

brass can still be seen, with the clothiers' shears in the window tracery above.

John Aubrey, writer and antiquary, visited Seend in the 1660s. He wrote "I know not any small country village that has so many well-built houses." He found mineral springs here, and did his best to get Seend developed as a Spa. Nothing came of the plan, owing - he suggests - to the jealousy of the Bath doctors.

In the 18th century, Seend was given a fresh lease of life by the accident that it lay on the Turnpike road on one of the main routes from London to Bath. Land became increasingly held by big landowners and the old open-field subsistence farming disappeared. The landed gentry liked the sandy ridge, because of the good air and open views, and built a number of fine houses, which still give the Street its special character.

In 1775 John Wesley opened the Methodist Chapel in Factory Row (now named Weavers' Cottages) which has been in continuous use ever since. The completion of the Kennet and Avon canal (1810) and a branch of the Great Western Railway (1858) meant that, after the industrial revolution, Seend was well placed for transport of heavy goods such as coal and stone. In the 1860s

there were great hopes that the local ironstone (known about since Roman times) could be profitably worked. Blast furnaces were built and linked by a tramway to the canal, and later to the railway station. But the costs were too high, and the furnaces were dismantled in 1889, though iron ore was still extracted from time to time and sent elsewhere for smelting, until 1947, when quarrying ceased. You can see an illustration of the smelting works on the interpretation panel near the canal bridge by the Barge Inn.

During the second world war, the combination of the Thames, K&A Canal and the Avon was seen as a possible last line of defence in the event of an invasion from the south. You can still see concrete pillboxes beside the towpath at Sells Green.

The closing of the canal in the 1950s and of the local railway line in 1966 meant that the village was once more entirely dependent upon road transport. Bus services to Devizes, Trowbridge, Melksham and Bath are supplemented by the village's own community bus the "Seend Shuttle" (timetable on www.seend.org.uk). The derelict canal was restored in the late 1970s and '80s and officially re-opened by the Queen in 1999 and is now in constant use, almost

entirely for leisure purposes. The famous Caen Hill staircase of locks is only a few miles away along the towpath.

In the early 1970s a large sum of money was raised by villagers, chiefly by huge traction engine rallies, to secure the Lye Field as a public recreation area, with sports field, tennis club and children's playground, and to build the Irene Usher Memorial Pavilion. A pretty little Millennium Garden has since been added, adjacent to the Pavilion, and some trees are to be planted to mark the centenary of the Armistice in 1918. A very successful fete on the second Saturday of August each year raises funds to maintain these facilities.

The village also boasts a shop and Post Office in the High Street, a primary school, pre-school playgroup, a village magazine and a Community Centre (the main part of which was built by villagers themselves, since extended). The Centre hosts a Beer Festival on the Saturday of the early May Bank Holiday each year, communal breakfasts on several Saturdays during the summer holidays, a wonderful flower and produce show on fete day, monthly coffee mornings and a pantomime at the end of February half-term week - among many other events and activities.

We also have three popular pubs:

The Barge Inn,
Seend Cleeve, SN12 6QB.
Tel: 01380 828230
www.bargeinnseend.co.uk

The Brewery Inn,
Seend Cleeve, SN12 6PX.
Tel: 01380 828463
www.breweryinnseend.co.uk

The Three Magpies,
Sells Green, SN12 6RN.
Tel: 01380 828389
www.threemagpies.co.uk

All serve food and have been given four or more stars on Trip Advisor.

The Community Centre in Rusty Lane (SN12 6NS) has an attractive members' lounge bar which opens every evening. Visitors can become temporary members for £1 per day.

Public Transport: The 49 bus runs between Swindon, Devizes and Trowbridge and passes through Seend High Street, and the 272 and X72 to Melksham and Bath stop at Sells Green and the Redstocks junction on the A365. These are infrequent rural services, so do check for an up-to-date timetable on: nationaljourneyplanner.travelinesw.com or call 0871 200 22 33. A limited rail service is available from Melksham.

A priced booklet of walks in and around the village should be available from late summer 2018.

In the meantime you may like to amble along the canal, or try visiting our beautiful church, and then take a stroll through the churchyard. Go through the kissing gate behind the church on the left and follow the path that goes parallel to the backs of some fine houses on your left, with panoramic views to your right. Go through another kissing gate and continue until you descend some stone steps. Now turn left and you will soon find yourself back on the High Street.



More information on the village of Seend and what goes on here can be found on: www.seend.org.uk
www.seendcommunitycentre.com

We hope you enjoy your visit.

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WELCOME TO SEEND **Some History and Highlights**



(Drawings by Mrs Pam Hillier)

The name of Seend is possibly derived from the old English word for sand. The centre of the village runs along a ridge of greensand while the settlements of Seend Cleeve and Sells Green are on the lower clay. There has been a settlement here since early times. Soon after the Norman Conquest there was a village here, with a church, forming part of the royal hunting forest of Melksham.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Seend was made prosperous by the wool industry. When the church was rebuilt and enlarged in the late 15th century, wealthy clothier, John Stokes, provided the North aisle, where his memorial