

Walk No3: To Victoria Embankment by Various Routes

12th – 20th May 2020 (that's the period over which I did the walks and photos, not the time it takes to walk them!)

I am sure we all like to go down to The Embankment for a stroll. This can be enhanced by choosing different ways to get there. This walk, therefore, has a number of route options, of between around 6 and 8km.

We are most fortunate to have Victoria Embankment close by – it's a nice place to walk or jog or just sit and watch the river go by and admire the birds or, in normal times, the various boats, especially the rowing teams.

It is also, of course, the venue for many great events, including (photos with a C in the top left corner are internet copies; the rest are mine).....

The Riverside Festival, with its terrific fireworks display



The Nottingham Triathlon



The Caribbean Carnival



For this participant it was all – yawn – a bit tiring!

And The Robin Hood Half & Full Marathon

I ran in the 1st Robin Hood Half Marathon in October 1981, along with over 3,000 runners, but the event caused some difficulties for traffic.

The organisers asked the County's highways department for help in planning a Half and Full Marathon for 1982 and I was given the task.

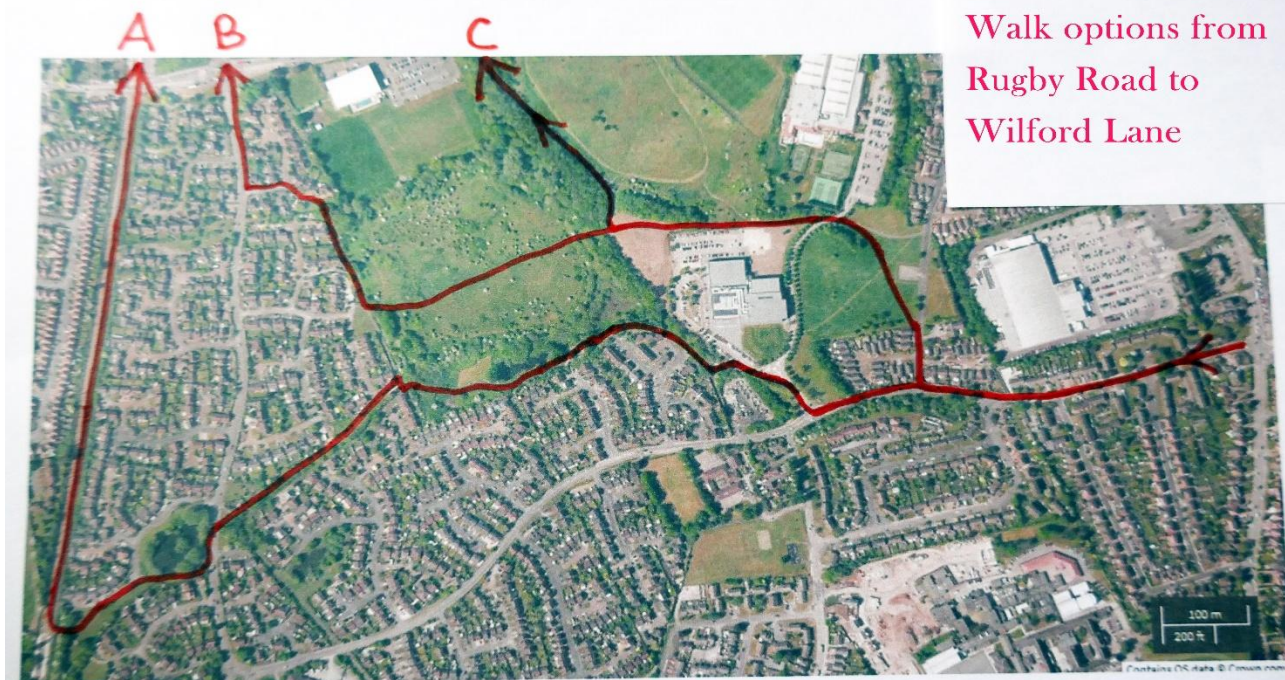
I ended up with the official role of traffic planning (road closures, diversions, etc.) and the voluntary role of actually planning, measuring, re-planning and re-measuring (repeatedly) the route and then co-ordinating the marshals. One significant factor in assessing the traffic implications is the time taken for all the runners to pass a particular point and the length of the 'procession' from the fastest runner to the slowest – for example, if the leader is at the 20 mile point the last runner is 10 miles back (so a 10 mile long queue of runners) and will take about 90 minutes to get to that point.

All quite exciting and rewarding and the result was a success with 7,000 entries. Of course, I couldn't actually compete in the run – my role was going along the route (in a car) a few minutes in advance of the runners, checking that the marshals had all final arrangements right and the route was correct and safe.....all with the frightening threat of something being wrong and 14,000 pounding feet not far behind me!



But this is meant to be a walk!

So, first, the map...



Walk options from
Rugby Road to
Wilford Lane

The route is from Musters Road, via Eton and Rugby Roads to Compton Acres and then across Wilford Lane, down to the River Trent and over Wilford Toll Bridge to Victoria Embankment. Return over the Suspension Bridge and along Melton Road, back to Musters Road.

There are many route options between Rugby Road and Wilford Lane – I have chosen 3: **A, B & C**, each with a short option (dotted lines) back along the Bridgford side of the Trent.

Option A leaves Rugby Road at the turning to Rushcliffe Arena and David Lloyd, then turns down the path on the left just before the Arena car park. Turn right and then left and follow the path which takes you past the first of two ponds



Continue along the path, going right and then left over a small bridge



and continue to Compton Acres road



..... some moorhen chicks

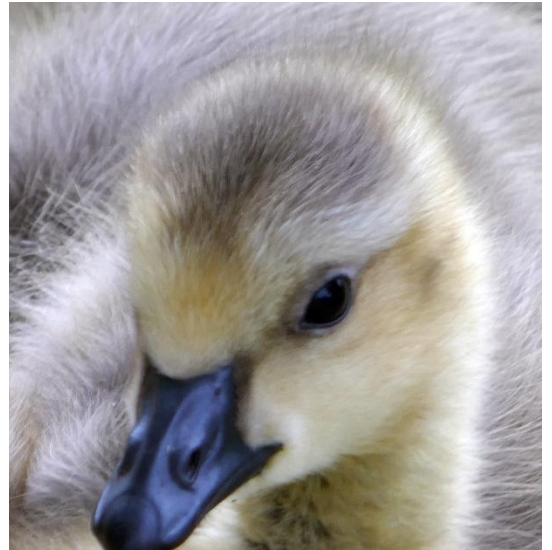


Cross the road, bearing slightly left and past the second pond.

There are usually plenty of birds at the second pond, with young families at this time of year



And lovely little goslings (14th May)



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Fast growing and out for a swim (20th May)...



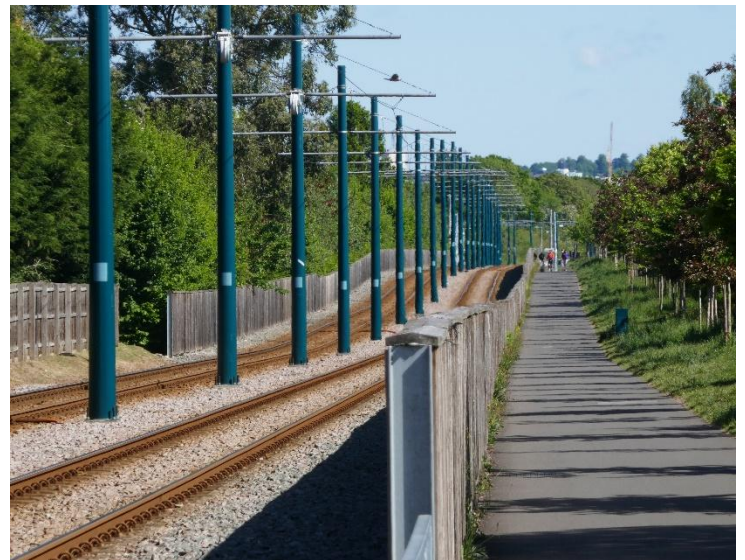
...with another family...



Also a Heron



Beyond the pond, continue alongside Lyme Park before reaching the tram line at Compton Acres tramstop. Turn right, alongside the tracks, and continue to Wilford Lane.



My passage was carefully watched by this cat, precariously perched about six feet above the ground – sunning itself, or, more likely, spying for possible prey down below.

Option B turns off Rugby Road at Collington Way and crosses the open ground to the rear of Rushcliffe Arena.



Behind the Arena, two tall pylons soar above you. Are these some of the dreaded, sabotage attracting, People's Republic of China's Ministry of State Security linked, Huawei promoted, 5G spreaders of Covid-19 symptoms ????

....Hurry on past....

and cross the open land that lies close to the Compton Acres estate



It is remarkable that we are in the middle of a built-up area

The name Compton Acres is taken from a garden in Poole, Dorset and the estate was built in the 1980s, partly on marshland and partly on a former waste tip.



If you stand half way along the path and look all around...not a building to be seen!

Continue down to the estate, turning right and then left, out onto Compton Acres road and go right to Wilford Lane.

Option C turns right, off Option B, just after Rushcliffe Arena. This option is just to see the growing Lynden Homes development of Wilford Fields – the cause of the frequent noise of pile driving last year and, I guess, more to come. Building works have started up again.



Continue to Wilford Lane and turn left to meet options A & B.

(Option C also provides a pleasant shorter route across the Gresham playing fields to the riverside path and back towards Melton Road.)



The three options join at Wilford Lane tramstop and the route continues alongside the tram track past the Becket School and on towards the Trent.

As the tram route turns left, we ignore the option for a quicker return via the Bridgford side of the river....



...we go straight ahead, up and over the bank and down towards the pond.

The tram route we have followed from Compton Acres goes alongside the raised embankment of the old alignment of the Great Central Railway (closed down on the recommendation of Dr Beeching in the 1960s). At this point, the GCR continued straight ahead and over the Trent across a now demolished bridge and into Nottingham.

We bear left and down to the fishing lake – Iremongers Pond



Apparently, Iremongers Pond is named after three brothers born in the 1880s/1890s: James (Jimmy) Iremonger was an English cricketer and noted as one of the players most unlucky never to play Test cricket. James also played football for Nottingham Forest making his debut as a fullback in 1896 against Stoke City and earned 3 caps for England. Albert Iremonger was a football goalkeeper and county-class cricketer. He was widely regarded as one of the best goalkeepers of his time He was landlord of The Ferry Inn until his death in 1958.

Harold (Harry) Iremonger was also an English professional football goalkeeper who played in the Football League for Nottingham Forest.



On 12th May the pond was quiet and there were ducklings enjoying the peace.



But, by 16th May, the anglers were back and the ducklings had gone into hiding



Crossing over Wilford Toll Bridge we turn onto the Embankment (at last!).

On 12th May, it was all pretty quiet, with the swans dominating activity on the river. There were a lot of swans but, in common with the Queen's Swan Marker, I didn't count them; the Royal Swan Upping (the annual counting of the Queen's swans) on the River Thames will not take place this year due to Covid 19



By 16th May, the rowers and canoeists were back



Using oars and paddles to maintain "social distancing"?

No 'fours' or 'eights'.... but one pair – perhaps from the same household?



The walk is completed by crossing the river over the Suspension Bridge

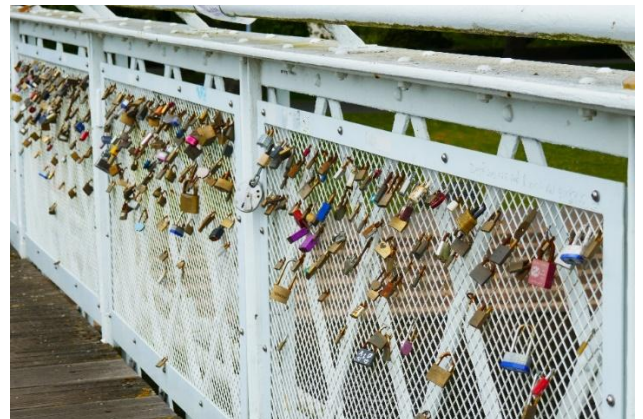


Owned by Severn Trent Water, the Grade II listed Wilford Suspension Bridge, also known as Meadows Suspension Bridge, is a combined suspension pedestrian footbridge and aqueduct. It also carries a gas main.

And it is also a popular location for the fixture of 'love locks' or 'love padlocks'.

According to Wikipedia, the history of love padlocks dates back at least 100 years to a melancholic Serbian tale of World War I, with an attribution for the bridge Most Ljubavi (lit. the Bridge of Love) in the spa town of Vrnjačka Banja. A local schoolmistress named Nada fell in love with a Serbian officer named Relja. After they committed to each other, Relja went to war in Greece, where he fell in love with a local woman from Corfu. As a consequence, Relja and Nada broke off their engagement. Nada never recovered from that devastating blow, and after some time she died due to heartbreak from her unfortunate love.

As young women from Vrnjačka Banja wanted to protect their own loves, they started writing down their names, with the names of their loved ones, on padlocks and affixing them to the railings of the bridge where Nada and Relja used to meet.



Looks like they are all in lockdownbut breaking the rules on social distancing!

Finally, cross Loughborough Road and go up Melton Road and Musters Road and the walk ends.