



# Swadlincote Heritage Trail No.2



## Swadlincote Villages: Newhall, Midway, Woodville, Hartshorne & Church Gresley

Our Heritage Trail takes you through villages around Swadlincote.

It includes people and places which local people have suggested.

It is an armchair browsing trail rather than a walking route, although we have clustered the entries together for each village to make exploring easier.

Our Trail is also online at

[www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/HeritageTrails](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/HeritageTrails)

Please call in at The Magic Attic to find out more about local heritage and look out for their special events.





Photo copyright:  
 (unless stated otherwise)  
 SDDC -recent photos  
 Magic Attic Archives -historic photos

Key to numbering:  
 G= around Church Gresley; M=Midway;  
 N=Newhall  
 WH= Woodville and the edge of Hartshorne

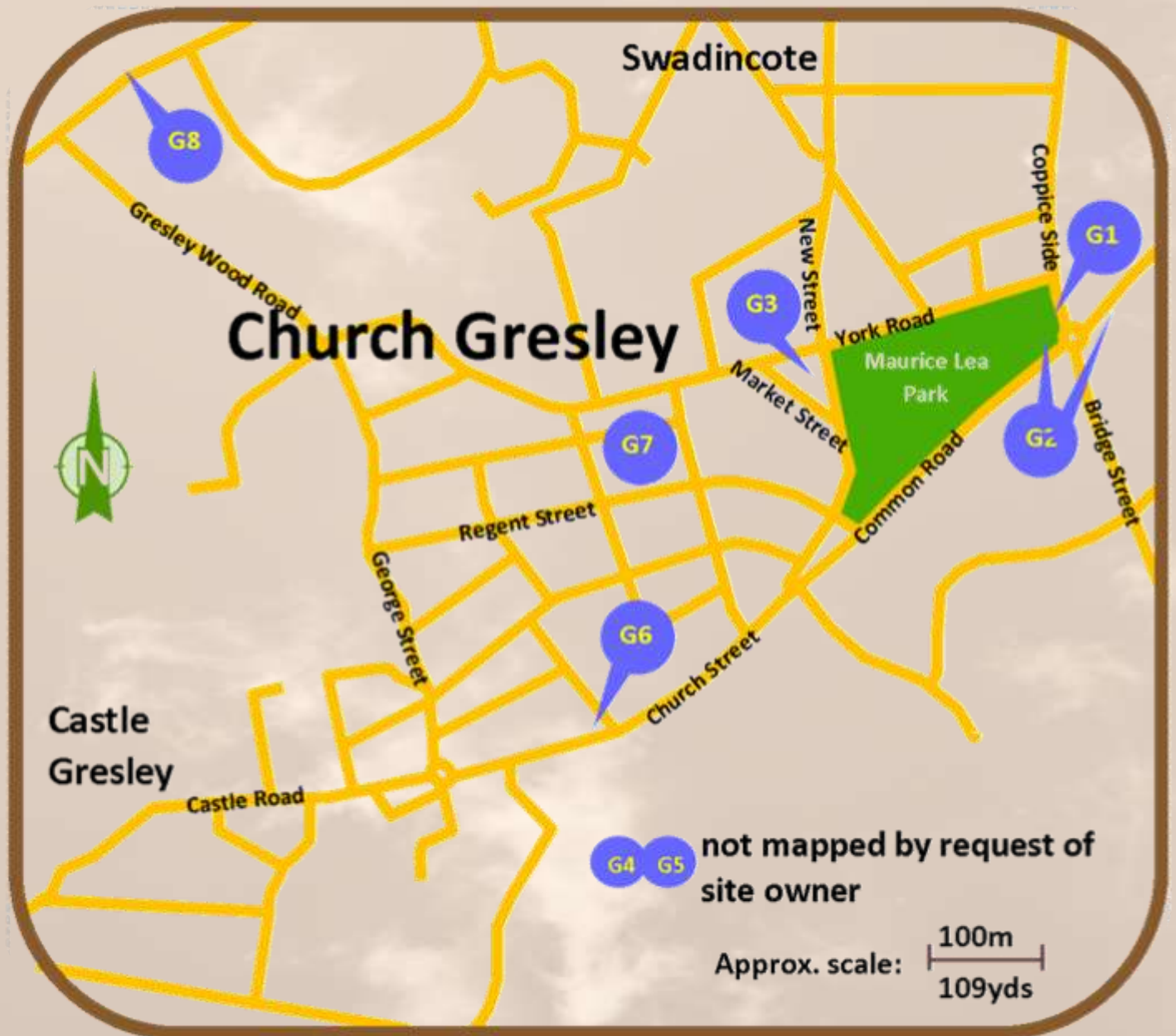
Legend for map:

 'A' Road  
 Other Roads

 M6 Exact address

 N3 General location  
 (where address is not available)

 = plaque  = lectern



## G1. Maurice Lea Memorial Park



York Road entrance DE11 9QG



The idea of having a park on this land was raised at the end of the nineteenth century when the common was covered by clay hollows and ash tips and had become a dumping ground for refuse. People began trying to clear it up to make the common look more attractive.

The outbreak of war in 1914 caused many schemes to be postponed and the subject was not raised again until 1922 when it was felt that there should be a memorial to the people from the district who had died in the Great War. In June 1927 Mr and Mrs Herbert Lea from London—former Gresley residents—paid a visit. Mr Lea liked the work done to look after Church Gresley common so much that he offered to support it in memory of his son, Maurice, who died at the Battle of the Somme. After lots of visits and meetings, he paid most of the costs to turn part of the common into a public park. On 17 May 1930, the Maurice Lea Memorial Park was opened in front of a crowd of 5,000 people. The Park was designed as a pleasure ground for the people.

It aimed to provide a designed landscape on former waste and common land. In 2006 it was restored with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. We like the park and we hope you do too.

*Research by Nathan, Ashley and Mollie from Pennine Way Jr School ('The Memorial Mail' June 2006)*

---

## G2. Mining & Pottery Heritage

Maurice Lea Memorial Park  
DE11 9NW

Common Road (see map)



The works of TG Green, Mason Cash and Granville Colliery stood a short walk from here and people used these paths to go to work. Memories and some buildings remain but the views are now over The National Forest.



## G3. William Beesley V.C. (P)

1895-1966

Memorial Garden, Market Street  
DE11 9PR



William Beesley was born on 5 October 1895 in the Parish of Church Gresley.

In 1901 he moved with his family to Nuneaton where his father- and later himself- worked in the local collieries. When war was declared William was quick to enlist and was allocated to the 9<sup>th</sup> King's Royal Rifle Corps. He saw action in Flanders and was wounded three times. He was transferred to the 13<sup>th</sup> Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) and trained as a Lewis Gunner.

On 8 May 1918 he was awarded the Victoria Cross "for most conspicuous bravery" at Bucquoy. The full citation for his award includes this statement:

*For four hours Private Beesley and his comrade held on to the position under very heavy machine-gun and rifle fire. The enemy then advanced to counter-attack, and the other soldier was wounded. Private Beesley carried on by himself, and actually maintained*

*his position until 10 p.m., long after the posts on his right and left had been practically wiped out and the survivors had fallen back.*

After the war, William returned to his home town of Nuneaton and was made a Freeman of the Borough of Nuneaton. He married Ada Wilson in 1920. They had 4 children (Rosemary, John Clifford, Kenneth & William)

William went on to serve in WWII as a Sergeant in the Royal Artillery. He died on 23 September 1966 in Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, Wales aged 70.



Photos: Imperial  
War Museum

## G4. T.G. Green & Co Ltd



T.G. Green & Co Ltd operated in Church Gresley from 1864 until June 2007.

At its peak it employed 1000 local people, making pottery for the domestic and international market. Its famous Cornish Ware stripes can be seen in kitchens



around the world and numerous films and TV programmes—something for Swadlincote to be proud of.

The remaining four Grade II\* listed bottle kilns and stable block are a significant reminder of the area's importance within the pottery industry. Although what



remains of the old factory site is on private land and not accessible, a dedicated archive has opened in the local area for people to learn about the T.G. Green site and what was made there. Check the website for more details: [www.gresleypottery.uk](http://www.gresleypottery.uk) Look for T.G. Green Archives on Facebook. See also Mason Cash who took over the T.G. Green premises.



Photos and content:  
T G Green Archives/  
Dr Iain Hambling

## G5. Mason Cash

Photo: Mason Cash website



The origins of Mason Cash can be traced to a pottery operating in Church Gresley in the 1800s. The pottery made goods from the 'white and cane' glazed earthenware sometimes known as 'yellow ware', due to the colour of the local clay, or 'bargeware' as it was packed on to local canal barges and sent to market.

The pottery was run by a series of Master Potters, of whom the most colourful was 'Bossy' Mason, which is where the 'Mason' name came from. Thomas Cash acquired the pottery in 1901 and renamed the company Mason Cash & Co. Mason Cash had made mixing bowls during the 1900s but in 1901 they designed and manufactured the very first iconic Mason Cash mixing bowl - easily recognised by the oatmeal colour and distinctive pattern on the outside of the bowl. In 2000, they purchased T.G. Green and revived that pottery's 'Cornish Blue' kitchenware line. April 2004 - The Tienshen Trading Company purchased Mason Cash 2007 - The Rayware Group acquired the Mason Cash brand. The site containing both companies was closed, including the factory in Church Gresley, with the machinery moved to Portugal where production continues.

Main source:

[www.masoncash.co.uk/about-us](http://www.masoncash.co.uk/about-us)

## G6. George Harrison Rising Sun Public House,

77 Church Street, Church  
Gresley, DE11 9NR



Photo: Everton  
Football Club  
Heritage Society  
Memorial  
Brochure

Gresley lad George Harrison played professional football for Everton between 1913 and 1923 and earned 2 caps playing for England in 1921.

George was born in Church Gresley in 1892 and married Frances O'Brian in the village. They had one son.

His footballing career started with Coalville Town (1910), Gresley Rovers (1911) and Leicester Fosse - now Leicester City (to 1913). As well as Everton he also played professional football for Preston North End from 1923-1931.

When he retired from football he started his pub management career in Preston, running the Moorbrook Inn until 1936. He then returned to his home town of Church Gresley to run the Rising Sun Public House in 1936. Unfortunately, George became ill early in 1939 with insomnia and influenza. After struggling with the illness, George tragically took his own life on the 12 February 1939.

George's unmarked grave was located in York Road Cemetery, Church Gresley, by local man Kieran Smith in 2015. Everton FC and the EFC Heritage Society marked his grave in 2016. The

ceremony was attended by many associated with Everton Football club, including former player Ian Snodin and training ground priest Henry Corbett.

---

### **G7. Waterfield's Bakery, Regent Street, Church Gresley DE11 9PQ**



Joseph Waterfield 1876-1937  
(photo from his grand daughter  
Caroline Moore)

Joseph and his son Joseph Harold (known as Harold) developed a large and successful bakery, catering and confectionary business which won national awards.

Joseph started the business in 1895/6 at premises on Alexandra Rd when he was only 19. By 1911 he had moved the bakery to larger premises in Regent Street, Church Gresley (demolished in the 1970s and there are now flats on the site). The bakery business included a shop/tearoom at 47 Market St, reception rooms on New St - both in Church Gresley - and a shop in Castle Gresley. Harold expanded the business into Swadlincote town centre and ran tea rooms on High Street where Boots The Chemist is today. He also opened shops in Burton and Ashby.

---

### **G8. Sabine's Brothers (Engineering), Hearthcote Road, Swadlincote DE11 9DU**



Sabine and his brother were blacksmiths who lived in Swadlincote in the early 1800s. Amongst other things, they invented the extrusion machine for

*Sabine's Munitions works, Belmont St, during the  
Second World War (1939-45)*

making sockets on the ends of clay pipes. This was used by the pipe manufacturer, Thomas Wragg, with great success as it meant sections of pipe could be joined together more easily.

At the time of printing, part of Sabine's Foundry, which made munitions during the first world war, remains on Belmont St and the main HQ is on Hearthcote Road. Sabine Brothers (Engineering) Ltd are still based in Swadlincote, and are managed by Mr Tim Sabine, the 5th generation of the family to run the firm.

Legend for map:



'A' Road



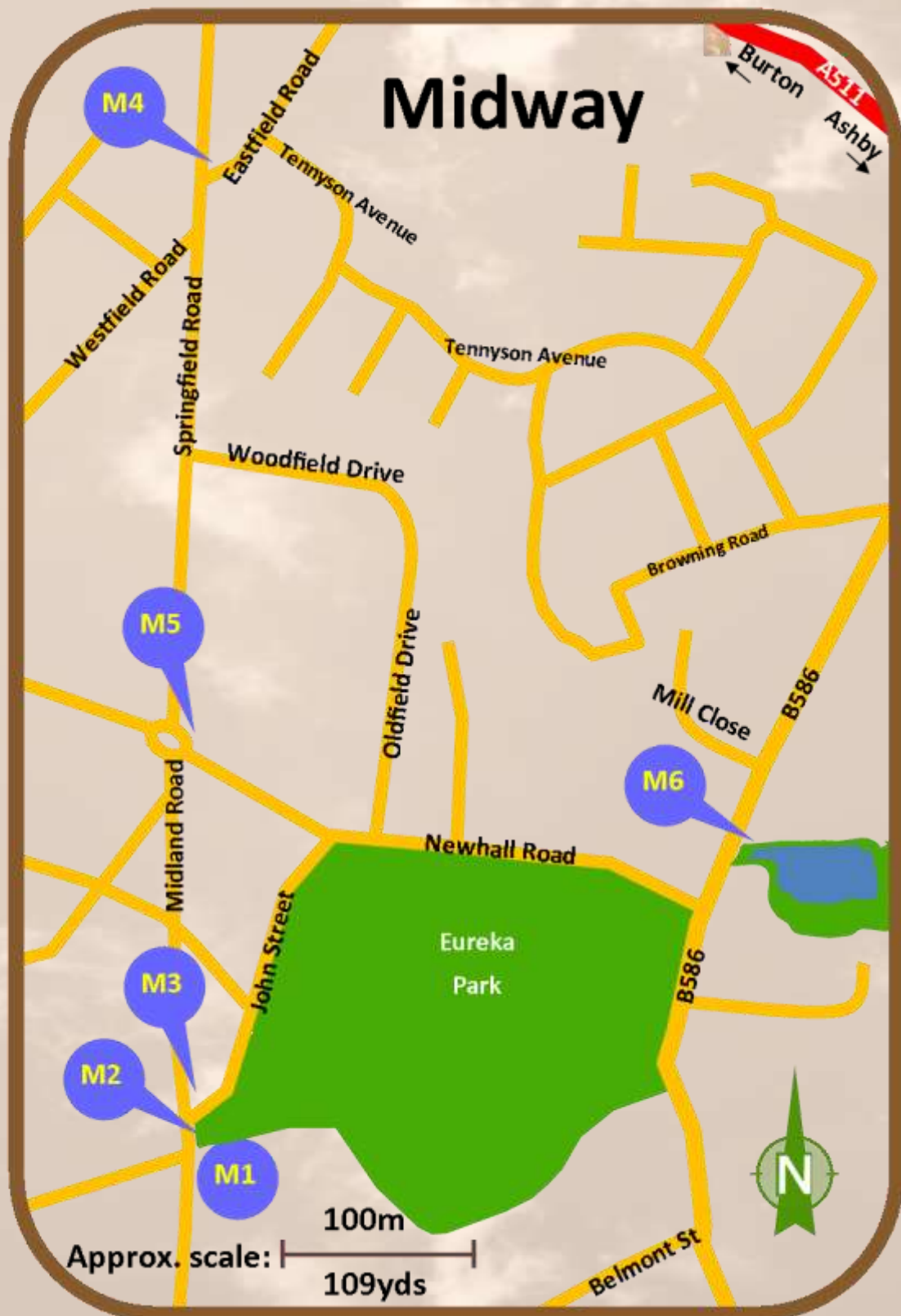
Other Roads



Exact address



General location  
(where address is not available)





## M1. Tram Sheds by Eureka Park (Midland Road entrance) DE11 0AN



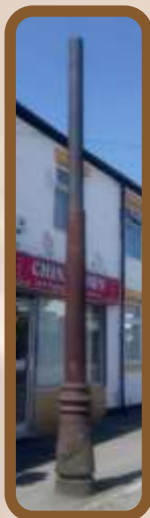
In 1906, a tramway system was opened, linking the Burton railway station with Ashby and Castle Gresley, along with the villages in between. The tram sheds were next to Eureka park. This was one of only a few rural tramways.

Eventually, the trams could not compete with the more flexible bus system and the last tram pulled into the Swadlincote sheds on 19 February 1927.

The tram sheds were also used for Thomson's Fair 1935-40s and for munitions during the Second World War. Two tram posts can still be seen in Newhall.



Sunnyside, Newhall



Close to the junction of Robinson Road and High Street, Newhall

## M2. Eureka Park Midland Road Entrance DE11 0BA



The park has a rich history linked to our mining heritage, including the 'Owd Shoddy' pit bank near the main park gates.

Many of the local families lost sons in the Great War and Second World War—they are commemorated on the park gates.

There is more about the history of the park in the park itself. You can find out more online and in the '*Footsteps around the Park, Eureka Park's Past*' walk leaflet, available from Swadlincote Tourist Information Centre.



### M3. 'Owd Shoddy' Pit

Midland Road, Swadlincote  
(next to the entrance to Eureka  
Park DE11 0AN)



In 1880, Moses Cartwright's colliery was developed. It was known locally as the "Owd Shoddy" pit because of the poor working conditions and badly faulted coal seams. There were problems with flooding and one of the two shafts collapsed. It closed in the early 1900s.

A 'brotherhood mine' was a cooperative owned by the workforce.

At one period, miners working here were paid in tokens that could only be spent in the 'tommy shop' adjacent to and owned by the pit owners.

The face of the Grandfather clock, now kept in the Magic Attic, came from the pit and it was turned into a grandfather clock by Dinnis' jewellers & watchmakers on High Street.

For more information on the local mining heritage see *the 'Mills, Mines and Murder'* walk leaflet, available from Swadlincote Tourist Information Centre.

### M4. Eddie Hardy

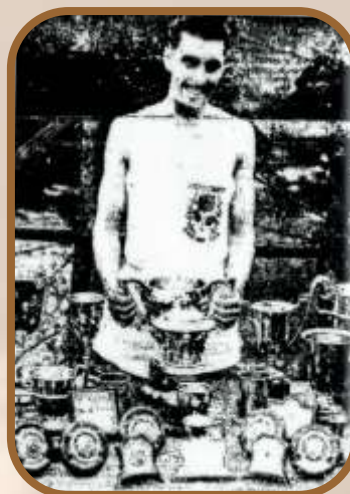
Lived near the junction of  
Eastfield Road/ Springfield  
Road DE11 0DA



Photos: scanned from *The Burton Mail* (Magic Attic Archives)

Eddie Hardy lived and trained in Midway. He had a long, distinguished career in athletics. As a member of the Derby and County Athletic Club, he gained international honours for his cross country running, reaching the European Finals in 1954 and 1955. He won the Derbyshire Senior mile event seven years in a row.

He retired due to injury in 1956 and joined the administrative side of the sport. He worked until 2000 in various roles including membership of the cross country International Team



Selection Committee.

**M5. George Widdows**  
**Springfield Junior School**  
**Springfield Road, DE11 OBU**

(P)



Designed by renowned architect George Widdows whose work maximised natural light and allowed air to circulate—a new direction for school buildings.

In 1913 'The Builder' periodical stated that his work 'constitutes a revolution in the planning and arrangement of school buildings... a real advance which places English school architecture without a rival in any European country or the United States.'

Widdows' work on school design still inspires architects. Springfield was one of his last: it was completed in 1936 and opened in 1937.

---

**M6. Charlie Hextall**  
**16-18 Midway Road,**  
**Swadlincote DE11 7NT**

(P)

Born in 1884, Charlie was one of the more colourful local characters and a regular poacher of game from the Bretby Estate.

During WW1 he served King and country, however once this ended, he returned to pursue his local pastime – poaching. On one

occasion when the police were looking for him, he was hiding in a relative's cottage across the road from Eureka Park.

He dodged the police by jumping into the pond, leading to the police believing he had drowned. However, his local knowledge fooled the



police and he managed to escape through the culvert. This outlet of the culvert at the top of the cascades became known as the 'Hole in the Wall'. The lettering marking this can still be seen above the culvert entrance today. He had several less successful run-ins with the law but still managed to make an impact on the local rabbit population. He was known for his generosity with his ill-gotten gains and often left a rabbit or two on the doorstep of poorer families. His legitimate trade was as a stallholder on Swadlincote Market. In 1913 he reprised his adventures on film when the makers of 'A Noble Brother' wanted a real poacher to play the role for the silver screen.

Their studio was based at The Rink so Charlie was the obvious local choice. In the film he was chased by the "bobbies" and escaped by diving into a pond.

---

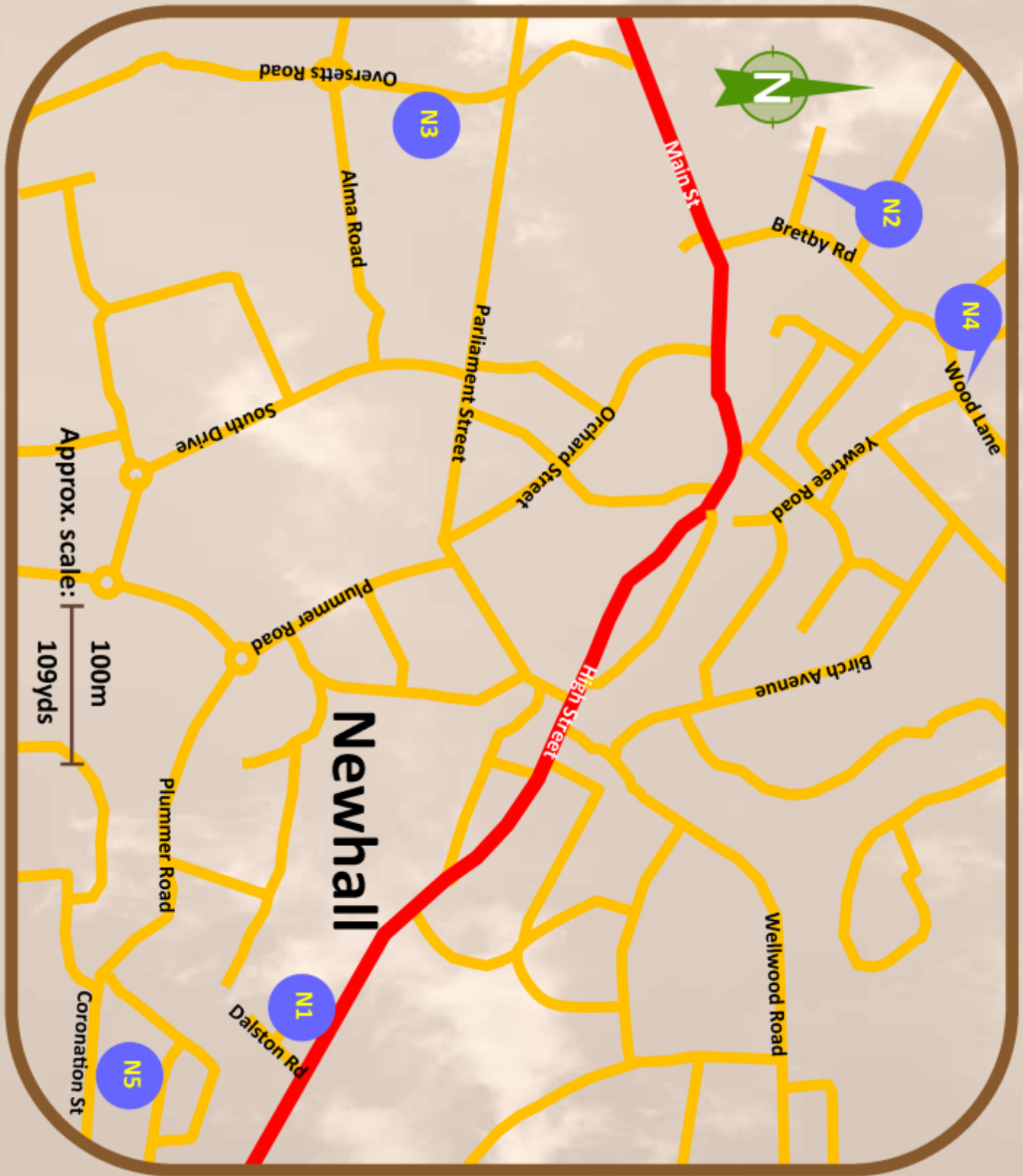
Legend for map:

 'A' Road

 Other Roads

 M6  
Exact address

 N3  
General location  
(where address is not available)



**N1. Jack Bodell**  
Dalston Road, Newhall  
DE11 0QG



Jack Bodell 1940-2016  
One of South Derbyshire's favourite sporting heroes. The 'Gentle Giant' was born and raised in Newhall, worked as a miner and took up the sport of boxing quite late.

He became A.B.A Light-Heavyweight champion in 1961 and also became British Heavyweight Champion twice, the first time in 1969.

He enjoyed a very successful, professional career, winning 58 of 71 contests over a 10 year period.

The highlight of his boxing career was becoming British, Commonwealth and European Champion, beating Joe Bugner in the title fight. He lived in Newhall for many years, then Hartshorne, finally moving to Coventry. Even after leaving the town he was a regular visitor to Swadlincote, often enjoying a game of dominoes in the Foresters pub.

**N2. Emmeline Jean Hanson, 1919-73**



Sunnyside, Newhall DE11 0TL  
The William Allitt School entrance gate



Photo: King's College Collection

Jean Hanson was born on 14 November 1919 in Newhall. She was a biophysicist and zoologist known for her contributions to muscle research. Hanson joined King's College London in 1948. She worked on muscle fibres and obtained her PhD in 1951. Working with a colleague, Hugh Huxley, she developed "sliding filament theory" on muscle contraction. Their publication in the 22 May 1954 issue of *Nature* became a landmark in muscle physiology and King's College describes her as "one of the most influential researchers to have worked at King's College London in modern times", going on to say "Her work has led to an understanding of how athletes can run faster and develop greater stamina by providing an insight into the molecular secrets of locomotion".

Main source Wikipedia and Kings College collection.

### N3. Hannah Mitchell



Between 11 & 39  
Oversetts Road,  
Newhall DE11 0SL



Photo: Wikipedia

Born into a poor mining family, she was raised on a remote farm in Alport Dale, then moved to Bolton, Lancashire as a seamstress.

She spent part of her married life in Newhall, which she loved, as her husband worked for Salts.

She was involved in the suffrage movement and in the campaign for better education, fighting for the rights of the working class and women. Hannah spoke at meetings of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and joined the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), working as a part-time organiser for the Pankhursts, who campaigned for votes for women. As an active member of the Suffragette movement she spent time in prison. At this time prison was used to discourage women from campaigning as some of the campaigning activities were criminal. She then later went on to be elected as a Councillor in Manchester.

Her autobiography, *'The Hard Way Up, the Autobiography of Hannah Mitchell, Suffragette and Rebel,'* was edited by her grandson and published in 1968.

(Source: The Magic Attic 'The Mail Remembers' 17/07/2001).

### N4. Ben Warren 1879-1917



Born at the Thorn Tree Inn  
Newhall DE11 0LL



Ben was born in Newhall and from 1899-1900 he was a footballer for Derby County, with 242 appearances and 19 goals. From 1908-1911 he played for Chelsea, making 92 appearances and scoring 4 goals. He also played for England from 1906-1911, appearing 22 times and scoring 2 goals. He was one of the most-capped players of the time. Whilst playing for Chelsea against Clapton Orient, he sustained a knee injury which ended his career. Harry, one of his sons also became a footballer, going on to be a very successful manager at Southend United.

Ben is buried in Newhall Cemetery.

more information and photo credit:  
<http://www.EnglandFootballOnline.com/TeamPlyrsBios/PlayersW/BioWarrenB.html>

Main source: Stuart Haywood.

**N5. Joe Jackson**  
**Coronation Street Newhall**  
**DE11 0QB**



*Photo:*  
<http://joejackson.com/>

Born in Burton Upon Trent in 1954, Joe Jackson lived on Coronation Street, Newhall as a child and spent a lot of time at his granny's at Vicarage Road, Swadlincote. He later moved to New York and became well known as a singer/songwriter. His first hit "Is she really going out with him?" made him an overnight success in 1979. He has recorded 19 studio albums and received five Grammy Award nominations during his career to date.

In his biography 'A Cure for Gravity' there are several references to Swadlincote including "this unearthly landscape still haunts me" (p3/4).

You can find out more about Joe's career and performances at:  
<http://joejackson.com/>

**WH1. Rene Cutforth 1909 – 84**  
**Swadlincote Road, Woodville**  
**DE11 8DB**



*Photo: BBC Photo Library*

Rene lived in Woodville, Swadlincote, as a child. His dad was involved with the local potteries and his mum has family links to T.G. Green.

He joined the BBC in 1946. He became well known as a broadcaster and travelled the world as a BBC correspondent - for example he was their War Correspondent during the Korean War. A small selection of his programmes can be viewed here:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/people/51/38.shtml>

In his autobiography 'Order to View' the early chapters include information about his childhood in Swadlincote

Legend for map:

-  'A' Road
-  Other Roads
-  M6  
Exact address
-  N3  
General location  
(where address is not available)





**WH2. Bretby Art Pottery**  
Showroom: 30 Swadlincote  
Road, Woodville DE11 8DB



*Photo: The Heritage Trust*

Bretby Art Pottery ran in Woodville from 1883 – 1996 under the company Tooth & Co. The pottery was internationally famous - winning awards for its Art Nouveau designs which are found throughout the world. The showroom, a grade II listed building, is all that remains of this important industrial past.

Find out more about plans to restore this important site: <https://www.facebook.com/bretbyartpottery>

<https://www.theheritagetrust.org.uk/projects>

Look out for Sir John Hurt Place next to Bretby Art Pottery

**WH3. John Hurt 1940-2017**  
Moira Road, Woodville  
DE11 8DQ



*Photo: Ian Derry / BAFTA with permission from Lady Hurt*

The renowned actor, John Hurt, moved to Woodville when he was five years old. Saint Stephen's Church records show that between 1945 – 1953 his father, Rev. A.H. Hurt, was the vicar at Woodville. Alongside two Academy Award nominations, Hurt received many awards throughout his career, including the BAFTA Lifetime Achievement for outstanding contribution to British cinema. John's parents were very strict about who he was allowed to play with—a fact still remembered by some local folk! John reminisced about the toy shop on the High Street—which we think, based on what he said, was Wroughtons. There is more information about John's background in a 'Derbyshire Life' interview with Ashley Franklin and in the Magic Attic.

*Photo: BBC Photo Library*

*Photo: Denis Makarenko / Shutterstock.com*



**WH4. Jack Bodell** (P)  
**250 Woodville Road, Hartshorne**  
**DE11 7HW**

For information on Jack Bodell please see N1.

---

**WH5. George Newberry** (P)  
**Hartshill Road, Hartshorne**  
**DE11 7HL**

George Newberry was born in Swadlincote on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1917 and was always proud of his roots.



*Photos: Pat Paling*

He made his living working at a local pipeyard but was well known for being part of the 'Swadlincote Wheelers' cycling club and competing in national and international cycling

competitions. He was conscripted to the army during WW2 in 1939 and served with the Royal Engineers as part of the 8th Army (Desert Rats) in Egypt.

He was demobbed in 1946 after 7 years and returned to Swadlincote to live in Coppice Side. He then took up competitive cycling again.

At the age of 35 he achieved his ambition to become an Olympian and captained the British 4000 metres pursuit team to win a

bronze medal at the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952. He lived in Goseley, Hartshorne.

Swadlincote Wheelers joined with Rykneld Road Club and Overseal Cycling Club to form Mercia CC which is based in Burton on Trent.

He has a road named after him in Church Gresley, near to where he grew up.



*Photos: Ian Newberry*

*George is second from left on both photos*

---

# “Shades of Black and Grey”

By Graham Nutt

I close my eyes and picture  
The way things used to be  
From Swadlincote to Moira  
Overseal to Blackfordby  
Green lakes amongst the landscape  
In the holes all lined with clay  
And from Green's to Castle Gresley  
There were shades of black and grey

But most of all I miss the sight  
Of chimneys standing tall  
And roads covered in coal dust  
Where we played bat and ball  
The stalls around the Market Hall  
On every Saturday  
And Salts sold suits for everyone  
In shades of black and grey

I wish that I could spend an hour

And hear a Rink refrain  
Or wait down on Swad station  
To catch the Blackpool train  
The picture of a sunset  
Over Darkland's old raceway  
And from O'Brian's across to Nadin's  
There were shades of black and grey

The lorry loads of sewage pipes  
The smoke from kiln tops swirled  
The expertise that made us  
Plumbers' merchants to the world  
There's a National Forest planted now  
It stands across the way  
But we know beneath the surface  
There are shades of black and grey

## Visit South Derbyshire to find the hidden gems within The National Forest

[www.visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk](http://www.visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk) email: [info@visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk](mailto:info@visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk)

South Derbyshire  
VISITOR INFORMATION  
Centre

South Derbyshire Visitor Information Centre, 1 High Street, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 8JG

 Visit South Derbyshire  [visitsouthderbyshire](https://www.instagram.com/visitsouthderbyshire)  01283 223333



If you require this information in **large print** or another language please ring **01283 595795** or email [customer.services@southderbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@southderbyshire.gov.uk)

## Swadlincote Heritage Trail Acknowledgements:

Thank you to everyone involved in this project especially:

The Magic Attic (Graham, Keith, Ron, Clyde, John) for their research and resources and for looking for the best sites to put plaques!

Stuart Haywood, Dot Morson, Jeffrey Parrans, & Stephanie Neild for research. Many other people who sent information about individual people and industries, particularly T.G.Green's and Bretby Art Pottery.

Burton and South Derbyshire College's Creative Industries students and staff also supported the project.

Our logo has been designed with ideas from: Elsie-Mae O'Neill, Jazzmyn Moore, Barnaby Morley, Maisie Richardson, Ned Scragg, Tia Power and Polly Budworth.

Trail content, final logo, design and layout:  
South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) June 2018

Finally a big thankyou to our funders: East Midlands Airport, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council

For local heritage info & events contact The Magic Attic, based at Sharpe's Pottery Museum  
[www.MagicAttic.org.uk](http://www.MagicAttic.org.uk)

For heritage trail school activities contact the Environmental Education Project team:  
01283 535039 or email: [rosliston@southderbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:rosliston@southderbyshire.gov.uk)



- ◆ The Magic Attic
- ◆ Swadlincote Townscape Heritage Scheme
- ◆ SchoolActivitiesSDerbys



@Roslistonerved

South Derbyshire  
VISITOR INFORMATION  
Centre

For information about local events go to:  
South Derbyshire Visitor Information Centre  
1 High Street, Swadlincote Derbyshire  
DE11 8JG  
01283 223333  
[info@visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk](mailto:info@visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk)  
[www.visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk](http://www.visitsouthderbyshire.co.uk)

