



# Between the Lines

Land of Oak & Iron Mapping Project Newsletter

August 2019

This month we report on the meeting and items raised at The Lodge in Consett, pose the question “Where on earth are we?” and explain how *full.chin.loops* and other random collections of words may hold part of the answer. Over on page 2 there is a guide to Heritage Open Days events, in our area, during mid-September.

## Volunteer meeting August 2019

The informal topic group meetings have continued and it seems a great deal of work is getting done by the team members. We return to holding two meetings each month from September.

The Lodge in Consett seems to be well suited to our activities with the exception of only having limited access to the internet. We have sought to address this concern by setting up local hotspots, but with limited success. These concerns are taken seriously and we will keep you all informed of our progress in resolving them. During the meeting a request for access to 1st edition 6 inch series maps was made. Whilst we do not have funds to purchase these we understand a full set is held at the “Lit and Phil” in Newcastle and are available for viewing by the public. Many for our area are also available on the National Library of Scotland web site. In addition we have our own scanned versions of 25 inch series maps, mainly from 1919/1920 and are working out how we might be able to make these available to the mapping group. We will be keeping you informed of our progress at meetings and in future newsletters.

## Where on earth are we?

If asked this question it would perhaps not be unusual to look on a map, identify the name of a place or a feature marked on it, and explain where we were relative to that. We may use directions based on the points of the compass and a scale, or a grid system, to explain to others how to find our location.

To us this is a relatively simple concept; of course we know which direction on the map is north and surely every map will be marked with a grid and have a scale. It has not always been the way.

Ptolemy, the Greek philosopher, is widely attributed with being the first to use a grid system, containing longitude and latitude elements, on paper maps in the second century. His other innovation was devising a method of projecting features on the near spherical surface of the earth to a flat sheet of paper. More details may be found [here](#).

Jump forward to the mid-16th century; The Age of Exploration, maps have developed as have tools for navigating the world, with some degree of accuracy, even though errors of several miles were the norm when crossing oceans.

In the UK we have the British National Grid (BNG) system, used by Ordnance Survey. This useful system allows a location to be defined to the desired degree of accuracy. For example, a 10 metre square can be defined by a simple 8 figure reference (2 letters and 6 numbers). Greater accuracy is achieved by using longer references. The availability of satellite technology has led to the development of GPS (Global Positioning System). Originally intended for military use, GPS has proven extremely popular in the public domain and is very accessible using modern smart mobile phones. Despite all this technology it can still prove very difficult for others to find the correct location. Read more about BNG and GPS systems and limitations in [this publication](#) by Ordnance Survey.

In 2013 after several difficulties locating addresses by a variety of methods Chris Sheldrick came up with a concept of using words rather than numbers. Together with two friends he developed a system that defines any place on earth using three words. In simple terms they divided the surface of the earth into a grid of 3m x 3m squares and randomly assigned three words to each of them. It is claimed that most people find it far easier to recall a group of three words than a string of letters and numbers. The system uses an app (*what3words*) on a mobile phone in conjunction with its GPS location to find the relevant three word sequence. So the entrance to the heritage centre at Winlaton Mill is *full.chin.loops*. Working in conjunction with Google maps the sequence of any location may be found. The limitations of both GPS and the accuracy with which locations are marked on Google maps still exist, however, as a recent article on the [BBC news site](#) reported, the app seems to be gaining some credence with the emergency services and may be a further step towards answering the question “Where on earth are we?”.

## Contact:

[landofoakandiron@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:landofoakandiron@groundwork.org.uk)

01207 524883

Kath Marshall-Ivens

Community Engagement Officer

## Portal:

<http://www.landofoakandironlocalhistoryportal.org.uk/index.asp>

## Heritage Open Days - 2019

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Heritage Open Days. Since 1994 this ten day event, spanning two weekends, has grown into England's largest heritage festival. It forms part of the European Heritage Days project which is held during September each year across Europe. Each country has its own way of organising its events, however, a common theme is to open historic buildings and monuments, including many normally having closed or restricted access, and heritage events, to the public.

In England, from around 700 individual events in its first year, 2019 will see over 5000 being run by people from public, private and the voluntary sectors. Events are held throughout the country and the north-east has its fair share of treasures to share. Below are brief details of a selection of the events being held in Land of Oak & Iron.

### Allensford Blast Furnace - Saturday 14th September

Join the archaeologists, between 10:30 and 12:00 noon, to explore and learn about Britain's earliest surviving ore-roasting kiln which can be found hidden in the woods near the banks of the River Derwent.

Book [here](#).

### Winlaton Forge - Saturday 14th September

The Cottage Forge is the last remaining link in the village to Crowley's vast iron manufacturing enterprise. With artefacts and information about Winlaton, The Forge is open from 10:00 until 12:00 noon.

Contact Susan Lynn, at [Winlaton Local History Society](#) for further information.

### Gibside Banqueting House - Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September

A gothic folly in a prominent location on the edge of Gibside Park dating from the 1750s is open to the public. *Note: Gibside Park is managed by the National Trust and not included in the Heritage Open Days event. Details, including ticket prices are available [here](#).*

Booking not required. Further details can be found [here](#).

### Shotley Bridge History walks - 14th, 15th, 21st & 22nd September

Join a different member of the Shotley Bridge Village Trust at 14:00 on each day to hear about the history, buildings and people of the villages, including sword and paper making industries. Self guided tours are also available.

Booking not required. Further details can be found [here](#).

### Discover Pont Valley's Heritage - Sunday 15th September

Let local historian David Marrs guide you on a 5 mile (3 hour) walk through the area discovering the remaining signs of its industrial past. Starts at 10:00.

Book [here](#).

### Discover Derwentcote Steel Furnace - Monday 16th September and Friday 20th September

See inside the building, which is rarely open to the public. Learn how wrought iron was turned into steel and about the lives of the people who worked here hundreds of years ago.

Monday's session is 17:00 until 19:00 and that on Friday from 10:00 until 12:00 noon.

Book [here](#).

### Ambrose Crowley, a man ahead of his time - Tuesday 17th September and Wednesday 18th September

Hear all about the remarkable organisation established by Ambrose Crowley in the late 17th century. With its own 'laws', courts, schools, welfare and pensions system this pioneering site played a key role in the Industrial Revolution.

The talk, followed by a walk to the dam, the only visible remains of Crowley's No.1 Mill, starts at 17:15 on both dates.

Book [here](#).

### Family hands-on heritage - Sunday 22nd September

Visit Chopwell Wood with the family between 11:00 and 15:00 to see demonstrations and have a go at activities including green woodworking, willow weaving, charcoal making, wool spinning, clay tile and pot making, flint napping, vintage forestry vehicles, and heavy horse logging.

Booking is not required.

### West Wylam Colliery archaeological dig - Monday 9th to Friday 20th September

Take the opportunity to get involved in an archaeological investigation into the workings of this 1870s coal mine on weekdays from 10:00 to 16:00.

Book [here](#).

### Visits throughout the Country

For those who fancy venturing further afield an [interactive page](#) on the Heritage Open Days website will allow visits in all parts of England to be planned.

### Coming up in September:

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 , [The Winlaton Centre](#), North Street NE21 6BY (in Winlaton village)

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 [The Lodge](#), Laburnum Avenue, Blackhill, Consett, DH8 5TA

