



Lambton Heritage Walk

A self-guided walking tour of a prosperous 19th century mining town



We respectfully acknowledge the Awabakal people, the traditional owners of the land that is known as Lambton.



This heritage walk takes about 35 minutes to walk at a slow to moderate pace. This time frame does not take into account observation time at various points of interest.



Above: Miners' meeting at Lambton Park Rotunda 25/2/1896



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LAMBTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GROUP INC.



Sonia Hornery MP

Please enjoy your time soaking up the history and heritage of our area and support where you can the local businesses that have sponsored this brochure.

Cover photo: Lambton Mechanics' and Miners' Institute



Lambton History

- The suburb of Lambton is named after the Lambton Colliery which commenced operations in the area early in 1863. The mine manager was Thomas Croudace, who was responsible for naming the mine after a family friend Lord Lambton, Earl of Durham.
- Croudace was known as the “Father of Lambton” due to his influence in the Lambton township. He was responsible for the choice of the township site, the street layout, the establishment of a school and the foundation of the Mechanics’ and Miners’ Institute.
- Millions of tons of coal were mined at the Lambton Colliery over a 74 year period. The mine closed in 1937 after the last ounce of coal was taken from the site. Some of the last mining buildings to be demolished in the 1960’s were located near to Dan Close off Durham Road. Nothing now remains of the Lambton Colliery.



Top and above: Lambton Colliery Buildings c1880



Above: Crowd at Lambton Electric Light Station in 1890 when the lights were turned on for the first time in Lambton.

- Lambton Colliery was the major mine in the area. Due to the widespread coal deposits in Lambton, there were a number of other smaller mine workings. Some of these employed few men and were possibly only worked on a part-time basis. In the late nineteenth century there were 11 collieries in Lambton.
- Some Lambton streets are named after men associated with the mines – Morehead, Croudace, Young, Grainger, Howe, Elder and DeVitre. Other streets are named after former Mayors – Dent, Charlton and Notley.



Above: Lambton township taken from Chilcott Street on September 9, 1890. In foreground is steam tram which ran from Newcastle to Plattsburg along Howe Street.

- Lambton was the first Municipality in Newcastle to adopt electric lights. The Mayor’s wife, Isabella Dent, switched on the lights at a ceremony on September 9, 1890. Most of the community had gathered on a high vantage point in North Lambton to witness the 160 street lights and lights in hotels, stores and some private dwellings illuminate the town.



Above: Intersection of Morehead Street and Elder Street in the 1900’s, showing Northumberland Hotel on left.

- An area of 35 acres of swampy land covered in scrub was destined to become Lambton Park. Children enjoyed fishing for crayfish, catching tadpoles and swimming in the waterholes. The area was swampy due to rain being channelled from the higher area around Morehead Street into the park. Over time a waterway was constructed to aid in directing the flow of water through the park to link up with a channel flowing through Broadmeadow. This creek was named Ker-rai which means stream or creek in the Awabakal language.



Above: The Gold Miners’ Home 1893, formerly located on NE corner of Elder & Grainger Streets

Lambton Heritage Walk

1. LAMBTON COUNCIL CHAMBERS (C1887)

The Municipality of Lambton was proclaimed in 1871 and the final meeting of council was held in 1938. Lambton Council was then amalgamated into Greater Newcastle Council. Lambton Library opened in these premises in 1950.

2. NORTHUMBERLAND HOTEL

Opened for business in 1866 and was the second hotel in Lambton. The structure had eleven rooms, a billiard room and extensive stabling. In 1913 there were extensive brick additions made to the hotel.

3. CORONATION HALL (C1910)

With the construction of this hall movies could be shown regardless of the weather and patrons no longer had to sit on benches while holding up umbrellas. The lease of the theatre was taken over in the 1930's when a dress circle was included and the interior decorated in Art Deco/Moderne style. The theatre reopened under the name Kings Theatre. After a succession of owners the building was converted into a theatre-restaurant in 1989. It is now known as Lizotte's

4. LAMBTON PARK GATES (C1919)

The gates had originally been proposed to be built in the late nineteenth century as part of a park beautification project. However, due to poor council finances, they were not built. After the return of servicemen from the First World War it was decided they should become memorial, rather than decorative gates. The gates were built in 1919 and included the names of Lambton residents who enlisted for service in the First World War.

5. LAMBTON PARK ROTUNDA (C1890)

At the opening of the rotunda it was said that the rotunda would be used for band recitals, as a speaking platform and as a grandstand for cricket and football matches. Over the years it has been used for all these purposes. It was also an important venue for miners' meetings, as Lambton was the centre of the mining district.

6. LAMBTON MECHANICS' AND MINERS' INSTITUTE (C1894)

The original Institute building was in Howe Street and opened in 1867. The Institute aimed to provide reading materials to the miners for enjoyment as well as for educational purposes. The current building opened in 1894 in Elder Street on land that was half of the block that had been dedicated to being a Town Hall. In 1903 it was decided to move the old hall from Howe Street and resite it at the rear of the new building. Both these buildings remain intact on the site.

7. POST OFFICE (C1884)

The building shows features of late Victorian Italianate design including a verandah with iron roof, wooden posts and iron balustrading. In 1996 the building was advertised for sale and the post office moved to Elder Street. The building is listed by the National Trust.



8. BETHEL CHAPEL (c1868)

This chapel is built of roughly hewn sandstone blocks quarried locally. The building's foundation blocks are approximately two feet thick. The stone plaque above the door says 'Bethel Capel Annibynol Adeiladwyd', which translates as Bethel Independent Chapel. The building is listed by the National Trust.

9. SEMI DETACHED BRICK HOUSES

Numbers 53-55 Dickson Street were originally a haberdashery and clothing store. Later, it was owned by Richard Thomas who was the first undertaker based in Lambton. Original paving bricks are still intact on the footpath.

10. LE CHALET

Heritage listed home at 130 Elder Street. This largely intact Federation home has stables facing DeVitre Street. This is a typical example of a well to do middle class house in a mining community. It was built for the Payne family between 1905 and 1910.

11. COMMERCIAL HOTEL

Began operating on this site in 1880. Over time it became known by the locals as the Snake Gully. In 1970 this name change became official. Today it is known as Bar 121.

12. PAYNE'S BUTCHERY

This shop and Simpsons shoe shop are the only two shops in Lambton still trading in the same line of business as when they first opened. Arthur Payne started in the butchery business around 1870. His shop was on the opposite side of Elder Street and he moved to the new site (108 Elder St) in 1914. The longest continuing business in Lambton came to an end in 1993 when the business was sold by the Payne family.

13. LAMBTON SHOES

In 1931 Stephen Simpson opened his own bootmaking and repair business in a small shed in Morehead St, opposite the library. In 1944 the shop at 100 Elder Street was purchased. The business has changed over time – different ranges of new shoes were added and the repair side of the business closed. The business is still operated today by the Simpson family in the same premises.

14. BELL'S GROCERY (c 1907)

George Bell & Sons conducted a successful retail business, which included a grocery, drapery and ironmongery business, at 92 Elder Street. After his father's death, John R. Bell took over the Lambton business and erected a new shop on the site of the old business. The Bell family's commercial association with Lambton ended in the 1960's.

15. BOX FAMILY HOME.

The attractive, two story building at 88 Elder Street was the home of Edward Box, a butcher. He owned a shop in Elder Street that was located between the family home and Bell's grocery shop (92 Elder St). Box was involved in the local community and served a term as Mayor.

Other Places of Interest

16. LAMBTON POLICE STATION (c1884)

The police residence was built next to the Court House. The Court House (photo below) had been built seven years earlier on the corner of Dickson, Lloyd and Young Streets. The police building contained a residence, office and cell. In the early 1920's the court building was deemed no longer viable and was eventually demolished. The police station was closed early this century and the building remains boarded up.



17. THE MARQUIS OF LORNE HOTEL

Traded from 1874 through until 1960 when the building was condemned. A new hotel bearing the same name was built on the same block of land. In 2008 the hotel changed name to The Mark Hotel.

18. FORMER RED LION INN

(Numbers 412-414 Newcastle Road) operated from 1872 to 1895. It was also a shop which sold bread baked at Wallsend.

19. FORMER PINE APPLE INN

(330 Newcastle Road) traded from 1874 to 1880. A trading licence was reissued in 1888 and it was named the Reservoir Inn. Trading ceased in 1921. The cellars are cut out of rock.

20. STONE HOUSES (c1890's)

Numbers 288 and 298 Newcastle Road are houses built of locally quarried stone.

21. HOLDING RESERVOIR (c1885)

Water was pumped from Walka Water Works in Maitland to the reservoir. This was the first permanent water supply for the town.

22. ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Constructed in 1921 across the road from the school in Dickson Street. The two story brick presbytery was built in 1933.

23. CATHOLIC SCHOOL COMPLEX

The first church/school was built in 1871 in DeVitre Street. The building was used as a school during the week and would be set up for Mass on Sundays. The school site has been added to over the years and now faces Dickson Street. The convent was built in the early 1900's next to the school. The school acquired the convent buildings and grounds in 1995.



24. LAMBTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Opened in 1865. The original building (photo above) contained a school room, master's residence and a detached kitchen. This building was demolished in 1965 to allow for the widening of Croudace Street.

25. LAMBTON LODGE (c1863)

Thomas Croudace lived here as it was the mine manager's house. It was built on a hill overlooking the colliery and had views in all directions. From 1863 to 1878 it was a single story residence, but Croudace requested that the house be enlarged as it was not big enough for his expanding family. A second story was added, with wide verandahs around three sides of the building, together with an observation tower (photo below). The property was offered to the Newcastle hospital in 1924 and the building is still standing in the grounds of John Hunter Hospital.



26. CARTREFLE

(Corner of Grainger and Howe Streets). This is a Federation style house with a multi gabled slate roof and two identical front doors facing each street. It was built around 1919 for the Payne family, who also owned Le Chalet, at 130 Elder Street.

27. STONE HOUSE (c1880's)

Two storey stone residence located at 64-66 Howe Street was owned by Henry Johnson, the first licensee of The Exchange Hotel.

28. THE EXCHANGE HOTEL

Started trading around 1881 and was built opposite the tram terminus. It is now known as Lambton Park Hotel.

29. CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHURCH. (c 1907)

This was the first church building constructed in Lambton. The land had frontages to both Church and Morehead Streets. This site was located between the pit head (area around Dan Close) and the main settlement (based around Elder Street). A wooden church opened in 1869 and 40 years later a more substantial brick church was constructed. The Church Hall was built in 1917 and the Rectory in 1922.

30. THE AREA AROUND DAN CLOSE

The site of some of the last Lambton Colliery buildings to be demolished during the 1960's.