

# St James' Heritage & Environment Group

## NEWSLETTER

### May 2026



## SUMMER EVENT

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2.30pm**  
**St James' Church, Benwell**

AGM and review of the year followed by

**STRAWBERRY CREAM TEA**

Art exhibition - Local history picture show - Graveyard tour  
Dead-hedging demonstration - Bookstall

### Summer History Tours

**St James' Graveyard**  
**Secrets of Benwell Lane**  
**Quayside to Paradise**  
**St James' Graveyard**  
**Scotswood: Gone but not forgotten**  
**Newcastle's Outer West**

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July  
Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August  
Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August

*Detailed information will be available by email or leaflets*

### CONTACT US

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**Email:** stjamesbenwell@gmail.com **Tel:** 0191 2528675 answerphone only

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

## Some of our recent activities

More than 70 members attended the Winter Event held in December at St James' Church. This year the event had a Roman theme to celebrate our project *The Romans Were Here*. As well as displays and information about the project, there were craft activities including making mosaics and wreaths, a pictorial local history talk and a film about Hadrian's Wall.

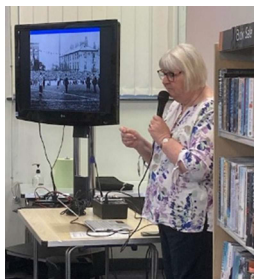


The event culminated with mince pies and mulled wine and a performance by local storyteller Pascale with tales of Roman Gods.

Since the start of 2026 we have run a number of local history talks on subjects ranging from Scotswood's old Chain Bridge to the industrial heritage of Lemington.

Pictured here is the final talk in the West End Library in 2025 on the subject of the architect Robert Burns Dick who features in our new book to be launched in June about Pendower Estate and the architects who designed it.





This year's "Big Local History Event" was held in May to celebrate Local History Month. The theme of entertainment in Newcastle covered topics such as cinemas, theatres, parks, music halls and football. The day ended with everyone singing a number of well-known Geordie songs, ending, of course, with *Blaydon Races*.

On display was a selection of the *Flying Along the Wall* pictures specially created for us by artist Ashley Bayston which will be officially launched at the Summer Event.



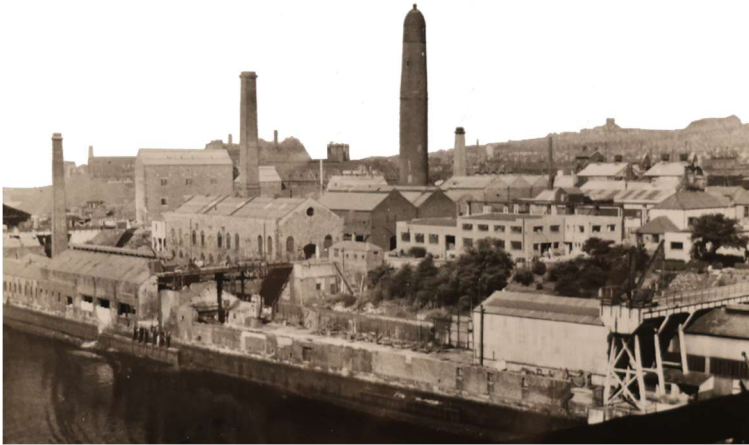
April saw us taking a group to Housesteads Roman Fort, courtesy of Historic England who are carrying out a consultation to find out what improvements visitors would like to see.



Our work of maintaining St James' Graveyard continues throughout the year, whatever the weather. Every season brings new colours – and new tasks. One of the improvements carried out recently has been creating fences using a process which involves weaving branches. Neil, seen here at work, will give a demonstration of 'dead hedging' at the Summer Event.



# Lead on the Tyne



## Exhibition Preview and Booklet Launch

**Saturday 13th June, 2-4pm**  
at

**Newcastle Arts Centre**

67 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SG

Everyone welcome - No booking required.

Join us for the launch of a new booklet in our local history series.

*Lead on the Tyne: The past, present and future of the Elswick Lead Works site* is the result of research by Julia Heslop who gave a talk about the history of Elswick Leadworks recently in our Local History Monday series.

This event will also launch an associated exhibition *Galena* - an exhibition of new work by artists Julia Heslop, Taryn Edmonds and Martin Heslop. Through sound, film, painting and print they explore the site of the Elswick Lead Works where a new housing development is planned. They examine the unique histories and cultures of the area, considering the origins of the galena (lead ore) from the mines of the North Pennines to the processing and production plants on the banks of the Tyne.