

Brinsley Headstocks (1872-1970)

Follow in the footsteps of the colliers of Eastwood by taking this short walk to Brinsley Headstocks, the site of a former coal mine, located in the local countryside loved by D.H. Lawrence.

Imagine the miners descending into the darkness, the loud noises and strange smells emerging from the pit. Brinsley Colliery was worked from 1872 until 1934, and was then used for access to nearby pits until 1970, when the surface buildings were demolished. The headstocks were taken to a mining museum but returned to Brinsley in 1991, where they were re-erected on their present site.

The twin headstocks and nearby disused mineral railway track are all that remains of an extensive coal mining enterprise owned by Barber, Walker & Co. (local colliery owners).



Lawrence described the coal mines:

"like black studs on the countryside, linked by a loop of fine chain, the railway".

Terrain Information: The walk takes approximately 1 ½ hours, starting from the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum, and back again following the same route. This route follows adjacent to roads and along clear footpaths. Appropriate walking clothes and footwear are recommended as footpaths can become muddy in wet weather. Please take care when crossing busy roads.



Brinsley Headstocks has a small car park on site.
Nearest postcode: NG16 5AE

D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930)



Born to an ordinary working-class home, in the busy mining community of Eastwood, David Herbert Lawrence became one of the 20th century's most influential and controversial writers.

Known as Bert to his family, D.H. Lawrence was a sickly child who struggled to fit into the mining community of Eastwood. D.H. Lawrence never worked down the pits, instead he had an education and trained to be a teacher. If he had have been sent down the mines, how do you think he would have fared?

Lawrence's father, Arthur, worked as a 'Butty' down at Brinsley Pit, and employed other miners to work in his team to mine a seam of coal. Arthur worked 780 feet underground, crouched down in an 18-inch coal seam.

'And my father, who always worked in Brinsley pit and who always got up at 5 o'clock, if not four, would set off in the dawn across the fields at Coney Grey and hunt for mushrooms in the long grass or perhaps pick up a skulking rabbit which he would bring home at evening inside the lining of his pit coat' - D.H. Lawrence, Nottingham and the Mining Country, 1929.

Many of Lawrence's stories are based on this area and the people who lived here, with many of his works focusing on life in the pits. Brinsley Pit is the backdrop for his short story, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, later dramatised in the play, *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*.

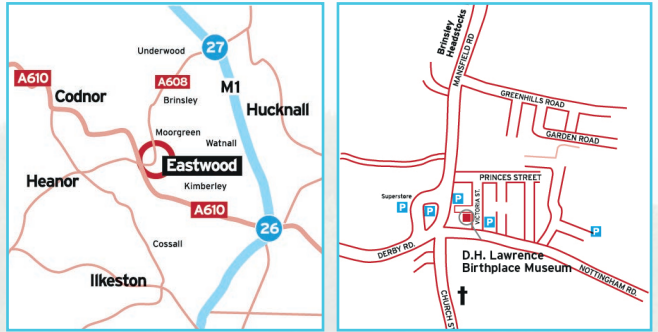


Where is the museum?

In the glorious East Midlands, near both Nottingham and Derby, and just 40 minutes from Matlock at the edge of the Peak District. Ten minutes from the M1, close to the IKEA retail park.

How do I get there?

From M1 Junction 26, take the A610 towards Eastwood. From M1 Junction 27, take the A608, through Brinsley, towards Eastwood.



Where can I park?

Pay and Display car parking is available at the nearby Scargill Walk, Victoria Street, and Sun Inn car parks (see map above).

Can I use public transport?

You don't need a car to come to us. For bus journeys to Eastwood high street jump on the Rainbow One from Nottingham or the Black Cat from Derby. Langley Mill train station is also only 1.5 miles away.

How do I contact you?

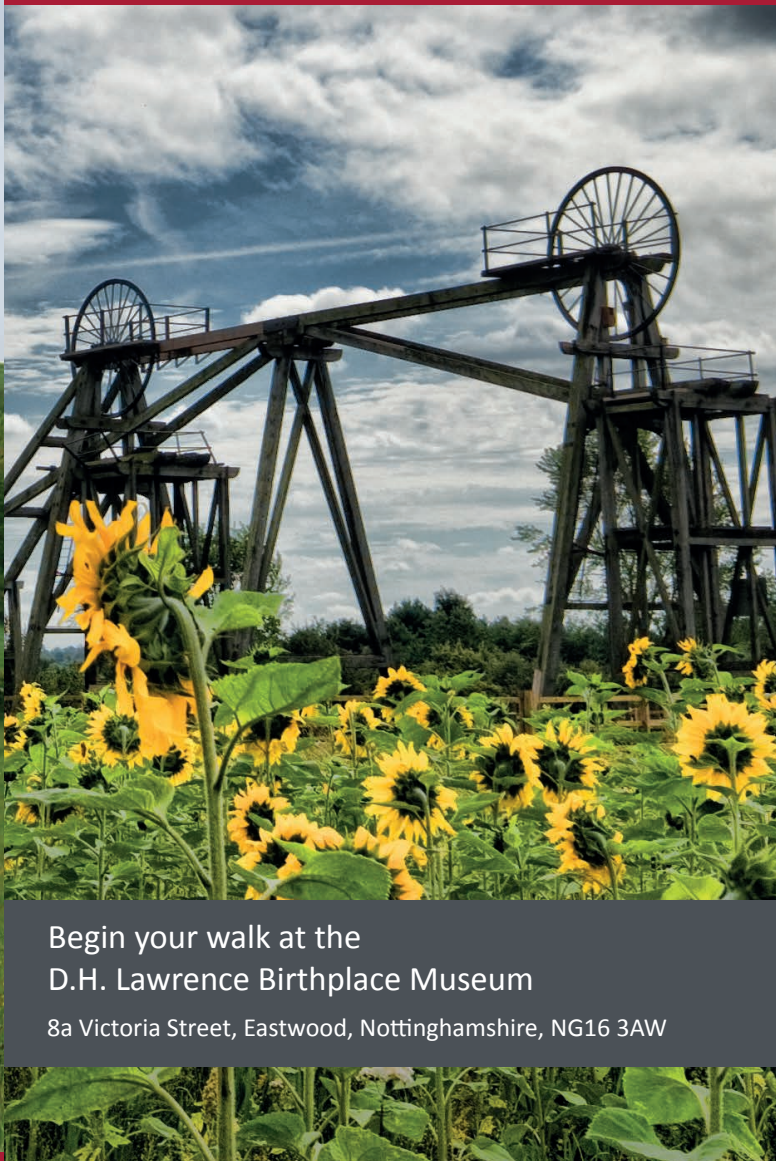
D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum,
8a Victoria Street, Eastwood,
Nottinghamshire, NG16 3AW

T: 0115 917 3824
E: dhlawrence@lleisure.co.uk
www.lleisure.co.uk/dhlawrence



The Country of My Heart A short walk to Brinsley Headstocks

Short - Approx 1 ½ hours / 2 miles



Begin your walk at the
D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum

8a Victoria Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, NG16 3AW



D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum
0115 917 3824
www.lleisure.co.uk/dhlawrence

1 Begin at 8a Victoria Street, Eastwood (NG16 3AW) now the **D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum**. This building is a charming, award-winning museum, featuring an exhibition including Lawrence's original water colour paintings and his headstone.

Turn left out of the Museum, and head down Scargill Walk, passing the Craft Workshops.

Pass through the archway and turn right.

Follow Mansfield Road down the hill, passing points 2,3 and 4 on your right.

2 **The Mechanics' Institute** - In Lawrence's time this building was the Mechanics' Institute, a 19th century version of a working man's education college. It incorporated a lending library, which was used extensively by D.H. Lawrence and his first romantic interest, Jessie Chambers. Now the Library Bar



3 **Princes Street** - The 19th century saw a huge increase in the amount of coal produced in the region. Barber, Walker & Co. built these houses, known as 'the squares' or 'the buildings'. Lawrence described them as 'great quadrangles of dwellings on the hillside' and 'sordid and hideous'!

Safely cross the road at the traffic lights past Hall Park Academy.

4 Look right to **Durban House** - This large red brick building was built in 1876 as offices for Barber, Walker & Co. As a boy Lawrence collected his father's wages from this building and 'suffered the tortures of the damned' when he was heckled by the local miners.

Continue down Mansfield Road.

5 You will pass the entrance to **Eastwood Hall**, this mansion built in the Italian style was constructed by local builder William Rowe in 1832. The Walker family (of Barber, Walker & Co.) were early owners.



Enjoy a pit-stop and relax at the Brinsley Headstocks and Nature Reserve.

What to read when you're here...

Sons and Lovers - Lawrence's semi-autobiographical novel features his father, Arthur Lawrence, as the Walter Morel character.

What to read when you're here...

Odour of Chrysanthemums - A short story featuring Aunt Polly's Cottage.

Continue walking alongside Mansfield Road (A608) until you reach the signed entrance to the **Brinsley Headstocks and Nature Reserve** on your right. Be careful when crossing the road as there is a blind corner.

6 **Quarry Cottage** - The home of D.H. Lawrence's grandfather who worked as a tailor. Lawrence and his siblings would steal apples from the tree in the garden.

Enter the car park of the Brinsley Headstocks and Nature Reserve, and pass through the gate straight ahead. Try the latch of the gate if it appears locked.

7 **Aunt Polly's Cottage** - You will walk past an old abandoned cottage, formerly owned by D.H. Lawrence's Aunt Polly. The house featured in his short story *Odour of Chrysanthemums*.

"At the edge of the ribbed level of sidings squat a low cottage, three steps down from the cinder track. A large bony vine clutched at the house, as if to claw down the tiled roof".

The building is just beside the footpath leading up to Brinsley Headstocks, and was originally next to the colliery railway.

Continue walking along the footpath, keeping to the left as the path divides into two. Follow this path until you reach the headstocks.

8 **Brinsley Headstocks** - In many of his works, Lawrence describes this area and paints a picture of living a life dependent on coal.

D.H. Lawrence's father, Arthur, worked at this very pit from 1883-1912. Imagine the smell and noise from the mining industry, and the colliers emerging in their pit dirt.

To lengthen your walk around the nature reserve, follow the directional information available on markers around the headstocks.

To return to the starting point of your walk, simply retrace your steps back to the **D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum**.