tour of the historic parish graveyard this summer?

This area used to be home to some of the wealthiest and most powerful families on Tyneside, and several famous people are buried here as well as thousands of other local residents such as pitmen, farmers, shopkeepers and engineers. There are also many war graves scattered around the graveyard.



Left: Richard Grainger, famous for transforming the centre of Newcastle into one of the finest city centres in Europe, buried at St James' in a recently restored grave. The Grainger family lived in Elswick Hall.



Right: Jack Palmer, a former miner from Benwell, who became a world class boxer.

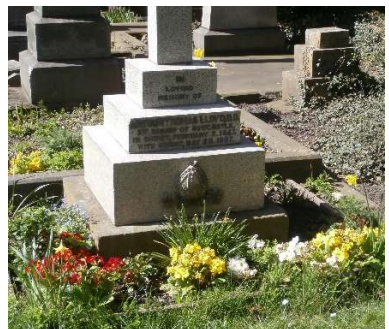


The graveyard is full of colour, with each season bringing displays of different flowers. Features such as this butterfly garden have helped to make it a haven for wildlife.

Graveyard Tour Dates

Friday 5th July at 2pm

Friday 19th July at 1pm



New Publication about Lemington Gut

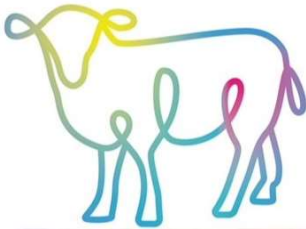
The area known as Lemington Gut has a rich heritage associated with the major industries of iron and steel, glass manufacture and coal mining.

Although this industrial heritage is now largely forgotten, visible evidence does remain. Our new booklet describes these important heritage remains, and the current threats to their survival. The booklet will be launched at the Summer Event, and copies can be obtained from us. This image depicts the great Tyne Ironworks in 1835.



We are joining a flock

St James' Heritage & Environment Group has decided to adopt a sheep! This is part of a large project to place fifty big plastic sheep with organisations along the route of Hadrian's Wall. During September our sheep will be named and decorated by a local primary school, and will then go on outings across Denton Burn and Benwell. We will keep you updated on our sheep's progress.



Family History

Almost 13,000 people had been buried in St James' Graveyard by the time it closed in the 1960s. Do you think you might have relatives buried at St James? We have databases of the marked graves and burials at St James' and can help identify the exact location of a grave. We also offer information about local history. Contact us for help and advice.

CONTACT US

Write: c/o 12/14 Sunnybank Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6SD

Email: stjamesbenwell@gmail.com **Website:** <https://stjamesheritage.com>

Visit St James' Graveyard: Wednesdays from 10am-1pm, or by arrangement.