

Explore your Neighbourhood

Learner Resource D: Clydebank Timeline

Clydebank Timeline

For most of the 19th Century the area, later known as Clydebank, on the north side of the River Clyde was agricultural land and a few small villages, including Old Kilpatrick, Duntocher and Hardgate, which sit on the site of the Antonine Wall. Old Kilpatrick is the westernmost end of the Antonine Wall, and marks the northern frontier of the Roman Empire, which 1800 years ago stretched from West Dunbartonshire to present day Egypt and the eastern shores of the Black Sea. The arrival of industry (water-driven mills and ship-building) in the 19th Century brought people into the area, with houses, shops, churches and other buildings being constructed to accommodate them.

AD 142 – AD 154 – Antonine Wall built, with a fortlet and bath-house at Duntocher (near the War Memorial) and a fort at Old Kilpatrick (now covered by the old bus depot).

1808–1831 - Four large cotton mills were built on the edge of the fast-flowing Duntocher burn, leading to an increase in population in the area and the expansion of canal, road and river transport links.

1871 – The construction of the first shipyard (J & G Thomson's). Houses for the workers, shops, schools and churches followed.

1882 – The *Glasgow, Yoker and Clydebank Railway* was built, linking the new shipyard to Glasgow.

1882–84 – The *Singer Manufacturing Company* built a huge sewing machine factory about half a mile from the shipyard, bringing more people into the area.

1886 – The people petitioned for the area to be made into a “police burgh” (town) which was called Clydebank, after the shipyard.

1899 – *John Brown & Co*, steelmakers of Sheffield bought the shipyard.

1907 – the *Titan Clydebank* crane, then the largest cantilever crane ever built and the world's first electrically powered cantilever crane, was constructed at the shipyard. It was used to lift engines and boilers into ships and was used to build some of the largest ships of the 20th Century – including the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth 2.

1941 (13th and 14th March) the *Clydebank Blitz* – 439 Luftwaffe bombers dropped over 1,000 bombs. Of around 12,000 houses only seven remained undamaged; 528 people died and 617 people were seriously injured. 4,000 houses completely destroyed, 4,500 severely damaged and 35,000 people were made homeless. The main intended targets, including the shipyards and the sewing machine factory, were undamaged.

Curriculum Links

I can use evidence to recreate the story of a place or individual of local historical interest. **SOC 1-03a**

I can compare aspects of people's daily lives in the past with my own by using historical evidence or the experience of recreating an historical setting. **SOC 1-04a**

I can use primary and secondary sources selectively to research events in the past. **SOC 2-01a**

I can compare and contrast a society in the past with my own and contribute to a discussion of the similarities and differences. **SOC 2-04a**

I can use my knowledge of a historical period to interpret the evidence and present an informed view. **SOC 3-01a**

1968 – John Brown’s shipyard merged with four others in and around Glasgow to form Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS)

1972 – UCS went into liquidation, the shipyard was sold to Marathon Oil who made oil rigs in the yard.

1980 – The Singer Corporation, one of the major employers in the town, closed.

1994 – A large, state of the art hospital was built by the US health company Health Care International, on the north bank of the Clyde at Dalmuir, on what had been the site of William Beardmore and Company Naval Construction Works. It ran as a private hospital for six months before going bankrupt and being bought up by an Abu Dhabi company. Again, it struggled as a private venture and was bought by the Scottish Executive, for the NHS, in 2002, at a fraction of the cost of building it. There is now a Research Institute, an Innovation Centre and a Conference Hotel as well as the hospital on the site and it is a big employer in the town.

2001 – The shipyard was closed.

Sources:

Antonine Wall -

<http://www.antoninewall.org/system/files/documents/WestDunbartonshireWalkingGuide.pdf>

Wikipedia – “Clydebank” and “Duntocher”.