

Scattered around the walls are numerous memorials to early parishioners including Cuthbert Ogle and Richard Coates, whilst over the tower arch is a royal Coat of Arms dated 1815 - 1837.

Exit the churchyard onto Coates Green.

#### 10. Coates Green

In 1872 the Coates School was so overcrowded that it became necessary to build a new school on what is now Coates Green. It had 175 pupils but was still very crowded



with three or four classes to one room. The Coates Endowed School, which was opened in 1874 was finally closed and demolished in 1968. The sculpture on the Green was commissioned by the Parish Council as part of the Millennium celebration to mark the long-standing association with "Education".

Cross the River Pont Bridge rebuilt in 1925

#### 11. The Diamond Inn

Established in the early 1700's as an old coaching inn the Diamond is a very popular public house. The local livestock mart was held on land behind the pub and parts of the building, which are now bed and breakfast accommodation, were used as the butcher's killing shop until the late 1950's. The Bistro Restaurant next door was of course an old Smithy built in 1822.

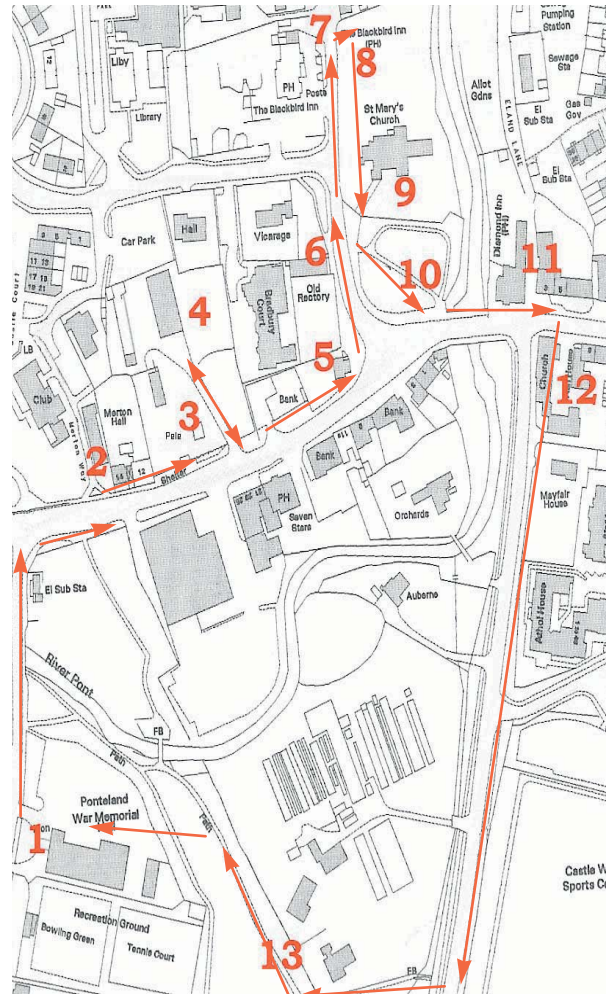


Carefully cross the main road at the first set of traffic lights to walk up Callerton Lane on the riverside of the road.

12. Methodist Church  
The first church was built in 1841 but the new chapel, which exists today, was opened in 1908 with extensions in 1927, 1956 and 2005.



Continue up Callerton Lane with the River Pont on



the right until you reach the point of the level crossing for the old Ponteland railway.

#### 13. Ponteland railway

Ponteland Railway was a 7-mile single track light railway from South Gosforth to Ponteland, with intermediate stations at West Gosforth, Coxlodge, Kenton Bank Foot and Callerton, which was opened in 1905. The branch line to Darras Hall was added in 1913 and subsequently extended out to Mount Huly, near Kirkheaton in 1927. All passenger services were withdrawn in 1929 but goods services continued until 1954 to Darras Hall and to Ponteland until 1967.

Turn right at the fingerpost and return to the Memorial Hall along the route of the old railway.

## Ponteland Local History Society

invite you to walk

# Round the Village

Exit the Memorial Hall and turn right.

#### 1. Memorial Hall

A public meeting was held on 19th July 1918 when it was decided to erect a memorial to commemorate the men from the Ponteland district who had fallen in the Great War. The estimated cost was £4,000. Colonel Riddell unveiled the Obelisk at a Ceremony held on 16th July 1920 and 14 foundation stones for the Hall were laid on 20th September. The opening ceremony, chaired by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Alderman W. Bramble, was performed by Mr. Angus Watson on the 20th December 1922.

*See Pont Island News 2005 (PIN 2005)*



PONTLAND WAR MEMORIAL HALL  
(based upon the architect's sketch of the building published in THE ILLUSTRATED CHRONICLE - September 1922.)

Walk along Darras Road to the road junction at the National Westminster Bank, turn right and cross the main road at the pedestrian crossing towards Merton Way.

#### 2. Merton Way

Until the 1960's the approach to Ponteland Railway Station occupied this site, which was cleared for the construction of Merton Hall, The Working Men's' Club and the Shopping Centre.



After the crossing turn right and just before the bus shelter take the pedestrian access on the left towards the Parish Council Office and follow the footway to the front of the Pele Tower.

### 3. Pele tower

The earliest mention of the Pele associated with the Vicar of Ponteland occurs in a list, said by Bates to have been drawn up in the first seven months of 1415, which identifies the owners and occupiers of the property viz: - "Turris de Ponteland - vicar eiusdem".



From 1778, after the death of James Snowdon, until the institution of Kenrick Prescott in 1864, there was no resident vicar in Ponteland and the condition of the vicarage deteriorated. Most of it was demolished and a new vicarage was built in 1865. The Tower was however retained as a Harness room and a photograph taken around 1900 shows a south facing oriel window at first floor level with a stone parapet fronting a double pitched roof. There is also evidence of a sundial above the entrance door. In 1996 the need to restore the tower was identified, money was raised and on 19th October 2002 a ceremony was held to celebrate completion of the project. The Mayor of Castle Morpeth Borough Council unveiled the interpretive panel, Working Group Vice Chairman, Councillor Frank Harrington raised the flag and Viscount Ridley, Patron to the Working Group, planted a Golden Birch, which he had donated to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

*See Pont Island News 2005 (PIN 2005)*

**Exit from the Pele Tower via the steps to the access road to the Old Vicarage**

### 4. Old Vicarage

The "new" vicarage was built in 1865 to a design prepared by architect F. R. Wilson of Alnwick. In 1954 this "new" vicarage, the Pele Tower and the old stable block were conveyed to Castle Ward Rural District Council for use as their headquarters.

However following local government reorganisation in 1974 and the creation of Castle Morpeth Borough Council, the vicarage was sold and is currently the principal office of Bellway Homes (North East Division) Ltd. Ponteland Parish Council occupies the old stable block and the Pele Tower remains in the ownership of Castle Morpeth Borough Council.



**Walk down the drive to the main road and turn left past Barclays Bank to the Estate Agent's Office on your left, which is the site of the original Coates Endowed School.**

### 5. Coates School

In 1719 Richard Coates bequeathed a sum of money to set up a school in Ponteland for 12 boys and 12 girls to provide them with an education. When it was first built it was a single-storey building but as numbers grew it was necessary to add an upstairs room.

**Turn left and continue into North Road**

### 6. Old Rectory

There has never been a Rector of Ponteland but the building was built on Rectorial Glebe land opposite the Great Tithe Barn, which stood on the area now known as Coates Green. Merton College, Oxford were major landowners in Ponteland and received the principal tithes either direct or by sub-letting. It is said that an annual tithe dinner was held at which money was given out to children on "Penny Day".



**Walk up North Road past the Rectory and carefully cross Thornhill Road to the Blackbird Inn**

### 7. Blackbird

The remains of a medieval tower, which stand as part of the Blackbird Inn were formerly the 14th Century home of the Earls of Athol. The Scots raised it to the ground on their way to the Battle of Otterburn in 1388 but it was rebuilt in the 17th Century. It subsequently became a ruin and was roofless until 1935 when it was restored as part of the Inn. On the east side of the basement there is an impressive fireplace c1600 and the initials M.E. carved in the stone above the porch are those of one time owner Mark Errington.

*See Pont Island News 2002 (PIN 2002)*

**Walk past Blackbird Inn and across North Road entering the churchyard by rear pedestrian gates.**

### 8. Churchyard

There are a number of interesting gravestones in the churchyard including one commemorating the tragic drowning of two boys in a canoeing accident which is identified by Boy Scout and Boys Brigade badges. The marble pinnacle memorial is that of William Wellan's who was a director of the Tyneside company of Robert Stephenson and Co.

*See Pont Island News 2007 (PIN 2007)*

*See Pont Island News 2008 (PIN 2008) to be published in September 2008*

**Walk through the churchyard to the south entrance to the Church.**

### 9. St Mary the Virgin

The Anglo-Saxon building has now disappeared but a gravestone from its cemetery is built into the south wall of the existing tower. The earliest parts of the present church belong to the Norman period but much of the building is 13th century. The south aisle arcade and the great window in the east end were added in the 14th century and substantial work was undertaken in the 19th century in building the barrel roofs and renewing the chancel roof and floor.

