

9. Ryton Island

Turn east along the Waggonway for Newburn. You join the road near Blayney Row. This was built for the employees of Heddon brickworks by Bates of Heddon Hall in 1889. The road to the right leads to Moore Court and the River Tyne at Ryton Island where there used to be a ferry. Three people from the village were drowned in a ferry accident in March 1877 while crossing to catch a morning train from Ryton Station. The ferryman was called Archie Scott. His house was originally on the north side of the river but was washed away in a severe flood. A new ferry-house was built on the south side and ran until 1950. Ryton Railway Station was closed in 1954 although the main line remains open.

10. Throckley Colliery

Throckley 'Isabella' Colliery, north of Blayney Row, operated between 1869 and 1954. Remains of the coke works can be seen in the wood north-east of Blayney Row but much has now been landscaped.

11. Newburn Water Works

Newburn Water Pumping Station was built in 1854 near to the site of the Battle of Newburn. The stone buildings housed a Hawthorn-built beam engine used to extract water from the River Tyne through a gravel-filled channel. The water was used for drinking, brewing and general use in Newcastle. The supply was not very clean, often salty from the tides, and frequently silted up. The Pumping Station was soon abandoned and the engines moved to Wylam, where the pump house still stands. The Keelman Brewery and pub opened here in 1996. From Newburn, return to Heddon by the same route or by footpaths back to Station Road.

Introduction

The walk to Wylam descends steeply from the village of Heddon on the Wall via Station Road to the site of the former Railway Station now on the Wylam Waggonway footpath and cycle way. If transport from Wylam is available, the steep climb back to Heddon can be avoided. The walk to Newburn of 2.5 miles follows the same route to Heddon Station then east along the Wylam Waggonway.

Wylam Waggonway

It was built c.1748 to a gauge of five foot. It was used to transport coal from Wylam to staiths at Lemington where the River Tyne was deep enough for keel boats. Horses originally pulled wagons on wooden rails. These were replaced with stronger iron rails in 1808. During the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815), when demand for coal was high, Christopher Blackett, the owner of Wylam Colliery, wanted to improve the transport of coal. In 1812 he asked his Colliery Manager, William Hedley, to build a locomotive. 'Puffing Billy' went into operation in 1813. Together with a second engine, they pulled up to 10 loaded wagons at 5mph until the 1860s. Passenger transport started on the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway on the south side of the river in 1835. Wylam Colliery closed in 1868 and part of the waggonway was incorporated into North Eastern Railways' Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam branch line in 1876, connected to the main line at Scotswood, and Hagg Bank. This loop was closed in 1966, the tracks removed in 1972, and part of the route turned into a public bridleway.

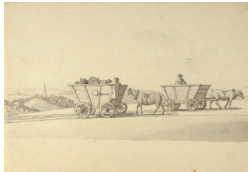
For further information on Heddon on the Wall Local History website:

www.heddonhistory.weebly.com

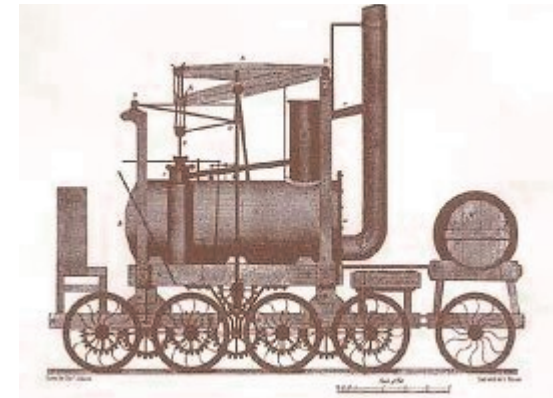
Information on Heddon Railway Station taken from www.disused-stations.org.uk

Photographs are from a variety of sources.

Support for this walk is acknowledged from the Hadrian's Wall Country Walking Festival 2013, Heddon on the Wall Parish Council, The Friends of Puffing Billy and Beamish Museum.



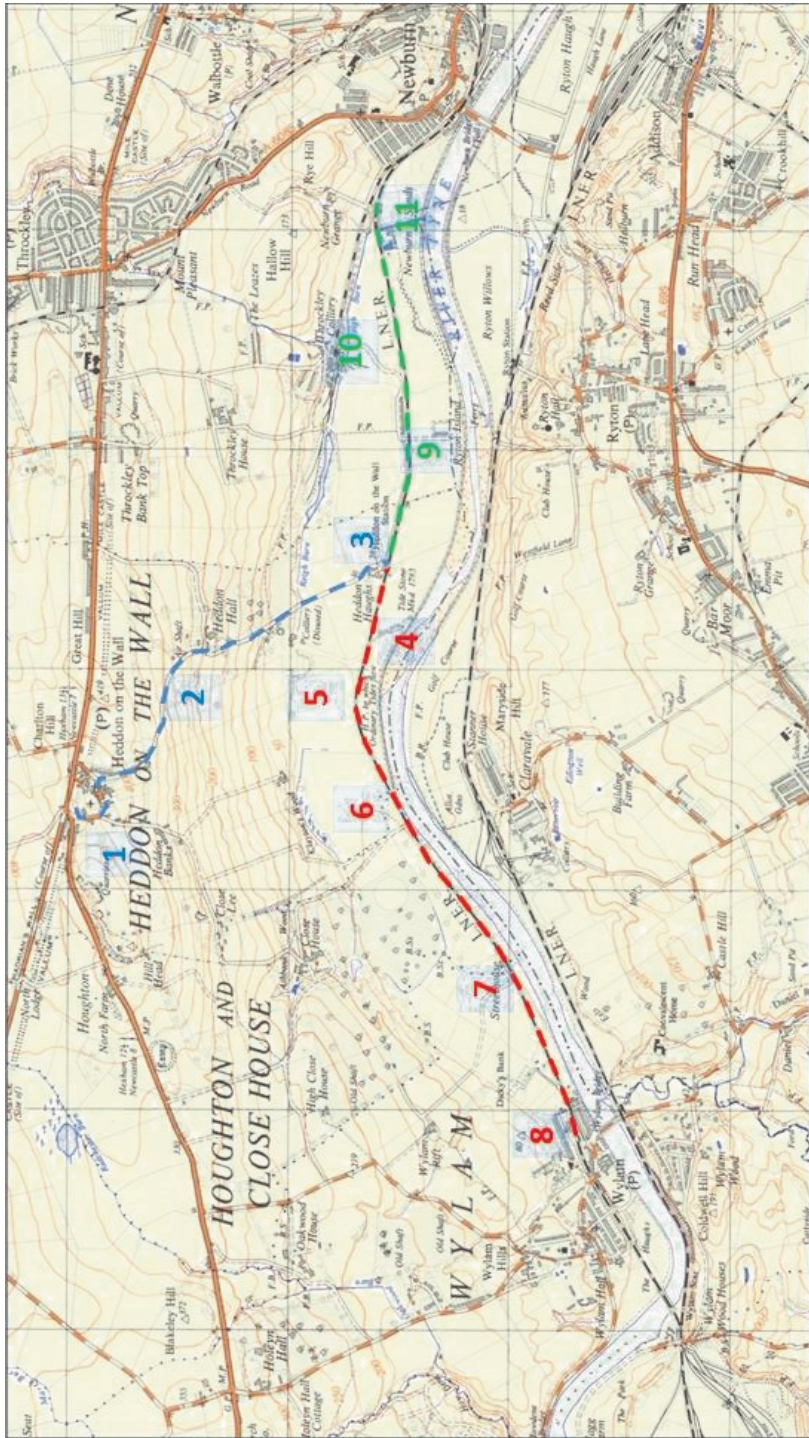
Puffing Billy Festival



The summer of 2013 marks the 200th anniversary of the use of the first commercial adhesion steam engine 'Puffing Billy', employed to haul chaldron wagons of coal on metal rails from the mine at Wylam to Lemington staiths on the River Tyne where the coal could be loaded onto shallow-bottomed keel boats. 'Puffing Billy' was built by local men: engineer William Hedley, engine-wright Jonathon Forster, and blacksmith Timothy Hackworth; for Christopher Blackett, the owner of Wylam Colliery.

**Two walks from Heddon on the Wall
in the company of Heddon on the Wall Local History Society
to explore some of our shared railway heritage**
Saturday 21st September 2013 to Wylam (3.0 miles)
Sunday 22nd September 2013 to Newburn (2.5 miles)
Start in Heddon Memorial Park (opposite The Three Tuns) at 9am





Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 First Edition map. The First Series was called "Provisional" because it was based on the 6" sheets of the late 19th century. As a result, other than significant highway additions, these maps have the version of our landscape that existed 100+ years ago. The sheets are now out of copyright and have been made available by www.openstreetmap.org

1. Heddon on the Wall village

Start in the Memorial Park opposite the Three Tuns. This was once the site of the village pond. Take the road (Towne Gate) into the village and turn first left to pass The Swan Inn. Terraced houses in the village were mainly occupied by Coal Miners and Quarrymen. Turn right onto Station Road and follow the road steeply downhill.

2. Station Road

Copses of trees in the fields hide former mine shafts. There has been coal mining around Heddon for at least 400 years. Coal from Heddon Colliery was winched up to depots on the roadside for local sale. Heddon Hall is behind the trees on the left before a prominent bend. It was owned by the Bates family and dates from the early 1700s. Below on the right are houses built for Heddon Colliery & Brick Works.

3. Heddon Station

Heddon on the Wall Railway Station opened in 1881. The 'up' platform (to Newcastle) was east of the road crossing; the 'down' platform (to North Wylam) west of the crossing, near the old Station Master's House. The station buildings were just wooden huts. The Station Master between 1898 and 1906 was William Harle. He is said to have planted a tree for each of his 13 children. For Wylam turn right along the waggonway; for Newburn turn left.

4. Tide Stone & Hedwin Streams Railway

The Tide Stone on the river bank nearby is dated 1783 and carved with the arms of the Corporation of Newcastle. It marked the former tidal limit of the River Tyne. The Corporation of Newcastle used to survey the bounds from Tynemouth to Hedwin Streams in their barge once a year. The short railway line passing through Cathouse Plantation to end at the river bank was used by the Tyne Improvement Commission between 1898 - 1912.

5. Margaret Pit of the former Heddon Colliery is just north of the waggonway. Originally owned by the Bates family, it was sold to Throckley Coal company in 1902 and worked until the early 1930s and then from the Throckley Isabella pit. The thin wood on the north side of the waggonway marks the railway line that ran from the colliery. It joined a mineral line adjacent to the railway at a triangular junction, although only the east side can still be seen. The single track line passed north of both Heddon and Newburn Stations and ran to Lemington staiths.

6. Close House

Just before the mansion comes into view there used to stand two prehistoric standing stones. A crossing point of the river nearby was known as Stanner Ford. Close House has been occupied since the C13th but the present house dates from 1779 built by Robert Bewicke whose family lived there for the next 333 years. Calverley and Mary Bewicke built the first school in Heddon parish, at Houghton in 1823. Killiebrigs Quarry, among the trees of Heddon Common, was worked from 1878. Stone was used for the Theatre Royal, St Nicholas Cathedral and Grey's Monument. It was brought down by a tramway (disused by 1897), which curved to the east to join the Heddon Colliery railway west of the triangular junction.

7. George Stephenson's Cottage

Continue along the Waggonway to George Stephenson's Cottage. The 'Father of the Railways' was born here in 1781. He would have seen the wooden horse-drawn waggonway outside and would later return to observe the pioneering work of the Wylam locomotive builders. At 'Street House', the waggonway crossed the old Newcastle to Hexham road and wagons were counted here to assess 'wayleave'.

8. Wylam

Continue along the Waggonway to Wylam. You arrive in the village on the former site of North Wylam Station, closed to passengers in 1968. Passenger trains running west usually terminated here, requiring those travelling further to cross the bridge to Wylam Station. To return to Heddon reverse the outward route or use paths from Wylam, via The Rift, Close House, Close Lea and Heddon Banks Farm, entering the village by the road of the same name.

