

Down the Park

Inspiring Learning Activities
about North Lodge Park,
Darlington



For teachers and home educators.

Roy Lawson and Sarah Gouldsbrough

Acknowledgements

This resource was written by Roy Lawson, a freelance heritage educator, with help from Sarah Gouldsbrough, Learning and Access Officer at Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum. It was written in Autumn/ Winter 2010, as part of the project to renovate and celebrate the Bandstand in North Lodge Park, Darlington.

Whilst it has been written with North Lodge Park in mind, the activities can be adapted to suit other parks and green spaces in other areas. Activities are aimed at Key Stage Two, but can easily be adapted for younger or older children. Whilst we have written for a schools audience, all the activities can be done by home educators and their families.

Find out more about Roy's work via his blogs

Roy Lawson

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What I'm currently doing:

- <http://roy-at-work.blogspot.com/>

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Context

History of Darlington and North Lodge Park

People have been living in the area for around 10 000 years, displays in the Head of Steam tell the story of the development of Darlington, including timelines. A visit will help to place the building of North Lodge Park in the context of a prosperous and developing town.

By the 17th century Darlington was turning into a prosperous town. The Quaker community of County Durham chose to settle here and built a Friends Meeting House in 1678. By the 1800's they formed an important part of Town society. North Lodge had not yet been built and the area to the north of the market place was where the influential families chose to build their big houses. During the Victorian and Edwardian eras much of this area of Darlington was laid out and built. North Lodge Park and the other Darlington Parks demonstrate the aspirations of Darlington to be seen as a modern and 'caring' town.

James and Jonathon Backhouse were the town's bankers and the family owned parkland, close to the Market place. Around 1830 they built the house called Elmfield. The house still stands, but looks little like a country mansion as it is hidden behind shop fronts. There were woodland walks a large pond and boathouse. These are visible on old maps, particularly the First (1856-65) and Second Series (1894-99) Ordnance Survey Maps.

In 1832 John Beaumont Pease bought some of the land from William Backhouse and in 1836 built North Lodge Villa. He lived there for 40 years until his death in 1873. During the 1890's the Elmfield estate began to be broken up, some of the land was sold to the Town Corporation to build the Town's first Technical College (now Central House, some of the Council Offices).

A timeline for North Lodge Park

- About 1820 In the mid-1820s, the land stretching from what is today Gladstone Street up to the Cocker Beck on the other side of Corporation Road was parkland belonging to banker William Backhouse (1779-1844). His elder brother, Jonathan, was the family's head banker and was bankrolling the building of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.
- Before 1830 William had wooded walks and a large pond with a boathouse on his land. In about 1830 he built a mansion there, which he called Elmfield
- 1832 John Beaumont Pease (cousin of Joseph, MP) bought part of the Elmfield estate from William Backhouse
- 1836 JB Pease built North Lodge Villa. He lived there for 40 years until his death.
- 1850's Alfred Kitching bought Elmfield from William Backhouse. Estate is now small, less than 2 acres. Kitching added small piece of land to the north adjoining Cocker Beck to plant trees, perhaps to screen the coal depot.
- 1871 Some extra stables added to North Lodge. House remains virtually unchanged to the present day.
- 1894 The estate began to be broken up. Some land of Northgate was sold to the Corporation to build Darlington's first technical college.
- 1900 A new street – North Lodge Terrace was built on the west of the estate
- 1901 Gladstone Street was extended to meet Northgate
- 1901 The remaining land – 12 acres of the North Lodge estate was acquired by the Corporation to be turned into a park
- 1901-3 Site laid out and planted. Underground pipe supplied waste water from the swimming baths to control the level of the lake
- 1903 Park officially opened – added to existing parks in Darlington, gives 100 acres
- 1904 5 gas lamps installed to light the park
- 1904 Pair of black swans presented to the park
- 1905 Education Department took over North Lodge, stayed until 1970
- 1906 Bowling Green and pavilion opened
- 1906 Fish Pond converted into a boating lake

1920	Elmfield estate came up for sale the Corporation bought most of the land
1932	The pond filled and re-landscaped
1935	Boathouse converted into a shelter
1948	A seat was presented by Darlington Townswomen
1954	Boathouse demolished
1960	Site proposed for new Town Hall, but building went elsewhere
1970	Education Dept moved out of North Lodge – became a teachers centre
C1970	North Lodge became a listed building
2003	Park is 100 years old
2004	Council granted funding to regenerate the park
2010	Bandstand refurbished and re-opened.
Sept 2010	Bandstand re-opened

Pre Visit Activities

1. What's in the Park now?

The first part of any Archaeological Investigation will be a Desk Top survey. Archaeologists study old maps, plans, drawings and photographs if possible. This activity uses old maps and modern aerial images to investigate North Lodge Park.

The Pupils will:

Study a locality using a variety of sources

Curriculum Links:

Geography: KS2

Geographic Enquiry and Skills – 1

Knowledge and understanding of places – 3b, d,

Knowledge and understanding of environmental change – 5a. (b)

Locality study - 6a

Maps and plans at a range of scales, - 7a

Field work outside the classroom – 7c

Also different sources of information, secondary sources

History: KS2

Chronological understanding – 1a ,b

Knowledge and understanding – 2a
ICT - use of internet
Eng – factual writing
Maths - scale

Main Activity:

How long will it take?

The children may not have much experience of maps, in this case, it may be worth devoting 1 or 2 full lessons to the topic.

How to do it:

Using the following to see what's in the park before a visit. What's happened to the Park in the last 100 years. What can the children see on the aerial photo and the maps?

Examine the old maps,
Discuss how things are represented.
Discuss ideas of scale

Examine the old maps – what could it tell us – record observations (see map grid) – look for features, eg paths, trees, bandstand, fountain, pond

Compare these observations with modern map and aerial photos (useful hint – Google earth and Bing maps allow maps on top of aerial images)
Discuss what's changed and what's stayed the same.

The children then develop a list of things they would like to investigate further on a visit to the Park.

What you might need:

Aerial photos, old maps - most resources can be accessed through the internet and shown on a whiteboard. Paper copies can be obtained from the Centre for Local Studies.

Plenary/follow up:

Follow up during your visit to the Park – see if there are any changes between the photos and maps, and the park now. Take your own photos.

2. The Park in the Papers

Over the last hundred years North Lodge Park has appeared in articles in both the Stockton and Darlington Times and the Northern Echo.

The Pupils will:

Use the internet and library to look for primary sources about the Park in the newspapers.

Curriculum Links:

History:

Using a range of sources, including primary ones – 4a

Knowledge and Understanding – 2a,2b

ICT: Finding things out – 1a,1b,1c

English: Using non fiction – 5b, 5c, 5d, 5g, 9b,9c

Main Activity:

How long will it take? One session using the internet, one – two hours in the library (can combine this activity with others)

How to do it:

Use the class whiteboard to look at the Northern Echo archives online – you can do this together or you can prepare some articles beforehand. Book a class visit to the Centre for Local Studies at Crown Street Library – explain what you will be doing in advance, they can then get items ready for you. They will explain to the class how to find things and how to use the equipment. There are charges for copying. You can also access old Ordnance Survey maps and old photos.

What you might need:

Range of examples of newspaper articles, access to the internet. Book time in the Centre for Local Studies.

Plenary/follow up: Later in the project, the children could write their own newspaper articles about a current Park issue or about their visit.

3. People from the Past

Many of the people who were important in Darlington's history lived near the park.

John Beaumont Pease (1803-73), (the nephew of **Edward Pease**, who was building the **Stockton and Darlington Railway**,) built North Lodge.

Banker **William Backhouse** (1779-1844). His elder brother, **Jonathan**, was the family's head banker and was bankrolling the building of the **Stockton and Darlington Railway**.

Elmfield was bought by the railway engineer **Alfred Kitching**. His son, John, was a keen horticulturalist and prettified the grounds further. Alfred had established a foundry in Hopetown in 1830 that would become known the world over as **Whessoe**.

The pupils will:

Use a variety of sources to find out about the people connected with the park.

Curriculum Links:

History:

Using a range of sources, including primary ones – 4a

Knowledge and Understanding – 2a,2b

ICT: Finding things out – 1a,1b,1c

English: Using non fiction – 5b, 5c, 5d, 5g, 9b,9c

Main Activity:

How long will it take? One lesson

How to do it:

Ask the children where they think they can find out more about people from the Park's history (books, newspapers, the internet, talking to friends and relatives). Set group tasks to find and present information at the end of the session or at the next one.

What you might need:

A variety of books about Darlington's history, newspaper articles (found in previous sessions), leaflets etc.

Plenary/follow up: Link this information in with the other information, images etc. Create a timeline wall.

A Visit to the Park

1. Map the Park

This activity takes the form of two linked activities – Sign Posts and Where Is it? Sign Posts provides a starting point for younger children or those with limited experience of maps. The background is that they are helping the Park Ranger by designing signs and maps for people their age so they need to think about what is in the park and what might be interesting to them.

Curriculum links

Geography: Enquiry and Skills – 1a,1b,2a,2b,2e

English: Speaking and Listening – 3a,3b,3f, 10a,10c

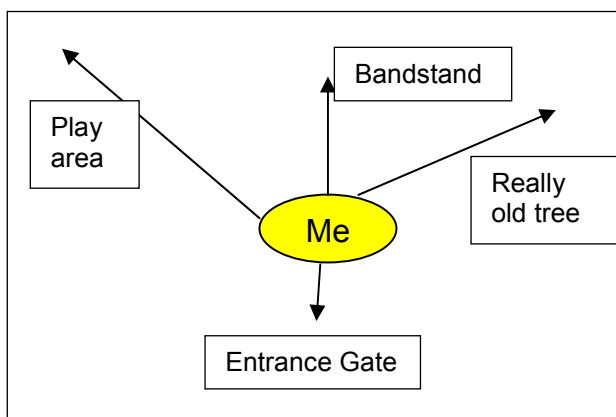
Sign Posts - Main Activity:

How long will it take?

This activity takes place in the outdoors, how long you spend on it might depend on the weather, suggested times might be around 15 minutes for each sign post.

How to do it:

Ask the children to draw a sign post to help people find their way around the park. They need to show where things are in relation to where they are standing. You could all start at a central point or have smaller groups at different points. They could swap over or compare results, showing where things are in relation to where they are sitting or standing.



The arrows indicate the location of the objects / people in relation to the child (labelled "Me"). The length of the arrow indicates the distance between the child and the object / person. The children could make their sign posts more interesting by using pictures instead of words.

The activity could be used to introduce the points of the compass to aid direction.

What you might need:

Pencils
Clipboards
Rubbers
Squared paper
15 cm ruler
Compass

As the activity is outdoors, the children will need to dress appropriately.

Where is it? - Main Activity:

How long will it take?

This activity takes place in the outdoors, how long you spend on it might depend on the weather, suggested times might be around 15 – 30 minutes depending on the skills of the group.

How to do it:

Begin at a central point, Introduce the idea of needing to map the park for visitors to find their way around. They are creating a map for their friends who haven't been to the Park before. What things would they want to see, need to find. You may wish to show them a street map to stimulate ideas. If they have done the signposts activity they will already have some idea of how to depict distance.

Place a small stick figure at the centre of the paper to represent the child. Remind them that things that are far away should be towards the edge of the paper. Discuss what things they might want to put on the map and how they will draw them. Will they draw what they see or use symbols or words? Their answer is up to them.

What you might need:

Pencils
Clipboards
Rubbers
Squared paper
15 cm ruler
Compass

Plenary/follow up:

Sign Posts – have the children see signposts anywhere else. They could spot different sign posts on the way back to school and then discuss the different types and what information is on them.

Where is it? - Children could finish and decorate the maps back at school. After finished the children could bring the maps back to the Park to see how well they represent the Park.

2. How old are the trees?

North Lodge Park was part of the grounds attached Elmfield House before the area was sold to the Town Corporation. Perhaps some of the trees have survived.

The pupils will:

Answer the question – Are any of the trees older than the park?

Curriculum Links:

Geography – fieldwork techniques – 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b

Maths:

Number – 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e

Shape, Space and measures – 4a, 4b.

Handling data – 2c, 2f

Main Activity:**How long will it take?**

The main part of the activity is measuring and recording the girth of trees in the park

How to do it:

Select some trees. Take a tape and measure the girth (distance around the trunk) approximately 150cms from the ground. Record this distance. It may be easier to work in groups of 3 or 4 children, 1 to record the number and the rest to hold the tape measure.

If the tree is growing close to other trees, and it has a tall straight trunk, it will have been struggling to grow up to the sunlight, so every 12mms of girth equals one year of growth.

If the tree is standing on its own with plenty of side branches growing from the trunk, then every 25 mm of girth equals one year of growth

You can estimate the age of the tree by girth of the tree divided by either 25mm or 12mm.

Measure and estimate carefully!

The results can be used to answer the questions,

Where any planted before the park was made? Any been planted since?

What you might need:

Long tape measure, clipboards, paper, pencils, string, camera.

Plenary/follow up:

The results recorded in the Park can be used as data for exercises back at school eg graphs. The results can be used a stimulus for discussions on trees and looking after trees

Children can estimate the ages of the trees, were any planted before the park was made? Have any been planted since?

Could make graphs and use in a class project.

Extension activity – measure trees in the school grounds and compare the results.

3. What Lives Here? – Minibeast survey

The park will be good for minibeast hunts and surveys – you could use the Woodland Trust minibeast worksheets.

The pupils will: Undertake a survey of minibeasts in different areas of the Park.

Curriculum Links:

Science:

Scientific enquiry – investigative skills

Life processes – 1c, 4b, 5a,b,c,d,e

Geography:

Maths: Handling data – 2c, 2f

Main Activity:

How long will it take? If the children work in small groups, you could send them to different parts of the park, with an adult, and take about 15 minutes for the survey, about 15 minutes to discuss and compare observations.

How to do it: Split into small groups with an adult and using the sheets, conduct a survey of an area. On return to class group, compare results, discuss possibilities for different results – environmental factors, types of plants, etc

What you might need: Clipboards, sheets, pencils, magnifying glasses, pooters, collection pots. (see Woodland Trust link for details)

Plenary/follow up: Use the results to complete data handling tasks. Do some research into the creatures, link in with science – life cycles, environment. What might improve the variety of species found? How does it compare with the school grounds?

4. Find the photo – images of North Lodge Park.

There are quite a few old photographs of North Lodge Park, and some are used as postcards. This activity aims to use these old images to investigate change over time in the park. The children can then record the Park today by taking their own images for postcards.

Using the old photos, can you find where each old one was taken from? They are postcards showing how pleasant the park was.

Use a digital camera to re-create the postcard. Do you need to add anything to make an attractive image?

The pupils will:

Investigate change through time using old photographs of North Lodge Park. Think about what makes an attractive image

Curriculum Links:

History:

Historical enquiry – 4b.

Local history study, or part of a study of the local area in Victorian times

ICT: Breadth of study – 5b,c

Art: Breadth of study – 5a,b,c.

Main Activity:

How long will it take?

This activity may need some preparation before the visit, depending on the skill level and familiarity of the children with digital camera. The activity in the Park could take from 20 to 40 minutes depending on how many images the children take.

How to do it:

Using the old images try to pin point where they were taken from.

Using the old photos, can you find where the old one was taken from?

They are postcards showing how pleasant the park was.

Use a digital camera to create the postcard. Do you need to add anything to make an attractive image?

What you might need:

Old images (see Resource section)

Other images could be obtained by the teacher from the Centre for Local Studies at Crown Street Library (charges apply for copies)

Digital cameras.

Computers at school to work with the digital images.

Plenary/follow up: Design and produce a postcard as a souvenir of a visit to North Lodge Park

Post Visit Activities

1. Memories of the Park.

In 2010 the Friends of North Lodge Park published a book of 'Memories of North Lodge' Park to celebrate the restoration of the Bandstand (schools in Darlington have been sent a copy). What memories have you got of your visit to the Park?

Record your thoughts in different ways:

- As a diary entry
- As a report
- As a comic strip or storyboard

2. Poem sculpture – write a poem.

There are leaf shaped sculptures with poems on in the park – did you see them on your visit? There are four different shaped leaves to look for.

What poem would you write about your visit?

Think carefully about how to present your poem:

- As an acrostic
- As a shape to represent the park

3. Save our park!

Using the Northern Echo Article as a stimulus

‘Residents protest at plans to build multi-storey car park’

Available at:

<http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/archive/2003/10/04/The+North+East+Archive/7013501.Residents+protest+at+plans+to+build+multi+storey+car+park/>

What would happen if the council was considering building a multi-story car park on the site.

The children could take on various roles in an inquiry, eg resident, friend of the park, child who plays in the park, police, parking control officer, out of town shopper, shopkeeper. They could write letters of protest or support, design posters, write newspaper articles.

4. My Perfect Park

Now that the class have studied North Lodge Park, they could work in groups or individually to design their perfect park, and work in 2d or 3d to present their ideas to the rest of the class. They would have to justify their choices. You could turn this into an enterprise style challenge by giving each piece of equipment or feature a price, and the children have to work to a budget.

Useful Resources and Contacts

Maps, Photographs, Newspapers:

The Centre for Local Studies at Crown Street Library, Darlington
The staff are very friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

Centre for Local Studies
Darlington Library
Crown Street
Darlington
County Durham
DL1 1ND
Telephone: 01325 349630
Fax: 01325 381556
E-mail: local.studies@darlington.gov.uk

Opening Hours

Monday: 9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Tuesday: 9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Wednesday: 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.
Thursday: 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Friday: 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.
Saturday: 9.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
Sunday: Closed

Old maps, aerial photos and images:

Keys to the Past

<http://www.keystothepast.info/k2p/usp.nsf/pws/Keys+to+the+past+-+Home+Page>

Durham Record

<http://ww2.durham.gov.uk/dre/>

Old Ordnance Survey Maps to buy:

www.alangodfrey.com

amongst others

Francis Frith

You can view images online, they have an extensive collection. Please note that copyright applies to the images, and this is a commercial organisation.

<http://www.francisfrith.com/>

Newspaper articles:

Paper and microfilm collections of the Northern Echo and Stockton and Darlington Times are available to look at and pay for paper copies of articles at the Centre for Local Studies at Crown Street Library. Copies for reference only.

Online access to most articles via the Northern Echo website, in the Archive section. Sometimes this can be a little slow to upload, so if you would like to use it, prepare in advance.

<http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/archive/>

<http://www.darlingtonandstocktontimes.co.uk/archive/>

Teaching Materials:

Mapping and Sign Posts activity

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/geography/map.htm>

Tree Age activity

This website is part of The Woodland Trust.

<http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/ancienttrees/findingthem/recognising.htm>

Minibeast Survey

The Woodland Trust has a big selection of packs and sheets that they will email to you on request, and over 1,000 sheets available in their downloads section. This link is to the minibeast pack.

http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/packs/minibeast_pack.htm

Friends of North Lodge Park:

Find out more about the Friends of the park, what they do, events they run, and how to get involved.

<http://www.communicate.co.uk/ne/friendsofnorthlodgepark/>

Park Rangers:

The Rangers are based at South Park but do cover Darlington's other parks.

Contact the office on tel: 01325 383099.

They often work with schools in the parks, or run events in school holidays.

Sarah Gouldsbrough:

Learning and Access Officer at Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum

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Email: sarah.gouldsbrough@darlington.gov.uk

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