

Northumberland's
Seaside Port

LIMITED
EDITION

Love Blyth™

Commemorating 2016

North Sea Tall Ships Regatta

Past Present + Future

Blyth Battery

Blyth Tall Ship and
Museum Project

Blyth Spartans

and more...



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THE FACTS & FIGURES

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Love
Blyth

'Love Blyth™' is the trademark of the Development Trust. The Trust was created to improve the image and perception of the town to its residents and visitors in an effort to show Blyth as an attractive and vibrant place to live, work, invest and visit.

New merchandise will be available at the Community Village at the Tall Ships event at the Keel Row Shopping Centre in Blyth. For further information contact Karen Walker at karen@theblythdevelopmenttrust.org

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Foreword

I do *Love Blyth*. I have lived in Blyth all my life, all 72 years in fact. Born in Cowpen Quay which was originally developed in 1810.

Ronnie Campbell,
MP, Blyth

Past, we had the original Blyth railway station which opened in 1847, rebuilt in 1886 due to the increase in passenger and goods traffic, later this would be the site for a supermarket.

1899 Blyth Spartans was founded, Ridley Park created early 1900's and in the 1920's and 30's saw new housing

estates being created on the outskirts of Blyth. 1913, Blyth shipyard started constructing The Arc Royal, an aircraft carrier for the Royal Navy.

Present Blyth, shipyard and mining industry, of pits we had five, and the shipyard which was the biggest exporter, for this the record was held several times over, have all gone now. Blyth has had to regenerate

itself, new engineering businesses, eco and renewable energy, keeping it vibrant for residents, workers and visitors to this coastal town.

Future Blyth, we have a beautiful beach, park and the harbour is currently being regenerated, housing, workshops and a hotel. The Tall Ships Regatta is good for the economy and is exciting for us all.



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Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the souvenir magazine "Love Blyth™", Northumberland's Seaside Port, Past, Present and Future.

There will only ever be 3 editions of the magazine to mark the historic and once in a lifetime events happening in the town.

The first of these historic events is the town staging the 2016 North Sea Tall Ships Regatta in August. This edition will look at the town's illustrious past which has almost been forgotten and without sounding like a history lesson, we aim to remind readers of some of that history especially in the coal mining, ship building and the important role the railways played in those industries. The town also played an important role in the two world wars.

The aim of this edition of the magazine is to educate, inform and entertain.

The 2nd edition will be in 2 years before Blyth Tall Ship sets sail on its historic (and life-changing for the crew) journey re-tracing the journey of Captain William Smith, who came from and sailed from Blyth and discovered Antarctica. The near identical ship to that Captain Smith sailed on is called the Williams II. It will cover the planning of the trip, the selection and preparation of the crew and the

"The aim of this edition of the magazine is to educate, inform and entertain."

George Forster
thf Publications

researchers who will be accompanying the ship as well as the attention to detail required to undertake such a journey. This edition will look at the present developments in the engineering sectors in the town and will contain more detailed information from some of the major players in the town who were unable to take part in the first edition.

The 3rd and final edition of the souvenir magazine will be on the return of the Williams II from its historic journey to Antarctica. It will include a Captain's log as well as diaries from crew members of the various legs of the journey. This final edition of the souvenir magazine will highlight future developments in the town as the future looks rosy for Blyth and its inhabitants.

Photo by James Seabright



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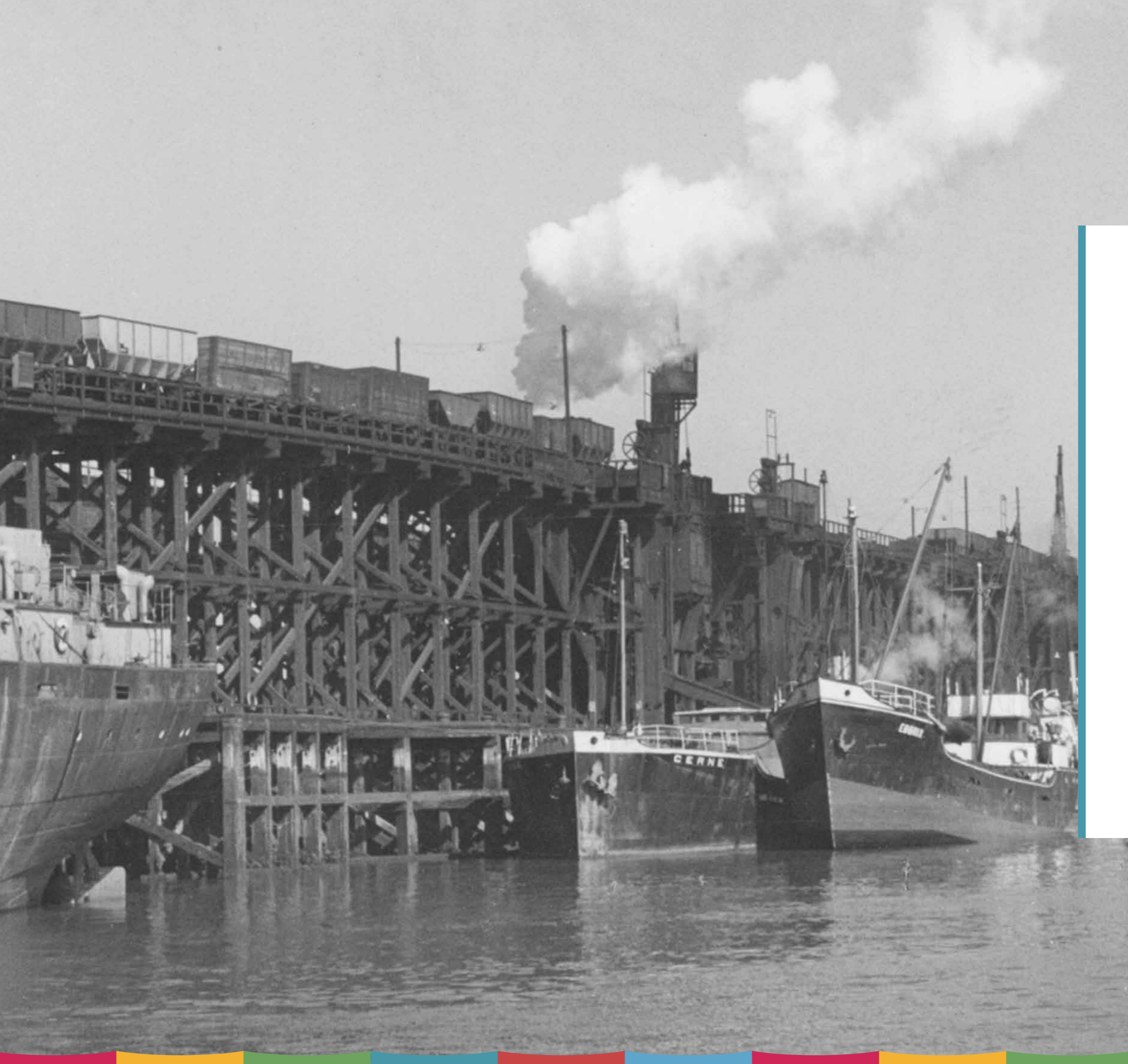
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Educate



1138

— *to* —

2016

*From a “Muddy Creek”
to a Major Port.*

THE HISTORY OF BLYTH



The history of Blyth is bound up with that of the Port of Blyth. Although there are references to Blyth from the 12th century, it is a relatively modern town, and its development from a “muddy creek” as it was once described, to a major coal exporter, and now a centre for renewable energy, only started in the first quarter of the 18th century.

In a document referring to the partition of Newsham, made by Gilbert de la Val, there is mention of the “Snoc de Bliemue,” meaning the Snook of Blythmouth, sometimes known as Blyth Nook. For many years Blyth Nook consisted of two or three fishermen’s cottages and two salt pans. The main quay of Blyth was on the north side of the river, as can be seen in the earliest chart of the port.

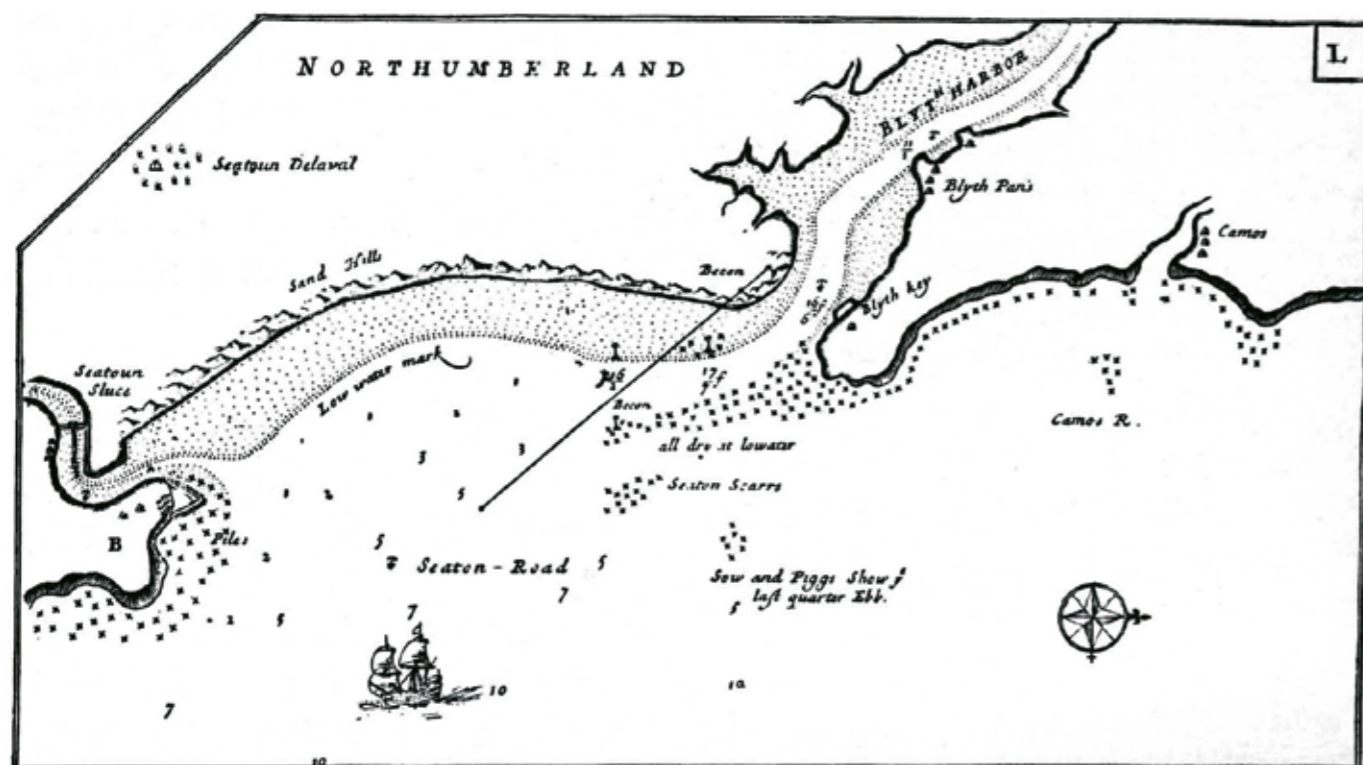


CHART OF BLYTH HARBOUR, 1693.

The main industries were mining, shipbuilding and ship repairing, which have almost disappeared from the area.

In 1723, two Newcastle merchants, Richard Ridley and Matthew White bought the Radcliffe estates after the Earl of Derwentwater was executed for his part in the “Jacobite Rising” of 1715, and all his lands were confiscated and put up for sale. By 1730 Richard and Nicholas Ridley were running the Plessey Collieries bringing the coal to Blyth. They also ran a timber yard, a brick and tile works, a quarry (behind the old Star & Garter Hotel), a brewery

behind Queen’s Lane and also lime kilns. The timber yard was on the site of the Post Office beside the bus station. The Tiles Sheds are now Wolmer Road and the clay holes field is Solingen Estate. The present Lord Ridley is descended from these two merchants.

With the development of deep mining, the Plessey Pits closed, and by the 1930s, Blyth had six collieries, starting with Cowpen “A” Pit and ending with the closure of Bates Colliery in 1986.



The port slowly developed and in 1854 the Blyth Harbour and Dock Company was formed. Progress under the company was slow and more money was needed to develop the port, and in June, 1882, the Blyth Harbour Commission was constituted by an Act of Parliament. This began the growth of the harbour into a modern port.

The chairman of the Commissioners was Sir Matthew White Ridley, Bart., with Mr. John Laws, as secretary, Mr. Thomas Meik, engineer, and Mr. McAlpine, Harbour Master. In 1888, the North Eastern Railway opened two coaling berths on the river with a link to Newsham. More staithes were built on the north side of the river, the last



one being held up by the First World War and not completed until after the war and opened in 1928. Only the bases of the staithe remain now. The last ones built in 1935 near Bates Colliery were recently removed and replaced with an oil terminal.

The area of land surrounding the port was owned, in the main, by the Ridley family and the Trustees of the Thoroton and Croft Estates. These names are perpetuated in many of the streets and buildings in Blyth today. Ridley Avenue and Thoroton Street to name only two of many with connections to both owners.

The main industries were mining, shipbuilding and ship repairing, which have almost disappeared from the area. Almaritec is still building boats at Wimbourne Quay, on the site of the former building yard of the Blyth Dry Docks and Shipbuilding Company Ltd. The old dry docks are now part of Catapult Offshore Renewable Energy. There is still mining going on but its all surface mining at three sites in Northumberland.



An early photograph of the shipyard and dry docks.

The former ship-breaking yard of Hughes, Bolckow and Company Ltd, named Battleship Wharf, which closed in 1980, is now the main terminal for handling bulk cargoes (coal, aggregates, grain, cement etc.) for the port. Bolckow's were early recyclers using

the timber from ships broken up to create garden furniture and many other products. During World War 2 they fitted out ships launched from across the river from the shipyard. Some of these vessels returned to the breaking yard to be recycled in their turn.

In 1751 a Chapel of Ease was built on the site of the present-day St. Cuthbert's Church Hall. This was the first of many church buildings which appeared in Blyth.

The Presbyterians built their first chapel close by, in 1814, where the police buildings are now. In 1818, the Methodists built a chapel where the Keel Row shopping centre is today. As the congregations became larger new churches were built and the smaller chapels were either demolished or used for commercial premises. The one built in 1818 became the first Theatre Royal, which after extensive alterations burned down in 1888, was re-built within a year and opened again as a theatre. Its popularity was such that a new Theatre Royal was built further up the street and the old theatre became the Alexandra Hall and later the Alexandra Billiard Hall.

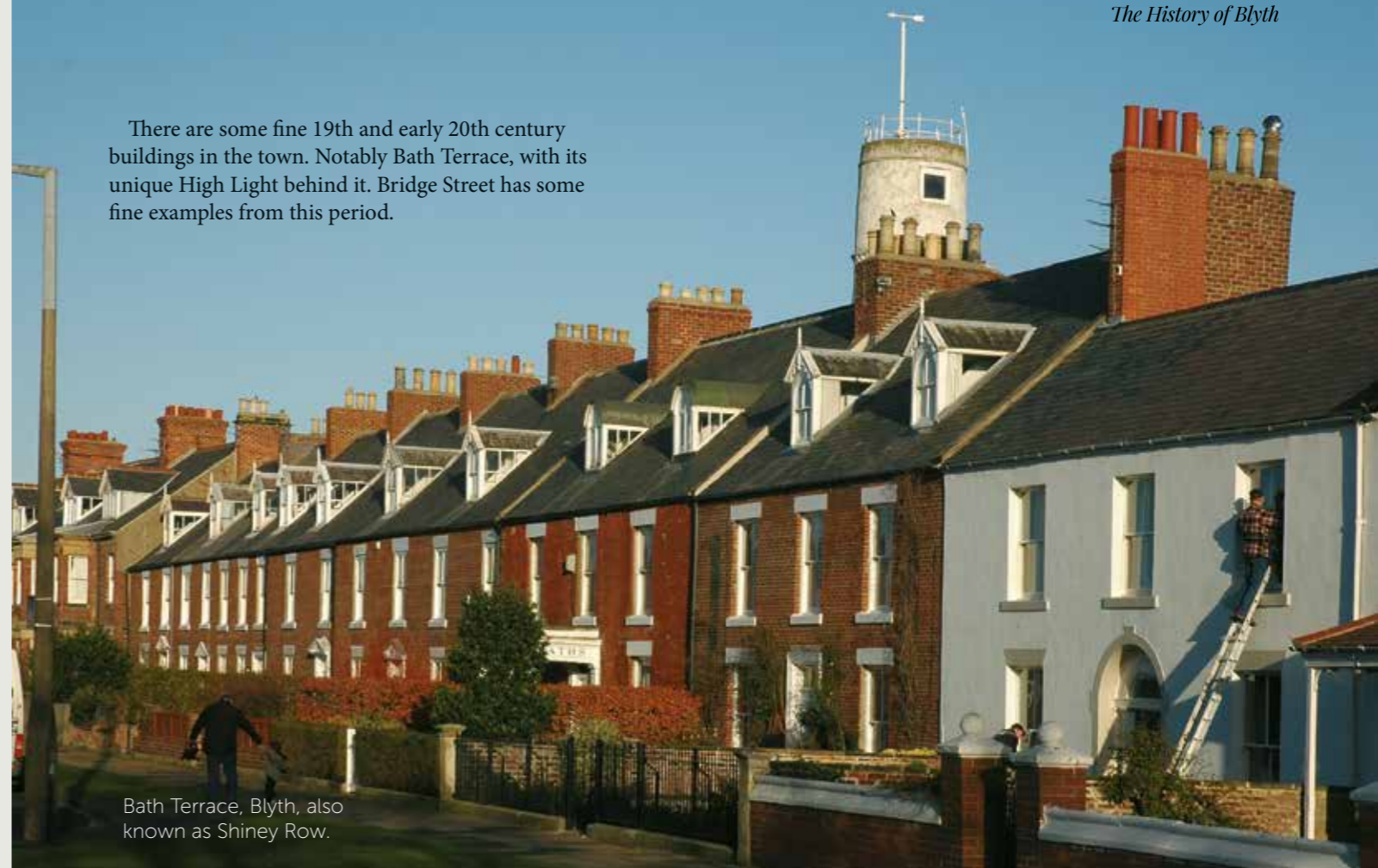
During this period Blyth was governed by two councils, which later became Urban District Councils, known as South Blyth and Cowpen Councils. It was not until 1922 that it became Blyth Corporation. Further changes came in 1974, creating Blyth Valley Borough Council, and again in 2009, when the present Town Council came into being, under one unitary authority Northumberland County Council.

The rail links to the port were extended and passenger services commenced, leading to the building of railway stations in the town. The first was near Cowpen Colliery, followed by a second on

Croft Street (since renamed King Street), and the third and fourth stations where Morrison's Supermarket now stands. A rail link still remains to the Alcan Terminal at North Blyth and also is linked to Battleship Wharf.



The Chapel of Ease, 1924, just prior to demolition.



There are some fine 19th and early 20th century buildings in the town. Notably Bath Terrace, with its unique High Light behind it. Bridge Street has some fine examples from this period.

Bath Terrace, Blyth, also known as Shiney Row.



Blyth Battery Volunteers now run the Blyth Battery as a visitor attraction during the summer months, which brings thousands of visitors to the town. They have an annual event in May when the Battery is home to military re-enactors from all over the country. The buildings here are a unique mix of World War 1 and World War 2 structures, housing a 1940s room, a WW1 machine gun post and other displays, as well as tea rooms, which also have displays of memorabilia from both wars, etc.

In both World Wars Blyth became a naval base with submarines and other craft. In 1916, a naval base was built on the Links Road with a gun battery to protect the port.

The base became the new home of the Wellesley Nautical School in 1920 to 1939, when the Admiralty took over the base again for the duration of the war. This site is now being built upon with new houses as phase 2 of the South Shore development by Persimmon.



Blyth Battery Observation Posts. Left is a unique WW1 structure and right is WW2.

Blyth is also home to the Royal Northumberland Yacht Club which boast a unique clubhouse, the Tyne III, the oldest floating wooden light vessel in the world, LV 50, which formerly was owned by Trinity House. This can be seen alongside the Middle Jetty at the South Harbour.



Left is Tyne III alongside the Middle Jetty, South Harbour, Blyth.

The quayside at Blyth has undergone a great transformation following the demolition of the south side staithes. A pleasant walkway was created, with an art work, the Spirit of the Staithes, representing the old staithes in height, with a train on the top. Viewed from the centre of the pedestrian crossing near the roundabout by St. Cuthbert's Church, the panels representing the train appear to join together to create the locomotive.

The old offices and workshops on the quayside have given way to the Community Enterprise Centre, Eddie Ferguson House, Blyth Workspace, and shortly the Commissioner's Quay Hotel will open in time for the arrival of the Tall Ships in August.



The Spirit of the Staithes.



There is much to recommend a visit to Blyth, with its magnificent beach stretching from the marina in the South Harbour all the way to Seaton Sluice.

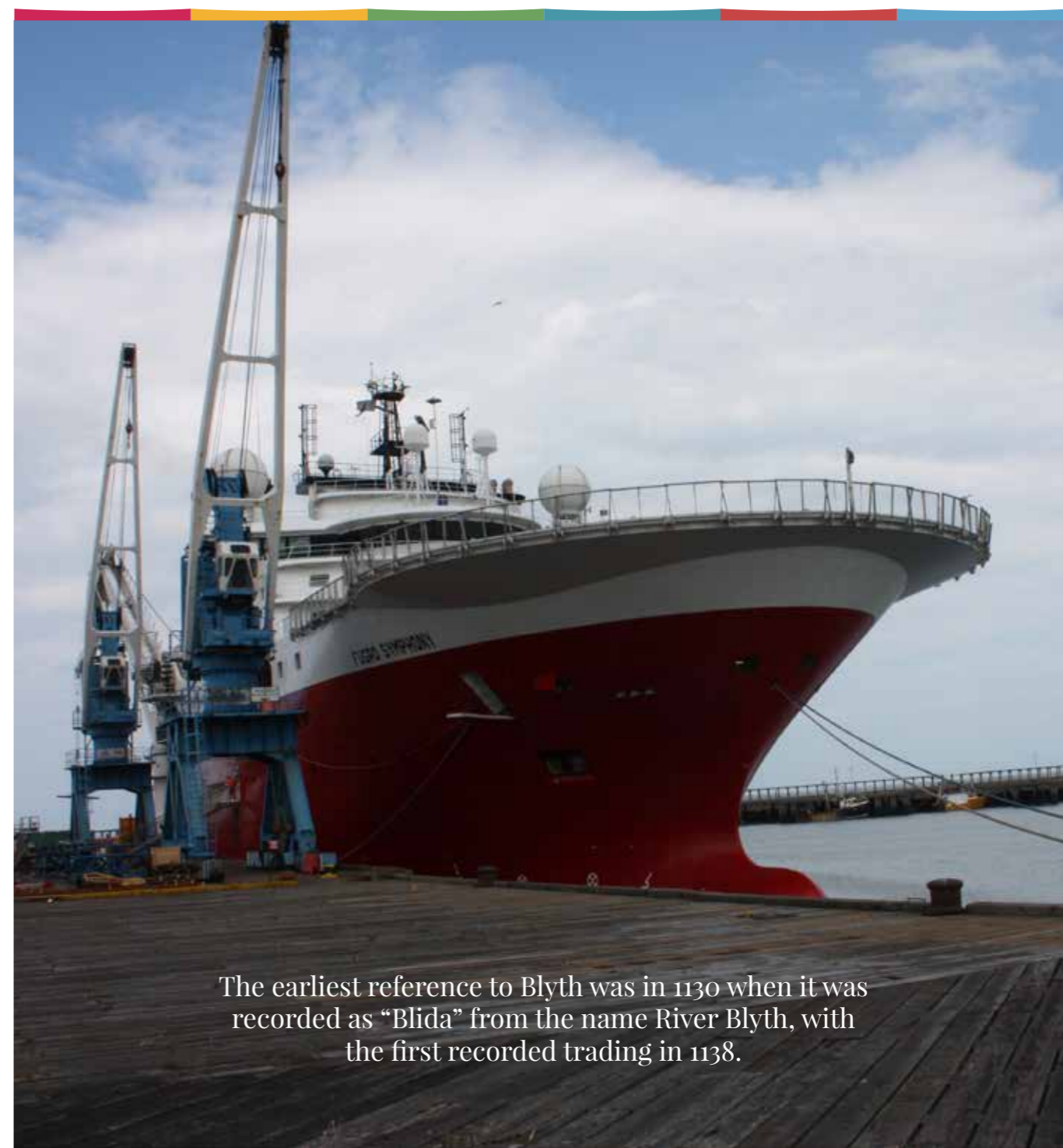
The Ridley Park, which adjoins the quayside, has seen a few changes since it was opened in 1904. The boating lake, which had so many troubles in the early years, has given way to a children's water feature, with two playgrounds attached. One of the bowling pavilions is now a café, Mr. Ridley's. The park is also home to three war memorials commemorating the men of Blyth who paid the supreme sacrifice in the Boer War and both World Wars.

There is much to recommend a visit to Blyth, with its magnificent beach stretching from the marina in the South Harbour all the way to Seaton Sluice.



THE PORT OF *Blyth*

FROM 1130 TO THE PRESENT DAY



The earliest reference to Blyth was in 1130 when it was recorded as "Blida" from the name River Blyth, with the first recorded trading in 1138.

THE PORT OF *Blyth*

FROM 1130 TO THE PRESENT DAY



Robert de Winchester granted the Bishops of Newminster (Morpeth) permission to build fisheries and establish salt pans, the salt being moved by boat down the river. By 1208 the Ridley family became involved with salt production and the area around the river mouth became known as the Snook of Blithmouth. A fishing community became established but by 1368 the area became unoccupied due to frequent raids by the Scots.

A new settlement began to appear in about 1423 but it was a hundred years later that the Bishops of Newminster let seven salt pans to Sir Phillip Dacre and Master Roger Pye. In 1551 when Blyth began to grow Dame Elizabeth Percy leased three salt pans to Thomas Harbottle at Cambois Ford.

The first stone quay was erected on the north side of the river in the late 17th century and is known as Bishop's Quay. Further development of the harbour began in 1722 when the Ridley family acquired land and began a coaling quay on the south side of the river. They then started the manufacture of salt on

a large scale with the movement of coal and salt being the sole trade of the port. 1730 saw the building of the Port of Blyth which began with improvements to the coal quays and the introduction of a ballast quay. A Pilots watch house and a lighthouse were also established.

Shipbuilding became established in 1750 with Edmund Hannah of Leith and by 1805 there were six ship builders on the river. This led to two rope works and several sail makers opening businesses in Blyth in support of the ship building. It was during this period that the first high staithes for loading coal were built with an elevated loading point along with a stone breakwater to protect the harbour from easterly gales, known as North Dyke. In c. 1799 a windmill was imported from Sweden and was erected on Buck's Hull with a second windmill from the south of England to process grain into flour.

With the increase on numbers of vessels using the port, it became necessary to use steam powered tugs to tow the sail ships to sea against the prevailing winds. With the coming

of the railways to the staithes on the south side, further improvements to the harbour were required and in 1853 the Blyth Harbour & Docks Company was formed and a Bill raised to develop the docks and improve rail links to Blyth. In 1858 the Harbour Act was passed to allow dredging and the shape of the river began to change.

In 1876 the last of the salt pans were destroyed and in 1880 the first iron ships were built for the Russian government by Messrs. Hodgson & Soulsby of Cowpen Quay.

1882 saw the formation of the Blyth Harbour Commission which led to the construction of the South Harbour. The movement to iron ships led eventually to the formation of the Blyth Shipbuilding & Dry Docks Company by amalgamation of the companies operating as builders and repairers of ships along the river bank where Wimbourne Quay is now situated. The remains of the last two dry docks can still be seen from the river. Dredging of the river to give deep water access gave rise to a long history of dredgers

including bucket and suction types. Even today a small drag dredger the Endeavour can be seen regularly doing its job.

Sometime around 1890 the 'Slake' a tidal inlet was filled in, probably with materials dug out when sinking local pit shafts, and the 'Flanker' that fed it, used to form a dock for a ship building company.

The turn of the century [1906] saw some major changes with the extending of the East Pier and the building of a lighthouse. Then with the commencement of WWI the rivers emphasis changed to naval activities with the establishment of a submarine training base with HMS Elfin and a submarine base for the 6th Flotilla which was supported by the supply ships HMS Titania and HMS Vulcan. The shipyards turned to naval use and in 1914 built the first aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal which served as a seaplane carrier during and after the war.

During this period in the rivers history, ship breaking by Hughes Bolckow was added to its industries.

One of the earliest ships broken up was HMS Britannia, a three deck first class ship of the line and one of the last wooden warships built. A lot of the timber from scrapped ships went on to produce furniture.

After the war shipping of coal was a growth industry and deepening of the harbour went on a pace to allow for larger ships to enter the harbour. Ship building went on with some highs and lows.

With the approach of WWII naval work increased. Several boom defence vessels for harbour protection were built followed by minesweepers and one Flower Class corvette. One Blyth built boom defence vessel HMS Barcross is now used as a museum in Cape Town, South Africa. During the war the yards built several minesweepers, a corvette and other naval vessels. Once again Blyth was home to HMS Elfin for submarine training and a supply station with a brief stay by HMS Titania.

After the war the yards returned to building colliers and tramp steamers as well as small liners. There was ship

repair and ship breaking going on. Coal was a major trade with a record 6,889,317 tons of coal shipped from the river in 1961, but by the mid 1960's decline had set in and most of the staithes were no longer used and the shipyards closed. The Port of Blyth looked elsewhere for business, Alcan built an aluminium smelting plant and an unloading dock for its ore, although the smelting plant closed, the unload terminal still operates for transshipping of ore to other plants. For a while import and export of paper at the Roll-on- Roll- off Terminal at Wimbourne Quay resulted in the filling- in of the docks and the building of large warehouses. Renewable energy in the form of wind generation came to Blyth in the form of testing and maintenance training. Boat building still goes on with a specialist boat builder at Wimbourne Quay [Alnmaritec] along with specialist engineering support to vessels working in cable laying and oil research.

The Port of Blyth continues to prosper and may it continue long into the future.





Blyth Battery

Blyth has the most intact and accessible defence battery on the north east coast.

Its primary purpose was to protect the port and there were three important reasons for this protection.

1. Coal - At the time of both world wars millions of tons were leaving the harbour each year. Steam ships, steam trains, factories and power stations all relied on coal which made its protection essential.
2. Building and repairing ships to keep the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy operational was the wartime job of the shipyards and Blyth had a busy shipyard just a short way up the river.
3. The submarine base. During both world wars Blyth was the home of HMS Elfin, a support depot for submarines operating in the North Sea and beyond. Safeguarding this base was crucial.

Its secondary function was as an anti-invasion battery. The wide bay and the flat beaches were thought to be an ideal landing place for an invasion. Blyth would have been the nearest suitable point to invade for a land attack on the armaments factories and shipyards along the Tyne. After WW2 the buildings were used by the local authority to house deck chairs and tents. Some became chalets but eventually they lay unused and derelict. The site narrowly avoided demolition in the 1990s when plans for its future began to take place. With the help of the local authority, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund Blyth Battery finally opened to the public in 2009. Every year more items of interest are added.

The site is run as charity and manned entirely by volunteers.

Explore

There are two ways to explore the battery. You can simply walk around using a map and the way markers. Many of the buildings will be open. Alternatively ask in the magazine or the shelter about guided tours. While every effort is made to provide disabled access to as many areas of the site as possible the natural terrain makes this difficult in some places. Buildings, too, can be a problem so for those of you who feel unable to walk the site, for whatever reason, there is a video which covers most aspects of the guided tour and you can watch this in the magazine.



The buildings

THE MAGAZINE:

Internally the magazine is divided into four sections: a store for the cartridges, a separate store for the unfused shells, the lamp room for storing lamps, fuses and firing tubes and the shifting lobby where the men changed from their uniforms into overalls. These overalls contained no metal items which might cause a spark.

The magazine now houses wartime artefacts as well as home guard photographs and a list of home guard personnel from July 1944.

THE SHELTER

This reinforced concrete building was protected by sand dunes on three sides. It was used by on duty battery personnel, other than the gun crews, to rest until they were needed.

The shelter now houses a café, a small shop and various displays throughout the season.

GUN EMPLACEMENTS:

The two almost circular concrete bases each housed a 6" gun with a range of 7 miles and capable of firing 5 - 6 rounds per minute.

The original flat round bases were constructed in WW1 with the overhead canopies added in WW2 for protection from air attack. These overhead canopies have not survived in other locations.

The two gun emplacements are 19m apart, connected by a concrete wall. Behind and below the gun emplacements are three buildings: ARTILLARY STORE which housed Gun parts, small arms and instruments WAR SHELTER used by the gun crews in a state of readiness to rest until they were needed

WORKSHOP where minor repairs to the guns took place These three buildings form part of the gun emplacement complex but are not currently open to the public.



WW1 OBSERVATION POST:

The top floor of this 6 sided two storey building, as the name implies, was used to watch for approaching ships. The Battery Commander controlled operations from here. Co-ordinates for these vessels were established using a Barr and Stroud horizontal range-finder. The armoured steel turret which housed the range-finder can be seen on the roof and from the inside of the building. This is very rare, if not unique, as it is believed to be the only surviving example in Europe. During the war the turret was disguised with a false roof.

The ground floor housed a plotting room and the signallers. It is now part of the museum and is home to many domestic items found in a 1940's house.

WW2 OBSERVATION POST:

By 1939 the original observation post was obsolete so a new one was built and completed in August 1940. It's function and operating practices were the same as in WW1. The upper floor provides a panoramic view of the bay and port entrance and contains a re-creation of its function during the war. At ground level there are two rooms. The larger one was the plotting room and the smaller one was used by the signallers. This smaller room now holds an excellent example of a WW1 Officer's dug-out while the larger room houses temporary displays.

BLOCK HOUSE:

This WW1 building was for use in the event of a land attack and is therefore sited high on the dunes to provide an all-round field of fire, including inland. Irregular in shape it has loopholes for rifles and machine guns. In WW2 the building was used as a workshop and store

SEARCHLIGHT BUILDINGS:

These are the two asymmetric buildings, 20 metres apart, which stand at the most northerly area of the site. Inside the light was separated by a wooden partition from the second section which housed the on-duty crew. This area contained a stove and a telephone and was also equipped with steel-shuttered loopholes for rifles and machine guns in case of a land attack.

THE ENGINE HOUSE:

The searchlights were powered from the nearby Engine House which contained two generators and two engines - one to provide backup for the other in case of failure. This building also contained its own workshop and store.

Volunteer!

If you would be interested in joining as a volunteer please ask at the Magazine or the Shelter



Coal Staithes *in Blyth Harbour*

The river Blyth and its harbour has been associated with coal shipping since the early days of railways. The method of transshipping coal into ships used wooden staithes constructed such that they were raised above the height of the waiting ship and gravity could then be used to teem the coal down into the ships hold.

Early Staithes in Blyth Harbour

The first staithes at Blyth and dating from the late 1600's were those of the Plessey Waggonway, a single line running for more than five miles from pits in the Plessey Checks area to the quayside at Blyth. Operated by horse drawn chaldron wagons, the coal was teemed from the low staith into small keel boats which then transferred the coal into the waiting ships, the river then being too shallow for the coal ships to come alongside the staithes.

The Blyth & Tyne Junction Railway Company constructed their first wooden staithes at Blyth harbour in 1850 having obtained the necessary act of parliament the previous year. The Blyth & Tyne would be subsumed into the North Eastern Railway (NER) in 1874.

Across the river, the Cowpen and North Seaton Coal Company built a two mile private railway to connect their Cambois Colliery with staithes opposite the High quay. The site of these four staithes and their complex of gravity worked railway lines are now obscured by the cylindrical alumina storage silos presently seen on the north side of the river.

Extensive dredging alongside the staith permitted bigger ships to berth here



N.E.R South Staithes

These were the earliest wooden coal staithes constructed by the North Eastern Railway Company in Blyth Harbour. Built in 1886 they replaced a set of low level staithes originally constructed by the Blyth and Tyne Railway which sat on the quayside and were worked by a combination of horse drawn haulage and gravity.

Shallow river depth especially at low tide hampered the ability of larger deep draught vessels to load here added to which, the progressive increase of coal shipments necessitated the replacement of the original low level staithes. Two new berths along with four gravity

spouts were placed here, the gradient allowing empty wagons to run off the staith faced towards Blyth station. Another two berths along with another four gravity spouts were built in 1888, this time facing south, and an extensive group of sidings to accommodate both full and empty wagons were laid out adjacent to Ridley Park. A new double track railway then connected with the NER main line at Newsham. This new railway connection also served Crofton Mill Colliery and sidings associated with the Blyth Harbour Commissioners south harbour.

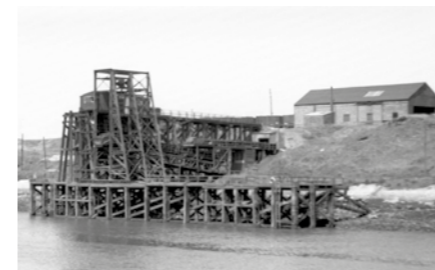
Following the progressive run down of coal shipments coupled with the deterioration of the staithes woodwork, the south staithes closed in 1964 and were subsequently dismantled, however a section of the lower jetty remains

today and can be walked upon at the south end of the quay parallel to Quay Road.

N.E.R North Staithes

Constructed by the North Eastern Railway in the period 1886 to 1888 this large staith on the north bank of the river was the largest of the NER wooden coal staithes.

It provided a total of four berths each being equipped with two gravity spouts, in addition there were three mechanical belt anti coal-breakers, being supported by jib cranes these could be attached to the mouthpiece of the telescopic spouts to help minimise breakage when loading friable coal. Two unique patented anti coal-breakers of the telescopic tube type were installed on the north staithes but proved unpopular and were eventually removed.



The north staithes comprised two separate structures with spouts numbered 9 to 12 and 13 to 16 respectively, they operated independently of each other. They each had a 'pushing up' pilot engine which propelled sets of full wagons up from the standage sidings. Once on the staithes top the wagons were ran by gravity under the control of teemers who brought the wagons to stop one at a time above the between track hopper so that the coal released from the wagon via hinged bottom doors could then teem down the telescopic spout and into the waiting ships hold.

The loading of ships was carried out in a controlled fashion with the ship being moved so as to ensure that the appropriate hold was being loaded, this 'warping' of the ships was done with winches and as the holds were brought to near full, gangs of trimmers were sent down into the hold to trim the coal level to ensure that all sides and corners of each hold were filled and level.



L.N.E.R West Staithes

The upper harbour has a large tidal basin and the truncated wooden jetty of the west staithes can be seen. This high level wooden staith, although originally planned by the North Eastern Railway in 1912, was not finally constructed by the L.N.E.R until 1926 and opened to traffic in April of 1928. Being the last of this type of wooden staith to be built, it took advantage of the advances in mechanised coal handling and from the outset each of its two berths were fitted out with a conventional single gravity spout along with two horizontal belt conveyors, one sat at a high level, the other somewhat lower. Extensive dredging alongside the staith permitted bigger ships to berth here and a large tidal basin was excavated, this coupled with a number of dolphins allowed a number of ships to lie in wait.

Movement of the coal during times of heavy seas could cause a severe list possibly even sinking the ship.

The teemers regularly rotated from berth to berth to familiarise each man with the particular workings of the different spout heads, in the early days, this 'corp' of teemers comprised of up to eight men however in the course of time this number progressively reduced to four.

This north staith and its lower jetty walkway gained fame when in 1970 it featured in the Michael Caine film Get Carter. Although the coaling staith has long since been dismantled, the lower jetty still exists and can still be seen running parallel with the river.



Today, to the north of the remaining jetty, can be seen the lengthy earthen embankment which originally carried a fan of standage sidings. From here the pilot engine propelled sets of full wagons up onto the staith top. Returning empty wagons were ran in a controlled manner under gravity and passed below the 'inbound' full line to reach a group of empties sidings where waiting locomotives could then couple on and haul them back to the various collieries.





Inform

Blyth: "What's Gaining On?"

Blyth is a booming town in every sense of the word and is on the up!!!

World renowned test centre; centre of excellence and the BEACH project:

As stated in the welcome section, the objective of the magazine is to educate, inform and entertain and by working closely and in partnership with The Blyth Development Trust, we aim to improve the image of Blyth not only as attractive, exciting and vibrant place but a town to be associated with.

Blyth is a hive of activity especially in the offshore **renewable energy sector**. Catapult ore operate the largest concentration of multi purpose offshore renewable energy test and demonstration facilities in the world in Blyth. Blyth is also the largest blade testing centre in the world.

Draeger, which has been operating in the town since 1963, chose Blyth as its UK headquarters. Not only is Blyth the base for its UK operations, it is also the centre of excellence for the design, production and supply of Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus with a comprehensive range of fire and gas detection products, which are supplied around the world. An in depth feature article about Draeger will be in the next edition.

Blyth hosts several **family owned businesses** now in its 4th, 5th & 6th generation of family ownership and some of them will be featured in the 2 later editions.



There is a lot going on at **The Port of Blyth** especially in the engineering sector. Some of the work going on at the Port include the construction of portable oil rigs to be attached to the back of ships in the North Sea and beyond. These engineering skills aim to replace the old ship building skills which have almost disappeared.

The Oil Spill Contingency Unit for the North Sea (in case of an oil spill) is resides at the Port of Blyth. They are those 5 humongous wheels covered in blue plastic seen close to the perimeter fence as you drive past.



The Blyth Educational And Cultural Hub also known as the BEACH project is alive and kicking at the Port of Blyth. This project is made up of the Port of Blyth, Port Training Services, Blyth Tall Ship, Newcastle University School of Marine Sciences, Northumberland College and Active Northumberland. Funding is through a collaboration between the Port of Blyth, Newcastle University, Northumberland County Council, the Coastal communities Fund, European Fisheries Fund, Regional Growth Fund and the Big Lottery Fund. The primary aim is to provide both educational and recreational attractions for all.

Phase 2 of the project is now completed and will house major training and water sport facilities. Port Training Services, Newcastle University, Northumberland College and Active Northumberland will occupy the new buildings. Port Training Services and Blyth Tall Ship have been featured in this edition and the 2 academic institutions will feature in later editions.



Port Training Services

Supporting Past, Present and Future Port and Marine NVQs & Apprenticeships

As there were no existing training providers with the knowledge and expertise in the complexities of port operations, the only option was for the Port to develop their own organisation, responsible for providing specialist training from those who do the job.

The port decided to invest heavily in establishing its own training division -Port Training Services (P T S) to ensure that their staff could attain adequate training and support, to achieve a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 or 3 in Port Operations. This required the recruiting and training of suitable staff as well as constructing a specialised training centre.

PTS utilised the extensive plant equipment to deliver specialised heavy plant training for the Port, Marine and Industry Sector. Becoming an accredited centre for National Plant Operators Registration Scheme (NPORS) and Road Transport Industry Training Board (RTITB), delivering training in the real work environment thus enabling PTS to offer this on a commercial basis, to any interested parties either companies or individuals.

Initially PTS worked tirelessly with the Local Skills Council now the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to achieve a Train to Gain contract and went onto successfully complete a substantial amount of National Vocational Qualifications at Level 2 and 3.

This new challenge was a very steep learning curve for the port, firstly getting to grips with the strict requirements of dealing with government funding and OFSTED requirements and to engage with the workforce who still had the ethos of traditional heavy industry, by encouraging them to participate in this new experience.

The NVQ was the catalyst for creating a new outlook in a range of other areas, such as Functional Skills, which offered all candidates the chance to

achieve English, Maths and Information Communication and Technology at Level 1 or 2.

Healthy lifestyle and financial awareness were other programmes, which were also added; this helped to promote a new approach on health, work and well-being. This was recognised by winning the National Business Award 2010. The highly prestigious National Business Awards, under the category for The Health,



Work and Well-being Award for Small Businesses. This Award was in recognition for the promotion of a healthy life and financial awareness, which was embedded into the training of the port staff in the Port Operations NVQ.

PTS has proved itself as a major provider in the area of Port Operations Training, from being initially instrumental in developing a new Maritime Occupations Apprenticeship Framework, a qualification that incorporates, Maths, English, ICT, Employees Rights and Responsibilities and Technical Certificate in conjunction with Port Skills and Safety and the

Maritime Skills

Alliance. PTS are now able to deliver NVQ and Apprenticeship programmes throughout the UK for the whole of the Port and Marine Sector and are proud that the framework it helped to develop, has been rolled out nationally stretching from the Orkneys in the North, all the way down to Jersey in the South.

The new apprenticeship scheme is helping to secure the future of the region's ports. Instrumented by PTS,

the new programme aims to introduce a new breed of workers into the industry. Adopted by Ports across the UK, the Ofqual and EAL accredited apprenticeships will focus on the traditional Port roles of stevedoring.

In line with Blyth Harbour Commission, which has Trust Port Status, working for the benefit of the local community. PTS play an active role in satisfying these requirements particularly with the support it provides for the Blyth Tall Ship Project. This is an initiative to get young people back into work, being inspired by the spirit of adventure from a local merchant, Captain William Smith who converted

Port Training Services was established when the Port of Blyth identified the need to introduce higher quality training within its own organisation and wished to embrace the new modern culture of vocational training through NVQs.



"A new apprenticeship scheme is helping to secure the future of the region's ports."



"Apprenticeship schemes like this are the only way to go to bring new people into the industry. We hope it's going to be an on-going project and is helping to secure the future of all our regional Ports".



his Collier Brig to trade around South America, discovering the Antarctic Landmass in 1819. Under guidance from PTS instructors, the current batch of Apprentices are restoring a former Baltic Trader to recreate the voyage made by Captain Smith in 2019. The current vessel the Williams II, renamed by the Countess of Wessex in April will be a focal point for the Tall Ship Regatta being hosted in Blyth in August 2016.

Since its initial conception PTS has expanded its role by forming active partnerships with Maersk Training and working in conjunction with two main colleges in the North East of England, Northumberland College and South Tyneside College. Whilst retaining our Matrix Award, the quality standard for excellent information, advice and guidance.

Colin Bassam, training manager for Port Training Services, said:

"In the North East we have a lot of ports, stretching from Blyth, the Tyne, Sunderland, and Seaham, down to Tees and Hartlepool. We have always been a traditional industry that has never gone away. However we have an ageing and a stable workforce with people being in the job for many years. Unfortunately these people are now retiring which means potentially these skills could be lost".

"Apprenticeships are vitally important to the Port industry. The potential for the North East Ports at the minute is growing. The Port of Blyth is booming and we are looking to expand our work in the Offshore Renewables Sector. It is vitally important that we start bringing young people in; otherwise we won't have the capacity and the skills in the future to compete. We handle a large volume of high tech project cargo and we need a high standard of competency of staff to ensure a safe and efficient operation".

Our training courses cover a full range of industrial plant and equipment including:

- > Forklift
- > Crane operator
- > Slinger/Signalling
- > Bobcat
- > Front end load shovel
- > Dozer
- > Working at height
- > Mobile Elevated Work Platform
- > Manual Handling
- > Port Safety Passport

For further details
www.porttrainingservices.co.uk

Blyth TALL SHIP

*Exploring Our Future,
Inspired By Our Past*



of Northumberland, the North East and UK on a world stage. Patrons of the expedition include two renowned adventurers in Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Sir Chris Bonnington.

Today Blyth is still suffering from 4th generation unemployment after the collapse of the coal and ship building industries, with many young people struggling to identify with their future and feeling disengaged, disinterested, unable and maybe sometimes unwilling, to aspire to the opportunities that are developing in and around the port.

The light at the end of the tunnel is the emerging Off Shore, Renewable Energy and Engineering sector that is growing in the area around the expanding Port of Blyth. There is a skills gap between those leaving formal education and these growing businesses which Blyth Tall Ship aims to fill.

Engage!

In 2009, an innovative experiment was conducted by the extended services team at Northumberland County Council working with young people likely to be labelled as “NEET” (not in education, employment or training) to see if working on a project to build a small traditional sailing boat could enhance the desire to continue in full time education. It was a great success. This success led to the extension of this innovative and inspirational approach providing hands on experience by

“The project will be recruiting and training 200 young people for the voyage which is expected to take about a year to complete”

working on traditional boat building skills with expert craftsmen, to engage a wider audience through a variety of ages from 12 to 28 year olds.

The project thus delivers high quality accredited foundation learning in engineering through the medium of heritage boat building skills. Level 1, 2 & 3 NVQ's in Marine Engineering are delivered by experienced volunteers and full time trainers. These volunteers, retired from a career in maritime and naval services or marine engineering, have a wealth of experience which they are very enthusiastic and happy to pass on to the younger generation. They act as a sounding board to the trainees. Working with such positive role models inspires confidence, self-esteem and improves employability. Modules in welding, marine diesels, port operations and rigging as well as working at heights are also offered.

Being small and independent means that the project is able to develop and

200 years ago Captain William Smith, raised the funds to build a state of the art sailing vessel and embarked on a voyage to trade around the world from Blyth where his ship was built. After having being pirated by the Spanish in 1818 on the East coast of South America he took cargo to recoup his losses and attempted to rounded Cape Horn (the most treacherous seas in the world) to trade on the British controlled West coast of South America. He was met by westerly gales and in a desperate attempt to sail around the storms, he discovered the first land in Antarctica, now called the Southern Shetland Islands. His use of adventure, enterprise as well as renewable energy and engineering were not rewarded and he died a pauper.

The Blyth Tall Ship project aims to inspire positive educational and investment decisions in Blyth leading to its regeneration by putting William Smith back in his rightful place in world history by repeating his boat building and voyage endeavours. A near identical ship is being refitted by 40 apprentices a year and volunteers and the project will be recruiting and training 200 young people for the voyage which is expected to take about a year to complete. On the way the expedition will take part in meaningful global science projects and showcase the skills and courage of the people



deliver short cost effective and specific skill courses as and when needed by various industries in the Maritime and Offshore Engineering.

The project is now supplying newly trained apprentices into full time jobs in the local engineering and offshore sector with over 30% gaining employment and 40% going on to further education. By combining the heritage experience of reliving Captain William Smith's adventures and working with the growing businesses in Blyth, it is hoped that both the community and the unsung hero will find new and exciting futures.

A variety of inspiring programmes are also delivered for schools. One day history and engineering courses for schools, looking at the discovery of Antarctica by William Smith on his Tall Ship are now run at Woodhorn Archive and Newcastle University at their Blyth

Marine Station. It also runs successful bespoke courses and experiences in conjunction with the Port of Blyth around STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects and employability. The courses involve learning about heritage research, ship building, the history of the port and port operations and employ creative and hands on skills.

Enable!

The Blyth Tall Ship Project is based on the quayside at Blyth next to the RNLI station and operates a ship, its berth, a new and a refurbished heritage boat workshops, a Museum and Local Seafood Bistro 'Blyth Boathouse', employing and training local people in hospitality skills.

While the project has mainly been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as the Port of Blyth,

Northumberland County Council and various other local and national charities, it is developing a corporate entertaining business a working boatyard and paid for schools and visitor services, to make it more sustainable.

With the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund, a 100 year old Baltic Trader was acquired in 2015, to refit and recreate the original voyage of Captain William Smith. It was greater enthusiastically by over 15000 local people on its arrival from Denmark and was renamed the Williams II by Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex on April 20th 2016. She is the same hull size and configuration as the original Williams although with a more efficient rig than that of a Brig. Williams II will be the host Tall Ship for the Tall Ship Regatta in August this year.

The project is also researching the life of merchant seamen and collecting shipping and maritime memorabilia from around 200 years ago at the time Captain William Smith made his epic voyage in order to recreate and learn about the conditions at sea at the time. The project has already received contributions from the Port of Blyth and Newcastle University School of Marine Science. The project also runs a heritage centre focussed on Blyth's past shipping glories and the growth of the Port and holds regular open days, to inspire future generations to use their own adventurous spirit to play their part in the future prosperity of Blyth.

Training in archive work is offered through its affiliation with Woodhorn Archive in Ashington and funding for the training was obtained from the Heritage Lottery Funding. The volunteers for the archive work meet on a Tuesday at the Blyth Boathouse Heritage Centre and are allowed use of the Port of Blyth Archive to build a picture of the past by exploring, recording and restoring some fascinating artefacts, documents, photos and charts that have never before been seen by the public. These result in several mobile exhibition pieces to display alongside restored small boats from the workshop.

Inspire!

Blyth Tall Ship has always had ambitious plans to represent Blyth and the UK positively on the world stage. It started with grass roots skills learning, it employs inspiring and engaging work with heritage vessels and has used this to restore the fortunes of many young people. The restoration of its heritage Tall Ship which will now enable a globally important celebration of the achievements of the community in 2019 and will support ongoing maritime festivals and events that bring in tourism and businesses that are sorely needed to grow the local economy.

"I think the Blyth Tall Ship project is fantastic on so many levels. We have an amazing heritage of boat building in this country and this project is keeping that alive. It is also introducing the magic of sailing adventures to a new generation and doing so in a self-sustaining way. I am sure the project will bring a lot of enjoyment to everyone involved. Go for it!" Dame Ellen MacArthur, retired British sailor and solo round the world yachtswoman.

Our Patron, The Duchess of Northumberland said: " Tall ships, adventure and active learning, all aimed at getting young people in to new jobs. This is an inspirational project for Northumberland and we should all back it."

Clive Gray Chief Executive of Blyth Tall Ship, retired Royal Marine Officer and Social Entrepreneur said: " The people of Blyth, young and old alike, have taken their own story of the last great continental discovery to their



"This is an inspirational project for Northumberland and we should all back it."

hearts. It is inspiring responses from junior school children and their teachers writing songs and visiting, young people who have lost their way and their self confidence, and skilled adults who want to put something back into their community. Blyth Tall Ship has become a family with inspiration, hope and determination at its heart. The ripples of positivity and the improved potential of those who work with us extend far beyond our immediate team and Inspire change. Putting the project on a world stage through the Williams Expedition will underpin this success and provide a lasting course of community cohesion and pride for future generations.'



BLYTH PLAYS LEADING ROLE

in developing the UK's offshore renewable energy industry

Just over 100 years ago, the 15 acre site on the banks of the River Blyth saw the construction of the Royal Navy's first aircraft carrier, the HMS Ark Royal.

Today, it's home to the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult's National Renewable Energy Centre, which provides the most comprehensive open-access test and research facilities anywhere in the world for the up-scaling of offshore renewable energy technologies. Testing and demonstration activity has been ongoing there since 2002,

with more than £150 million invested in integrated research and testing facilities for the offshore wind and marine industries.

ORE Catapult is the UK's flagship technology innovation and research centre for offshore wind, wave and tide. It works with industry and research partners to identify, develop, prove and de-risk promising new technologies and bring them to market, helping to reduce the cost of offshore renewable energy, supporting the growth of the industry and delivering UK economic benefit.

The facilities at the National Renewable Energy Centre include 50m and 100m blade test facilities, a 15 Megawatt (MW) wind turbine nacelle test facility, 3MW tidal turbine power train test facility, three dry dock facilities, as well as a United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited electrical and materials laboratory. They offer a supportive environment to get new technologies ready for deployment sooner by providing a controlled environment to perform accelerated life testing and proof of concept trials,

helping to improve device reliability, reduce product costs and accelerate the development and deployment of offshore renewable energy technologies in the UK.

The Centre also provides welcome local employment. ORE Catapult employs about 120 employees across its sites in Glasgow and Levenmouth in Scotland, with around 70 of those employees based at the Blyth site. The Catapult also runs a successful apprenticeship scheme with Newcastle University.

Blades

The Centre has been testing wind turbine blades since 2005 and in that time has firmly established itself as an independent development partner for manufacturers of wind turbine blades.

In 2012, a new £20 million facility, the largest in the world, and capable of conducting testing of wind turbine blades up to 100m in length, was commissioned. These world-leading facilities enable blade manufacturers to achieve industry certification, allowing them to carry out both fatigue testing, using a hydraulic system to resonate the blade at its natural frequency, and static testing, where a blade is pulled using winches up to its failure point.

Power trains

The 3MW and 15MW power train test facilities are capable of performing independent performance and reliability assessments of full systems and components. Both test rigs are able to perform accelerated lifetime testing in a full scale, controlled offshore environment. The data collected helps to improve the understanding of turbine performance, identifying any

potential assembly and design issues in a compressed time period, ultimately reducing the technical and commercial risk of deployment.

The 3MW drive train test facility is used for the testing of tidal turbine drive trains and individual components. Leading tidal energy developer Atlantis Resources Ltd conducted a six week test programme on their next generation AR1500 (1.5MW) tidal turbine which will be installed in the Pentland Firth at MeyGen, the UK's first tidal array, in the Pentland Firth off the Scottish coast. The tests are the critical final stage of development that will give Atlantis, MeyGen and their investors the confidence that the turbine is ready to be deployed and to start generating electricity.

High Voltage (HV) electrical systems

The UKAS accredited laboratories are equipped with an extensive suite of specialist test and measurement facilities, helping clients to develop technologies to cater for the needs of the developing power systems and exploring life extension opportunities for ageing assets. They are the only UK accredited facilities for the testing of power cable systems, capable of providing type testing services for underground and submarine cable systems.

Marine renewables testing

As the site is an ex-shipyard, it has dis-used dry docks to create a real-life testing ground for trialling new technologies in a controlled onshore environment. The facility is used to perform equipment trials, prove installation techniques, and conduct performance verification and witness tests for the offshore energy sector. The

two still water docks and a simulated seabed have enabled ORE Catapult to play an instrumental role in the testing and trialling of novel cutting devices for rock trenching equipment, such as IHC Engineering Business Ltd's Hi-Traq Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) trenching technology, submerged testing of ROVs and cable protection system trials.

Local benefit

The Catapult's testing services and expertise brings huge benefits to north east companies.

More than 200 small businesses in the North East benefited from a Catapult-led European Regional Development Funded project (ERDF) related to offshore wind and marine training. The Blyth-based project delivered health and safety and technical training in a range of disciplines in order to help companies access crucial supply chain opportunities and diversify their business into the offshore renewable energy sector.

One of the project's success stories was Cramlington-based Dynamo Electrical. As a result of receiving working at height, confined spaces and other offshore renewable energy-relevant courses, the company has been able to transfer some of their electrical testing and certification skills, and more than triple its workforce to 38 members of staff. They also won a substantial asset management contract as a result of the direct support received.

ORE Catapult's world-leading research, testing and demonstration facilities help to bring innovative technologies to market, lower costs and provide the industry with confidence and reassurance, helping to encourage further investment and the wider supply chain to make the transition into the offshore renewable energy industry.

Silx Teen Bar is celebrating its 20 year anniversary this year, so we thought we would start this piece by telling you a little bit about our history and how the project started....

Silx Teen Celebrates!

In September 1995 a group of local Blyth based professionals made up of the Health service, Social Services, Blyth Valley Council and Ridley High School Youth Service along with parents and ex substance misuse users were very concerned with the escalating number of young people aged 15 -25 who were dying from using Heroin and Methadone in the Blyth area. This group came together and acquired the name of People and Drugs (the parent company of Silx Teen Bar)

In the same year, the BBC 'Panorama' programme was planning to base an episode on Blyth and the escalating number of deaths in the area. The programme although was very negative about Blyth, resulting in the label of 'Drug capital of the North East' actually raised the issue of the problem, resulting in the education sector, the health sector and Blyth Valley Council launching 'The Drug Reference Group', which looked into the problem and tried to find solutions. One of the people who saw the Panorama programme was Kevin Keegan, the then manager of Newcastle United Football Club who contacted the programme and offered his support. The support consisted of a series of football matches between Newcastle United, Blyth Spartans and Gateshead with in excess of £250,000 being raised towards the finding solutions to the issue.

The funds were used to support the work of People and Drugs and other organisations. With their share of the funds in 1996 People and Drugs acquired the lease of Silx an unused building in Blyth Market place which was once a wine bar. With the support of Ridley High School Youth Service, People and Drugs set up youth provision in order to offer diversionary projects and activities for the young people of Blyth and 'SILX TEEN BAR' was born.

Silx Teen Bar has a caring ethos and

gets to know every single young person that walks through the door and for the last 20 years we have delivered lots of different projects and provision including:

- Detached work, reaching out to young people who may not access any other centre based youth provision
- Sexual Health C Card Drop in
- Art Projects
- Health projects
- Music Projects including a monthly MCing and Djing night
- Hundreds of trips and residential opportunities introducing young people to places outside of the Blyth area
- Football and sporting activities
- Employability Support

At present and for quite some time we have been the largest youth provider in Northumberland offering support to over 1,000 individual young people every year. We currently run two very successful centre based projects:

Our Teen Bar Project runs every week Monday-Thursday from 5pm-8pm for young people aged 11-19, during these sessions the young people can come and meet youth workers, chill out with mates, play pool and Xbox and also get involved with all of the various Arts, Health, Music and sports activities. All of our activities are free and we endeavour to raise awareness, encourage the development of transferable skills and always ensure that the young people have fun. We were recently given the 'Group Impact Award' at this year's Northumberland Finest Awards after parents and young people commented on how Silx has had such a positive impact on their lives, this was a great honour and the level of support and encouragement our team give to the young people in Blyth is unquestionable.

Our Silx Employability Project runs every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12-3pm and was set up specifically to meet the needs of hard to reach and

marginalised young people aged 16-25 living in Blyth. Young people who are unemployed and not in education or training are encouraged to use our sessions to get support with job search, CVs, Cover letters, job applications. We also offer free use of internet and printing facilities, free refreshments and offer support, advice and guidance around training, debt, housing, health, benefits and any other issues that may be a barrier to a young person progressing in life. Our team consists of youth workers and we also have an information, advice and guidance worker and are able to give individual bespoke action plans for every young person we work with. We have recently become an AQA accredited centre which means the young people can complete accreditations in all aspects of employability as well as other subject areas, as well as the AQA's we also have a whole range of online courses that can be completed in our sessions such as IOSH, CSCS, Asbestos Awareness, food hygiene and many more.... We work very closely with the job centre, careers advisors, training providers and housing organisations so we are able to refer young people when appropriate.

As well as our centre based provision we also have a detached team who work out on the streets of Blyth every Wednesday and Friday evening with the aim of building positive relationships with young people who choose not to access any centre based youth provision. The team have been running these sessions for a year now and have made contact with over 300 young people and have encouraged them to come to Silx, given advice and have arranged trips. The team work very closely with the police and the anti-social behaviour team to help find solutions to youth disorder in Blyth and have been recommended for the positive interventions with young people.



"We are the largest youth provider in Northumberland offering support to over 1,000 individual young people every year"



For further information about Silx please check out our website: www.silxteen.com you can also find us on Facebook and Twitter

ENGAGE

opportunities for success

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid"

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Everyone Needs Good And Guided Engagement

Hello! I am Connor Fielding and I started at ENGAGE on 6th January 2016. I am one of the first students here and in a few short months it has really helped me to get better grades while enjoying learning.

Before I came to ENGAGE there were a lot of things being built within the unit, like the salon and the barbers where Davy who works and owns Headkase in Blyth is teaching some of the boys how to cut hair. Phil - the teacher who does the lesson called Vocational - is the lead on the project to transform one part of ENGAGE into a 'town within a town' where we can all learn lots of different trades. He is also teaching us to build a lot of stuff like a bird table, a work bench, a name banner for the vocational room and a planter for the back garden. Ashleigh who is also a teacher at ENGAGE does ICT and Personal Development. She does a lot of things in that lesson like your CV, ECDL and organising college open-days for the year 11's

who want to go to college. There is an English teacher as well, Mrs Davidson. The boss Mr Herron runs Engage and also teaches maths and PE - and there are other teachers who come in on certain days like Joe who also does maths and Alice who does English. They are great teachers and are always focussed on what they can do to help the students achieve the best possible grades.

On Mondays I do work experience with Keith Jewitt landscape, gardening and fencing. I have been working with him for 6 weeks and might be getting an apprenticeship with him. This was organised through ENGAGE and all of the other students have placements too. I have learned a lot of things when I have been with Keith. The last time I was with him I was putting lamp-posts up in West Heighley Gate but we do all sorts like putting flagstones down, laying driveways and putting fencing down. It is really funny and I have learned loads, working on jobs with Keith and Andy who he has to help him.

"I hope to see each student achieve success in finding a future progression route - be it an apprenticeship or any other training. We want the students of ENGAGE to leave us as outstanding well-rounded individuals who will contribute towards making their community a better place to live."

MR HERRON

North Sea Tall
Ships Regatta
BLYTH 2016





A fleet of up to 30 Tall Ships will sail into Blyth, Northumberland this August bank holiday for the county's biggest free event in 2016 - the North Sea Tall Ships Regatta.

Over the four day festival, visitors will be able to enjoy fairground rides, street theatre, fireworks, live music and have the chance to climb on board some of the largest and most spectacular Tall Ships in the world.

Northumberland County Council, in partnership with the Port of Blyth and Sail Training International, is hosting the prestigious event – the UK's only Regatta in 2016. Fergusons of Blyth, one of the UK's leading privately owned haulage companies and the biggest in the North East, has been confirmed as the principal sponsor for the event in celebration of their 90th Anniversary.

The North Sea Tall Ships Regatta Blyth 2016 takes place from Friday 26 – Monday 29 August.

Cultural programme

Thanks to a £120,000 grant from Arts Council England, organisers are developing an extensive cultural programme with partners, individuals and community groups; including Blyth-based Headway Arts, Woodhorn Museum through the bait programme, and creative producers, Culture Creative.

It includes the reanimation of the Blyth Carnival and the production of three large scale evening performances featuring sound, images and fireworks.

Blyth Carnival

Headway Arts will be leading on the re-imagining of the Carnival, and would like to involve local people of all ages and experience to work alongside their company of professional artists to help create and paint decorative sails, and design costumes and giant puppets on the themes of 'Sagas of the Seven Seas' for the Carnival procession.

People taking part will be able to join the Carnival procession and the spectacular Crew Parade which takes place on the Saturday afternoon at the Regatta.

Allie Walton-Robson, Creative Director, Headway Arts, said: "We have had lots of requests to revive the popular Blyth Carnival Parade and the Regatta seemed like a fantastic catalyst to do this - it's a chance for us to show off our great creative community."

"We have a partner organisation in Sweden, which is where the Tall Ships are heading after the Regatta, helping us to give the event a Swedish flavour."

"We'd love to hear from individuals, dance, arts and musical groups who'd like to make a costume or join our community band or participate in a colourful parade."

"We are also launching our newly refurbished ArtSpace - so it's all very exciting and we are looking

forward to giving visitors to the Tall Ships a proper Northumbrian welcome."

Anyone interested in getting involved will be able to join the Carnival club workshops which begin in June at Headway ArtSpace every Tuesday: 4-7pm.

Arts trail

Also underway is the development of an Arts Trail featuring a wide range of venues in Blyth, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Sluice. Participating venues on the trail will showcase local artists' work which will also be available for purchase. A free map of the trail will be produced for visitors to follow.

Street dressing

The Keel Row Shopping Centre in Blyth commissioned Headway Arts to work with volunteer artists to create 'banners of celebration' for the coming of the Tall Ships to the town.

Twelve banners have been hand-painted on pure silk by people of all ages in a project supported by youth and community groups and local schools who have worked alongside professional artists from Headway Arts. You can see the wonderful results in the Keel Row.

Traffic and parking

To ensure a fun and safe event, parking will be outside of the town using park and ride facilities. There will be no event parking in the town itself.

A traffic management plan will be in place during the event including temporary road closures, a one-way system, and parking restrictions. Parking permits will be issued to residents where restrictions are in place. Emergency access will be maintained at all times, including to the hospital and GP services.

Programme of events:

The exciting programme of four fun-packed days of entertainment will make the Tall Ships a great day out. A fabulous pyrotechnical display will illuminate Regatta and visitors will be able to enjoy the fireworks on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings.

The fireworks which will be part of a spectacular nightly entertainment show at Blyth harbour choreographed around a specially-commissioned 20-minute music and visual performance.

The music and visual arts for the performance have been commissioned by Active Northumberland, working with community groups across south east Northumberland, funded by Arts Council England and Northumberland County Council.

Lots of local musicians will also playing on the event's stages and at designated busking spots. Over 200 applications were received from acts to play.



Pupils from the Dales School, Blyth and Assistant head teacher, Leesa Harbottle (back row – far right), Frances Castle, chief executive (left), and Alison Walton-Robson (orange floral dress, centre), Creative Director, Headway Arts; Trevor Gyllenspetz, centre manager, The Keel Row Shopping Centre; councillor Kath Nisbet (far left, glasses); and the Tall Ships banners in the Keel Row Shopping Centre.

The programme of events includes:

Friday 26 August: - opens 10am

12 noon: Welcome the world to Blyth and Northumberland:

12-8pm: Street theatre, fairground rides (with a charge), music and other entertainment

9pm: Performance and fireworks

10pm: Event close

Saturday 27 August:

Creating worldwide atmospheres for everyone to enjoy

10am-8pm: Street theatre, fairground rides (with a charge), music and other entertainment

3pm: Crew Parade and Carnival

4.30pm: Crew prize-giving at Dun Cow Quay

9pm: Performance and fireworks

10pm: Event close

Sunday 28 August:

Blyth-Gothenburg Cultural Exchange

10am-8pm: Street theatre, fairground rides (with a charge), music and other entertainment

9pm: Performance and fireworks

10pm: Event close

Monday 29 August:

Grand Depart: Celebrating Gothenburg

10am-5pm: Street theatre, fairground rides (with a charge), music and other entertainment

2-3pm: Parade of Sail with a special farewell musical commission to wish the ships fair sail.

5pm: Event close

Meet the Fleet:

The Regatta is a perfect opportunity to climb on board and meet the crews and captains, and see what life is like on a Tall Ship.

There are four classes of Tall Ships. The largest are the Class 'A' vessels and those coming to Blyth include the *Shtandart* from Russia which is a replica of the 1703 frigate built by Peter the Great. It was built in 1994 at St Petersburg and is 32-metres (100-feet) long.

The ship is richly decorated with beautiful carvings. A lion figurehead and mermaids adorn the bow; and there are wreaths around the gunports and on the transom, a three-headed dragon, flags, the imperial crest and King Neptune riding on the sea.

One of the biggest ships sailing in will be the 108-metre long *Dar Młodzieży* from Poland. Built in 1982 and owned by the Gdynia Maritime Academy, her name means 'the gift of youth'.

The *Lord Nelson* is a 48-metre (157-feet) long vessel built to enable able-bodied and physically disabled people to sail side-by-side and share the adventure and experience of tall ship sailing as equals.

Community Village

Blyth Development Trust and Northumberland Community Voluntary Action are hosting a community village on the town market to showcase local charities and small traders.

Information Centre

The Tall Ships Information Centre at the Keel Row Shopping Centre, Blyth is now open and provides information on the Regatta for local residents, businesses and visitors. It is open at the following times for the first weeks of its operation: Wednesdays: 1-5pm; Thursdays: 1-6.30pm; Fridays: 9am - 5pm; Saturdays: 9am - 12.30pm. The centre will extend its opening times closer to the event.

Quote: Councillor Val Tyler, cabinet member for Arts, Leisure and Culture at Northumberland County Council, said: "This is going to be a very exciting time for residents and visitors to the county this August Bank Holiday when the Tall Ships Regatta comes to Blyth."

"It's going to be a fantastic free event with something for all the family across five entertainment zones featuring music, theatre and circus acts, and a spectacular fireworks display and evening performance on Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

For more information about the North Sea Tall Ships Regatta Blyth 2016, visit: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/tallshipsblyth2016> or Twitter: @TallShipsBlyth or the website: www.tallshipsblyth2016.com

For further information on Sail Training International, visit: www.sailtraininginternational.org

The Tall Ships Regatta is part of the Festival of the Coast taking place this summer, you can find out more at: <http://www.visitnorthumberland.com/>



Entertain

The SPARTANS

Blyth Spartans were formed in 1899, the 'Spartans' tag having been suggested by then Secretary Fred Stoker.



to this day. More recently the Spartans have reached the third round of the FA Cup twice playing Blackburn Rovers and Birmingham City at their home ground Croft Park. Media coverage of football, and things in general, has developed exponentially since 77/78 and name awareness of the Spartans has grown like-wise.

Current Blyth Spartans manager Tom Wade commented: "I'm a Blyth lad and I think I know what the club means to the town and to people across the world. Having said that I believe sometimes we don't realise just how extraordinarily well known we are.

"I think the football club is a major' export' for the town. It's a flag bearer for Blyth. When the football team are doing well the whole town is buoyant; it gives the town a lot of credibility. If you think of football shirts like those of Manchester United or Chelsea being worn across the world then Blyth Spartans is the non-league equivalent.

"I remember a time when I was driving in Australia – Brisbane, and I saw two young people wearing our famous green and white striped shirts. I couldn't believe it! I pulled over to speak to them and it turned out they were third generation Spartans fans whose grandparents had emigrated from Blyth and they still followed our progress.

"Wherever you are if you mention that you're from Blyth the other person will say 'Oh, Blyth Spartans'. It's actually a great ice-breaker.

"I recently experienced four good stories which really surprised me and which are good examples of the club's fame. The first was when, last season Teddy Sheringham the former Spurs and England super-star striker, rang me out of the blue about a non league player who I might be interested in. I

The name evokes characteristics such as fearlessness, self sacrifice for the cause and steadfastness.

These are attributes which the football club has endeavoured to live up to over the course of its distinguished history.

Blyth Spartans are primarily known for their exploits in Cup competitions, mainly the FA Cup. Termed 'the most famous non-league club in the world' knowledge about the Spartans is indeed a world-wide phenomenon, forged through numerous rousing Cup encounters.

The club reached the fifth round replay of the FA Cup in 1977/78. It was a record for a non-league club and it is one which still stands



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was almost speechless that it was him on the other end of the line. He said he was delighted to speak to the boss of 'the famous Blyth Spartans'! I couldn't believe it.

"We subsequently signed the player he was talking about, a young goalkeeper from Germany and he said he and his family were well aware of the Spartans and their exploits. Incredible.

"I was at a Paulo Nutini show last year in Glasgow and, through a contact, I was lucky enough to be invited to the post-show backstage party. I was introduced to Paulo as 'Tom Wade, manager of Blyth Spartans' and he said 'Really? I'm a Partick supporter but I certainly know about the Spartans and their famous Cup runs'. I was astonished.

"Then there was our League, the Evo-Stik League, Annual Dinner last year when I got chatting to the head of Evo-Stik's parent company Bostik. He



was saying about how the company use the name 'Blyth Spartans' in their team-building training in terms of discussing motivation and teamwork and how they are both vital ingredients for success.

"Those are just a few of my own recent experiences of how famous a club we are. I'm sure loads of other residents have similar tales. All this fame is great for the town as a whole and helps promote a very positive image of it. It's amazing to think of our success not only gets the town itself buzzing but also resonates across the world."

The Spartans Media Manager, Blyth-born Phil Castiaux, commented: "In

terms of name awareness the football club continually advertise Blyth across the globe. In our last major FA Cup run a couple of years ago several million people watched our live televised game against Hartlepool which was shown across the world. Even more tuned in to see us on Match of the Day when we were narrowly beaten by Birmingham City while tens of millions listened to the game on Five Live and the World Service. In advertising terms that sort of publicity would cost an absolute fortune."

www.blythspartansafc.co.uk

Northumberland boasts some of the country's, if not Europe's, most beautiful and spectacular scenery, which lends itself to become the backdrop for an array of fantastic events.

Blyth is so much more than just pretty views and somewhere to dip your toes into the water – there's something to do all year round.



North-FUN-berland

The region's colourful pallet helps to paint a tourism picture containing rolling rural settings that are complimented by breath-taking coastal seascapes.

Nowhere better is this portrayed than in the town of Blyth, situated on the South East Northumberland coastline with its relaxing, pastel sea views.

Blyth is so much more than just pretty views and somewhere to dip your toes into the water – there's something to do all year round.

This is being recognised by the number of high profile destination events taking place or involving Blyth, like the North Sea Tall Ships Regatta and the Tour of Britain cycle race. Both of which have the pulling power to bring thousands of people into the town, to the benefit of local businesses, residents and tourism.

Blyth has also nurtured its very own annual headlining show with Northumberland Live, Blyth attracting over 30,000 people to Blyth Beach since its birth three years ago. The showcase has attracted chart-topping acts like Scouting For Girls, Toploader, Doctor and the Medics and The Christians. It also provides a platform for local musicians to perform their own brand of music to live audiences, with the event giving welcome trade to North-East independent traders.

Blyth Beach Huts have become iconic buildings recognised and photographed by visitors, tourists and residents with the twenty wooden cabins proving popular for people using the beach or just hiring them to soak up the cathartic setting.

The fresh air bodes well for walks along the beach and scaling the dunes to get the blood rushing round your body; and as a reward at the end of the trek there's award-winning fish and chips from Coastline or delicious homemade ice cream from Ciccarelli's with over 40 flavours to choose from.

Blyth perfectly utilises its location by staging popular events including the Summer Fair that takes over the traditional market place with a bustling collection of fairground rides, stalls and attractions; through to the annual Bonfire Night firework display on the Quayside.

Another cool place to visit that is steeped in heritage and culture is Blyth Battery. It boasts unique World War One and Two Coastal Defence buildings alongside a collection of captivating exhibits. The volunteers also stage regular re-enactments involving memorabilia and realistic costumes. The Battery celebrated its 100th birthday in 2016 and continues to educate visitors about our past that should never be forgotten.

When there's a winter breeze in the air and people are preparing for Santa, Blyth Town Centre welcomes a celeb or two to switch-on the Christmas Lights. In years gone by the likes of The X-Factor's very own superstar Joe McElderry has flicked the switch to illuminate the town.

If culture is your bag, then look no further than The Phoenix Theatre which has been entertaining audiences for half-a-century with original and touring shows from the sparkly world of stage, music, dance and comedy.

Let's not forget Blyth's pieces of public art with *The Spirit of the Staithes* sculpture by artist Simon Packard, which is positioned on the Quayside; *Hyperscope* by Simon Watkinson in Blyth's town centre, and CURRENT a light installation by Laura Harrington and Jamie Allen that brings the Blyth Beach Huts to life after dark.



Ciccarelli's



Scouting For Girls



Northumberland Live

Blyth Beach Huts



Photo by James Sebright

If you're interested in learning more about visiting Blyth, then the ideal place to click is Blyth Town Council's website www.blythtowncouncil.org.uk

Resident permit zones and access restrictions



- General resident permit zone
- Permit issued for accessing one way system
- No vehicular access to properties during event:
- ↔ Buses and taxis only during peak times
- ↔ Buses, taxis and permits only
- Permit provided for alternative parking at Crofton Mill site on Plessey Road
- One way system
- End of one-way system



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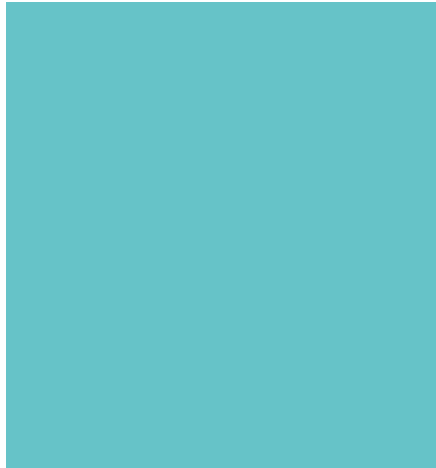
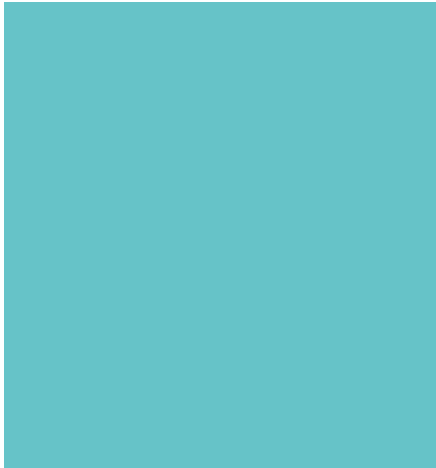


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