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Newsletter edited by Lesley Turner, designed by Northern Design & arranged by Toby Lloyd. Many thanks to all contributors. If you would like to include an item in our next newsletter, please email: lesley.turner@ouseburntrust.org.uk by 20th January 2020.

Winter Walks in Ouseburn

This year we are pleased to revive the popular tradition of an Ouseburn Boxing Day Walk. Two of our 'Back to the Future' walking guides, John and David, will be stretching their legs on Thursday 26th December at 11am and invite you to join them for fresh air and a short walk.

The walk will follow the Waymarkers art installations, including the green bottles made of steel you may have spotted around the valley, and there is a strong likelihood of ending at an Ouseburn hostelry after 90 minutes.

Places are free, although donations are always welcome, but please do book a place on our website: www.ouseburntrust.org.uk/boxing-day-walk

Meanwhile our regular Back to the Future walks will continue every Saturday morning at 10.30am. They are an excellent introduction to the history, regeneration and future of Ouseburn Valley. Tickets are £5 and can be booked at www.ouseburntrust.org.uk/back-to-the-future



Edinburgh University Creative Design students came well wrapped up to explore Ouseburn
(Photo by John Hipkin)

Consultation on Ouseburn 2020-30

In September and October we were out and about running consultation events asking people about the next ten year strategy for Ouseburn. We had great conversations with a wide range of businesses, residents and visitors in all sorts of places from a climbing wall, a pub and a yurt to the eco fair at Ouseburn Farm.

What we heard loud and clear was how much everyone loves and treasures Ouseburn as a special place.

- The mixed use urban village where people can live, work and play
- The re-use of old buildings and the history all around us
- The green environment, the woodland and wild corners and the tidal river with its wildlife
- The creative, quirky vibe
- The non-corporate, independent and local businesses
- The friendly, welcoming, relaxed atmosphere



The next step will be to write up a draft strategy ready for a final consultation early in the new year.

You can follow the development of the strategy at www.ouseburntrust.org.uk/2020-30



All photos: John Hipkin

Ouseburn Memories

Anne Baxter recently shared with the Trust some memories and photos of her early life in the Ouseburn in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

"It's a Shallot!" ... is how the midwife announced my birth, a shallot being a small onion and my parents being called (wait for it) Isaac and Isabella Onions!

I was born at Garth Heads, Newcastle, but my earliest memories are of life at 21 Stepney Road where my parents were (unbelievably) caretakers of a pickle factory, above whose premises we lived.

Our front door was directly opposite "The Tip" [now the City Stadium]. I didn't realise at the time, but this was the local council rubbish tip and comprised piles and piles of rubbish. However, to us, it was an endless source of "treasure" to play with. 'The Tip' was our playground and our means of getting across to Shields Road for shopping.

One incident of my time at Stepney Road is "The Great Elephant Escape". A few yards from our home, under one of the railway arches, animals (usually horses) performing at The Grand across 'The Tip' in Byker were often housed in a make-shift stable. Apparently on one occasion an elephant was kept there between performances. The elephant, not surprisingly, was able to break out, made its way up the street and trumpeted loudly through our front door, which was always left open, and then bellowed up the stairs, where my pregnant Mam got the fright of her life. In terror, she shouted out of the window to the 3 brothers who lived next door, but upon seeing the elephant they promptly ran inside, slamming their door shut! This must've occurred in 1949 as my younger sister was born in January 1950. An Old Wife's Tale in those days believed that being scared during pregnancy by an animal (probably a cat, dog, or vermin), the baby would be born bearing its mark. Thus, my sister's birth was awaited with great trepidation, fearing that she would bear the mark of an elephant! If she did, we never found it. My sister and I were told this tale by my Mam and Gran as genuine fact, but I've never come across anyone who could corroborate or otherwise.

I remember that when the doctor came to deliver my sister, my dad put his jacket around my shoulders (it was bitterly cold), telling me that he was going on 'The Tip' to get a couple of bricks. Well, for years I wondered why my dad had to give or pay the doctor 2

bricks to get my baby sister! They had been needed to raise the end of my Mam's bed!

I have several photos taken on The Tip and what ragamuffins my sister and I were. The photo below shows a sink/water trough where we used to play and I remember that when the council came to remove it Margaret, my younger sister, had hysterics and couldn't be consoled on its loss.

Can you corroborate Anne's *mam's* elephant story, or do you have stories and photos of your own? The Trust would love to hear from you.



Anne Onions (left) and her younger sister Margaret posing with a dog by water trough on 'the tip'.

Tuesday Talks 2020

Following the success of our Tuesday Talks at Ernest café bar in early 2019 we have a new programme from January 2020.

Manors to Quayside branch line

5.30pm Tuesday 21 January

Kicking off the new season Victoria Tunnel volunteer Jeff Taylor will be presenting **“Manors to Quayside branch line”**. From 1870 to 1969 an amazing railway carried goods on the steep incline between the Manors Goods Yard and the Quayside. Jeff’s illustrated talk will step through the route, examine the engineering solutions involved, the rolling stock used, and show what remains can still be seen today.

Geordie Shores

5.30pm Tuesday 18 February

Heritage research volunteer Alistair Collin presents the gloriously titled **“Geordie Shores: Wherries and Lightermen on the River Tyne”**. Both Wherries and Lightermen have been key components in the transportation of goods and materials on the UK’s major rivers for hundreds of years. Alistair examines the importance of wherries in maintaining trade along both the Tyne and Ouseburn rivers and the challenges they faced. It also focusses on the Newcastle Wherry Company, which was one of the principal companies, from its formation in 1874 to its’ closure one hundred years later.

Hope and Opportunity

5.30pm Tuesday 17 March

The Trust are delighted to welcome back to the fold Bob Langley, one of the pioneers in the regeneration of the Ouseburn, who will present **“Hope and Opportunity amidst the decay of a neglected Valley”**. The talk will cover the very beginnings of the interest in the regeneration of the Ouseburn by some of those who went on to form the Ouseburn Trust – the commitment to try to ensure that the values driving its development should take people and community seriously, in contrast to the commercial property-led development on the Quayside. Bob will chart some of challenges and pressures, some of the false starts, some of the successes and failures, some of the conflicts of ideas, personality, and of interests which arose in those early days of the 1990’s when the vision was still being formed.



Pauline Moriarty presenting work of Davey Pearson Local Photographer

Talks are held in the back room at Ernest on the corner of Boyd Street and Stepney Road and are free, although donations to support Trust heritage projects are always welcome. They start at 5.30pm, last around an hour, including time for informal discussion and are the perfect excuse for a drink after work with added learning opportunities!

Gift Vouchers

Our gift vouchers are valid for a year and can be bought at 2019 prices until 31 December. These are our most popular but we can do variations to suit:

Victoria Tunnel Tours (2 people + guidebook for £19, 2 adults with up to 3 children + guidebook £25)

Back to the Future Guided Walk (£5 per person)

Back to the Future Guided Walk + Victoria Tunnel Tour (£13 per person)

Tipple in the Tunnel wine tasting + tunnel tour (2 people + Guidebook for £50)

Call in at the office at 53 Lime Street or buy online at www.ouseburntrust.org.uk/gv

The Best Bit about being a Victoria Tunnel Tour Guide

Clive Goodwin asked the volunteers for their thoughts on what they find the most satisfying about being a Victoria Tunnel Guide. Here are some of their responses:

“The best features of being a guide are the people you work with and the people you meet. The staff of the Ouseburn Trust are all easy to work with and extremely helpful. However, it is fellow guides who make it such a positive experience. The feeling of being part of a team is enormous.”

“Because we are all passionate about what we do and being volunteers we all enjoy doing it. People are supportive and encouraging. Everything is done with a sense of camaraderie that is sustained by a healthy sense of humour.”

“Meeting the public is brilliant. Encountering people from all over the world has been both fascinating and a revelation. I had not appreciated how many people visit our city.”

“It’s a great way to escape the daily grind and rat race to just spend time without the 21st century mod-cons like phones and traffic.”

Another common response was how much the guides respect our oldest volunteer, Basil McLeod, who at ninety years young is a legend of our Heritage Education Team, that in the last twelve months have welcomed seventy schools to our World War Two and Victorian half-day workshops.

“Working with children in the classroom alongside Basil is a real privilege. As I show the children a replica of a wartime identity card, Basil will produce the actual card he carried with him during the war. On one occasion a boy turned to me and said, “Hey, Mister, we don’t want to see yours anymore.” How true! Regularly the children will look at Basil as he tells them about his experiences and say “Wow!” Wow indeed! It is awesome to work with Basil but is also awesome to take visitors into the tunnel to experience the same wow-factor.”

For more information about becoming a Tunnel Guide contact clive.goodwin@ouseburntrust.org.uk

Special Events in the Victoria Tunnel

Our fantastic team of guides are once again planning for Santa’s annual visit. Tickets for **Christmas in the Victoria Tunnel** on Sundays in December are selling out fast.

Tipples in the Tunnel combine wine tasting by Hotel du Vin with a short Tunnel tour. These have become very popular events held on the last Friday of every month from January to November.

Sounds of the Underground,

Saturday 16th November with the local band **Sauvage** and guest artist **Late Girl**. Drawing influences from jazz, indie and psychedelia - Sauvage are an art rock collective with a passion for making danceable grooves. Named after the French for “Wild”, their sound is a driving rhythm section, soaked in vocal harmonies, with lush soundscapes and dynamic arrangements. Late Girl: Submerging oral history archives or sung stories, Late Girl externalises the overload of information and cultural assumptions with an irreverent approach, to bring a mesmeric sonic soundscape to the listener.

Saturday 21st December our very own Ouseburn Valley pianist and composer **Steve Luck** will perform his specially composed music to celebrate the Solstice season.

More information and tickets for all events are available at www.ouseburntrust.org.uk/vt-tour



What's on in Ouseburn



Ouseburn Open Studios 10am - 5pm Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 November

The wonderful Ouseburn Open Studios is back! Visit artists, designers & makers in their studios all across Ouseburn Valley. Buy direct, meet the makers, commission items, take part in workshops, watch demos and more!

From Mushroom Works to Biscuit Tin Studios, via Kiln, 36 Lime Street, Jim Edwards Gallery, Northern Print, The Biscuit Factory and new venue Biscuit Box Studios on Stoddart St. Do you like to try to get to all of them or pick one and explore it thoroughly?

Call in and see us on your way – the Ouseburn Trust will be on floor 3 at 36 Lime Street.

Winter at The Biscuit Factory

The Biscuit Factory offers plenty of inspiring gift ideas and ways to shop local and buy handmade this Christmas.

- During Ouseburn Open Studios weekend the gallery will bring festive flair and seasonal sparkle with its programme of creative workshops and pop ups.
- Then on 15 November, the gallery will unveil its new winter exhibition headlined by landscape artist Rob Van Hoek, with an evening of live music, hearty food and complimentary fizz.
- In December in style, there will be late night shopping events on Wednesdays 4, 11 and 18 December - each with a different vibe, street food and music, or alternatively, indulge in festive afternoon tea on selected Sundays.

For more details on the gallery's winter programme, visit www.thebiscuitfactory.com

Creative Age at Northern Print 10am - 12 noon Tuesdays until 17 December

Northern Print are offering artist-led printmaking sessions for people with memory issues, dementia, and long-term conditions, their families and carers. Every Tuesday morning until 17 December there will be tactile and relaxing printmaking activities. No experience is necessary. £3 per person. Booking essential - please contact the team at Northern Print.

0191 2617000
enquiry@nothernprint.org.uk

Ouseburn Farm Christmas Fair 10.30-3pm Saturday 30 November

Call in for Christmas crafts, art, street food, performances, music and much more!

Tyne Bar Xmas Fair 12 noon onwards 23 November



Ouseburn Trust Photographic Archive

by Allen Mulliss, Photo Archive Volunteer

The Ouseburn Trust has a growing collection of photographs in its archive including the work of Davey Pearson. The collection was gifted to the Trust by Charlie and June Allen following Davey's death in 2003 and is being digitised.

Pauline Moriarty, a friend of Davey's and volunteer cataloguer of the collection, recently joined June and Charlie to provide a personal glimpse into the diversity of the photographs and the stories that accompany them. These, amongst many others, are some of those that were selected from the Davey Pearson Collection.

Pauline gave the first of this season of Ouseburn Trust's Tuesday Talks, held monthly at Ernest café bar on the corner of Boyd Street and Stepney Road. Look out for the full programme of Tuesday Talks on page 4.

Quayside



Sky at dusk above Dredger/Sand Carrier 'Sand Kite' moored at Spillers Quay, Quayside. There are footprints in snow on the ground and in the background is Spillers Flour Mill. The vessel made the news in 1997 when a captain's errors caused it to crash into a concrete pier at the Thames Flood Barrier in thick fog at Woolwich, London. The vessel was re-floated five days after the accident and, after repairs, went back into service in 1998 (until scrapped in 2007).

Lime Street



Base of chimney outside (right) 36 Lime Street, Ouseburn. The chimney was built in the late 1840s originally as part of the original steam operated flax mill designed by John Dobson. The top was removed prior to World War II and the chimney void filled in. In the background Byker Bridge is clad in scaffolding.

Shields Road



Elongated shadow of a man walking up Shields Road from the end of (blocked up) Addison Road, Byker. In the background (left) is the Raby pub at the end of Raby Street.

Ouseburn river



Boys standing by the side of rubbish including wheel in the Ouseburn under Crawford's Bridge, Ouseburn Valley.

Clean Green Ouseburn

Our environmental volunteers are out and about every Saturday undertaking all manner of tasks and projects in the green spaces in the valley. Additionally we have an array of corporate volunteers during the week, ably overseen by our Volunteer Supervisors.

So far this year we have worked with over 200 volunteers. We would like to increase this number to enable more projects to improve our green spaces in the Valley.

All sessions are fun and informal while focussed on achieving essential maintenance and improvement.

We welcome families too and love to see younger members of the community taking interest and pride in their natural heritage.

There are three ways in which you can get involved

- Enrol a group from your workplace to volunteer with us
- Join our weekly Saturday morning 'Clean Green Team'
- Become a Volunteer Supervisor by training to lead groups

Please contact our Environment Officer for further information:
phil.ogg@ouseburntrust.org.uk



Father and son volunteers planting donated trees one October morning (Photo Dave Cross)



53-55 Lime Street
Ouseburn Valley
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 2PQ

0191 261 6596
admin@ouseburntrust.org.uk

Who are the Trust?

Staff Team

Chris Barnard
Julie Carr
Clive Goodwin
Diane Humberstone
Phil Ogg
Heather Richardson
Lesley Turner

Board of Trustees

Andrew Buckley (Chair)
Sue Bright (Vice Chair)
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