

Walk No 13.3: Ruddington (The Green) to WB

Walk/Photos taken 3-11 Sept, 2020

Walk 13.3 starts at The Green in Ruddington and returns to West Bridgford via Compton Acres, a distance of about 7.5km.

It includes the Framework Knitters' Museum, the Village Museum, St Peter's Church, Manor Park and The Grange.

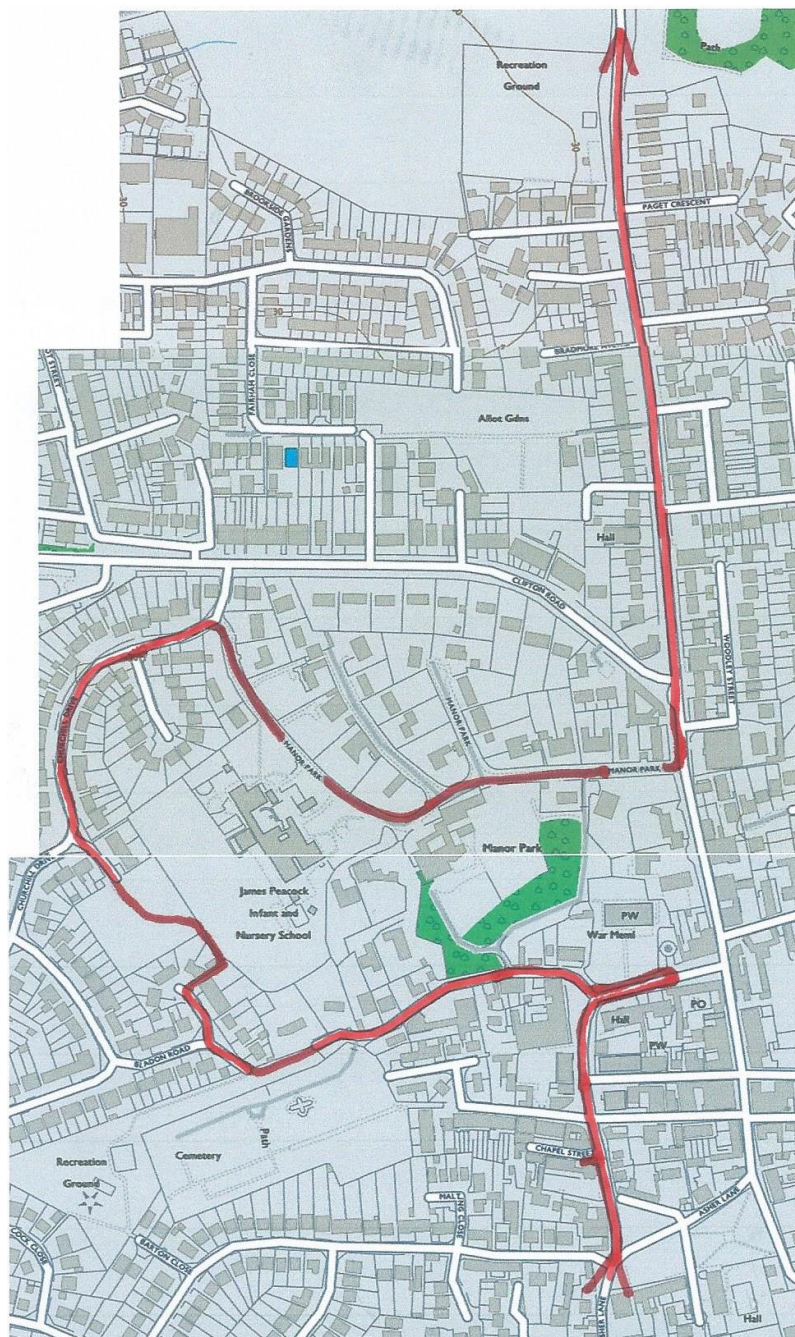
Combining this walk with Walks 13.1 (WB to Ruddington (The Green)) and 13.2 (Rushcliffe Country Park) makes a longer walk. Taken on its own, or in combination with bits of the other walks, it requires a bus or other means to get to the start in Ruddington.

The history of Ruddington Village is mainly covered in Walk 13.1, with some here in 13.3, which also includes a bit about future growth of the village, and there is also the important part the village played in the history of knitting, covered in 13A 'Framework Knitting in Nottinghamshire – from invention to dissension'

To simplify the actual walk description I have put some of the more detailed history and other information at the end, numbered in red in the main text. Ruddington has a lot of history and interesting stories, far too much for me to include here. If you want to learn more, the Ruddington Parish Council website is a great place to look:
ruddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk



This map shows the walk through the village of Ruddington. The earlier map is adequate for the return to West Bridgford along Wilford Road and through Compton Acres.

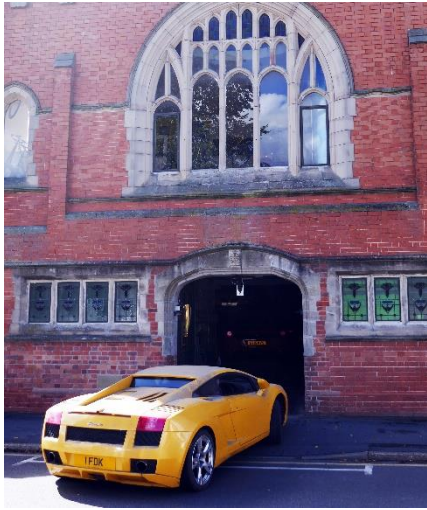


The walk starts at the junction of Asher Lane and The Green and goes north.

The second building on the left used to be a Wesleyan Chapel. The history that I have found is a little unclear but I believe that the original chapel was to the right (as you face it) of this building. According to an article on the Ruddington Parish Council website, this was the site of an old Quaker meeting house. After, apparently, four years of opposition, threats and intimidation from the local vicar, the landowner Sir Thomas Parkyns and others, the Ruddington Wesleyans erected the chapel in 1800.

As Methodism increased dramatically in the 19th century due to the influx of framework knitters there was a need for larger premises and the new Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1835 adjoining the original – this is the building we see today. However, it is no longer a chapel.



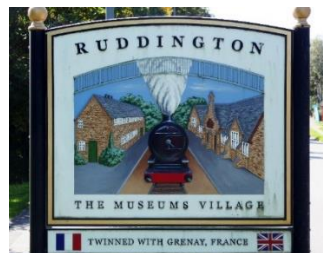


The chapel has been converted into a private home now occupied by Richard Stewart, a (retired?) engineer who used to run Robin Hood Sports Cars Ltd. The front doors of the building open into a large workshop, fully kitted out and big enough for several cars!

As I passed, this bright yellow Lamborghini Gallardo – or “Lambo Gallardo” as the enthusiasts call it – was being driven in.

Next door is Martindale House which is where WigWag are based. As you may recall from Walk 13.1,

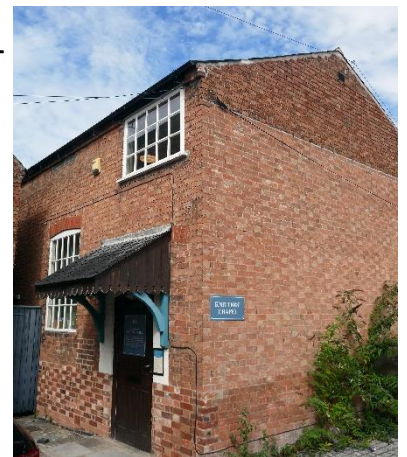
WigWag is the digital communications company that designed the Ruddington village signs erected on all the roads entering the village.



A short way further along is the White Horse Inn & Kitchen, the 5th pub (of the 7 in Ruddington) we have passed.



The White Horse is on the corner of Chapel Street, so named because of the chapel at the end, built in 1829 by the Primitive Methodists. At that time Chapel Street was known as “Rantergate” – “ranter” being the nickname for the Primitive Methodists. This was a time when Framework Knitting was the main source of employment in Ruddington and was inextricably linked with Methodism – the chapel is now named the Knitters’ Chapel. The Grade II Listed buildings next to the chapel comprise a complex of framework knitters’ cottages, workshops and outbuildings which date from c.1829 and c.1840 and now form the Framework Knitters’ Museum, with the chapel being purchased in 1991.



See below: [Further Info. 1. Framework Knitters’ Museum](#)



Returning out of Chapel Street, on the opposite side of Church Street you may notice an iron railings fence with brick pillars fronting a modest house. Attached to the iron railings are the shapes of an anvil and tools – was this a blacksmith's you might wonder?



Once more an article on the Ruddington Parish Council website can tell us – this is the home of a retired blacksmith, Oliver J Blood, and his wife; they had the house built next to his former forge. The wrought iron gates at the old Horspool's Bakery, the giant pagoda at Lymn's Funeral Directors and dozens of customised weather vanes are just some of his work. Oliver retired in 1998, at which time his big workshop was dismantled and a more modest, domestic garage put in its place.



The house and workshop before 1998.

Apparently there were once five blacksmiths in the village.

As you continue along Church Street you can see the wrought iron gates on the first building on the left – the former Horspool's Bakery Shop is now the Old Bakehouse Tearoom; the bakery at the rear was demolished (in 2014?) and replaced with housing.



Further along Church Street, on the right, is the fourth Methodist chapel building in the village – this one, built by the Primitive Methodists in 1873, is still very much in use today.



An old photo of the Primitive Chapel.

Also on the right, where Church Street bends to the right, are the Grade II Listed St Peter's Rooms, home of the Parish Council and the Village Museum.

Built in 1852 for Sir Thomas Parkyns, this was an Infants' & Girls' School, dedicated to the memory of his grandmother and parents. It was later known as St Peter's Junior School and was subsequently converted to a community hall in 1976.



The original Ruddington Village Museum was opened in 1968, housed across two floors in a wing of The Hermitage (on Wilford Road). It had moved to St. Peter's Rooms by the late 1980s and, as the museum's website explains, it *'explores retail life in late Victorian and early Edwardian Ruddington through a series of displays which recreate Ruddington's shops of yesteryear'*. Apparently these include an Edwardian fish and chip shop, a pharmacist, a cobbler, an ironmonger and a toy shop. There is also an Edwardian school-room and a collection of farm implements.

A short way further along Church Street, set back from the road (to the left of the photo) is another Grade II Listed building. Formally Manor Farmhouse, designed by and built for Sir Thomas Parkyns in the early C18th, Nos 17 and 19 are now two cottages.



On the opposite side of Church Street and a little further along is a traditional, cast iron, red telephone kiosk. Surprisingly, you may think, this is Grade II Listed.

This is a K6 kiosk, identified as Britain's red Telephone Box; in fact eight kiosk types were introduced by the General Post Office between 1926 and 1983. The K6 was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the coronation of King George V in 1935. Some 60,000 examples were installed across Britain. Over 11,000 K6s remain and they are the most visible examples of the eight kiosk types. There are around 2,500 listings for the K6 kiosk in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



I'm sure you are so pleased to learn all that!



Behind the kiosk is Ruddington's War Memorial (Grade II Listed) which commemorates village residents who were killed in the First and Second World Wars, and the Korean War. The Memorial was unveiled by the Duke of Portland on Saturday 19th May 1923. Parish Council records show *'that a Committee of Councillors to be called the War Memorial Committee, was formed and in October 1923 they agreed to employ a Mr. A. W. Cross at a rate of one shilling and three pence per hour (approximately 6p per hour) to keep the Memorial tidy and to assist him the Council brought a second hand lawn mower at a cost of £3'*.

Turning back along Church Street is the Grade II Listed St Peter's Church.

The first recorded evidence of any church is in Domesday Book 1086. It is probable that this is a reference to the church at Flawforth (or Flawford). There are plaques in the churchyard that provide a good description of the history of the church here and at Flawforth and there is a summary below: [Further Info. 2. Flawforth & Ruddington Church](#)



If you go through the churchyard round to the back of the church you come to The Hermitage (mentioned earlier). This is a Grade II Listed building from C16, remodelled 1708, late C18, and late C19 alterations and extensions. It used to be the manor house and is now church rooms, preschool and flats.



Continue past the church and turn left into Vicarage Lane. The first building on the right is Widows Cottages – a set of alms-houses dating from 1850.



Set back behind Widows Cottages and to the left of the church is, the appropriately named, Churchside. This is another Grade II Listed building. It was 2 cottages, built in mid C16 with later C17 and C18 alterations and extensions, converted into single house in 1952.

A little further along Vicarage Lane is the entrance to The Manor House (earlier named South Manor) – yes, another Grade II Listed building, built in C18 with 1852 alterations and additions by T. C. Hine for Sir Thomas George Augustus Parkyns. White's Directory in 1853 records Parkyns as the principal owner of land in the village and lord of the manor.



South Manor in c1910s: A P Knighton

Thomas Chambers Hine (1813 – 1899), Nottingham architect and son of hosiery manufacturer Jonathan Hine, is perhaps best known for the Adams Building on Stoney Street, The Great Northern Railway Station off London Road, the layout and development of The Park Estate and the restoration of Nottingham Castle from the ruin of what was the Ducal mansion destroyed by rioters in 1831 and its conversion into the museum and art gallery.



The Manor House drive curves up to the house, which is obscured from the road by trees. It has changed somewhat from the old photo – now all painted white and the tower with the look-out balcony has been truncated.

Today this is the offices of True Story Marketing and Advertising Consultants. “An independent creative agency for retailers, brands, businesses and organisations with a story to tell.”

A little further along, on the left is the old vicarage, now St Peter's Rest Home.....



....and then, on the right, is Lane House which used to to be the lodge at the southern entrance to the Manor.



At the end of Vicarage Lane, on the left is an attractive avenue leading into the cemetery....



... but for our route, go past the cemetery entrance and continue ahead onto the path, with Manor Farm House on your right



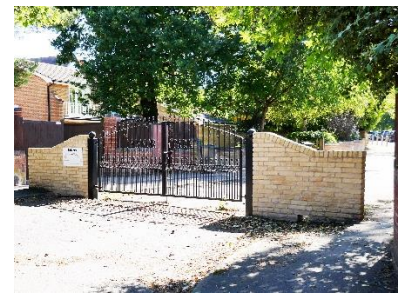
After about 80m turn right through a gap in the hedge and onto Bladen Road then ahead onto Spencer Close and, almost at the end, turn right down an alleyway between houses. This turns sharply left and goes along the back of a school playing field.....



...with a view of South Manor, with its portico doorway (below, an old photo to compare).

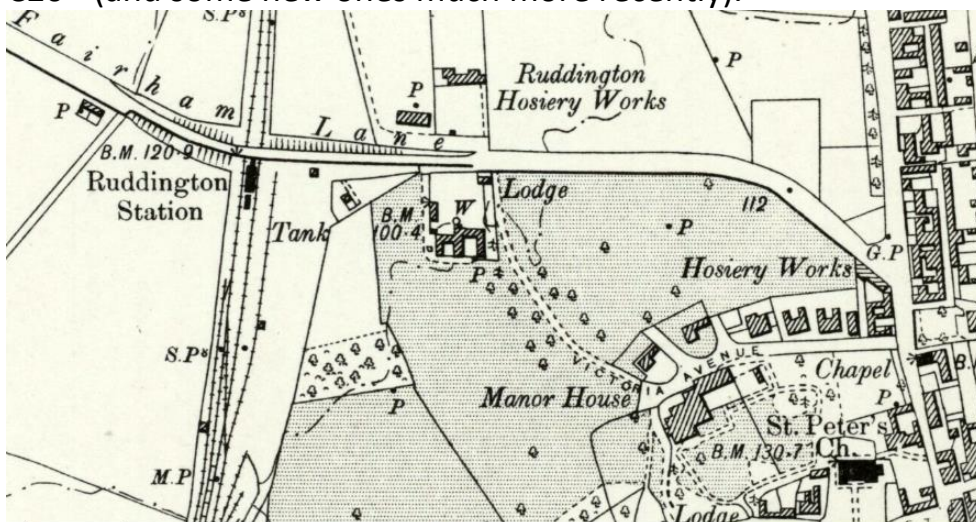


The path goes across a field and onto Churchill Drive (1960s/70s houses?) – turn right and then right again into... the private road of Manor Park



Rushcliffe Borough Council's Ruddington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2009) describes Manor Park as a 'distinct area of Edwardian large commuter properties' built following the opening, in March 1899, of passenger services from Ruddington Station on the Great Central Railway.

The road is now called Manor Park but, as this 1901 map shows, it was originally named Victoria Avenue. The map shows the first five houses – more were built in the early years of C20th (and some new ones much more recently).



For access to the station, commuters used the northern driveway of Manor House to the northern lodge (we passed the southern lodge, now Lane House, on Vicarage Lane) and onto Fairham Lane (later named Station Road and now Clifton Road). Churchill Drive is, of course, not on this map.

As you walk along Manor Park, on the right is the school, the back of which we passed earlier. It was built in 1967 and named the James Peacock Infant and Nursery school – you will recall from Walk 13.2 that James Peacock founded the Free School on The Green. The Edwardian properties are on the left – a couple of examples...



The access to Manor House is on the right – along which you can get a better view of the west front, with portico



And just beyond the drive are properties with names 'The Coach House' and 'Butlers' – houses which were presumably for staff of the Manor.



Continue to the end of Manor Park and onto Wilford Road. Just opposite and to the right is the Baptist Chapel building. Built in 1853 and (according to the stone on the front) enlarged in 1872. .



An old postcard photo, labled Wilford Lane (now Wiford Road) taken from 'Dutton's Hill', with the Baptist Chapel on the right.



The chapel is now converted to residential use. The building behind is named The School House

The section of road here is, according to maps and the street nameplate, 'Wilford Road' but the bit up the hill towards the village centre is known locally, and used in village descriptions, e.g. by Wikipedia, as Dutton's Hill. An article on the Parish Council website tells that the hill

was named after a man called Mr Dutton who in the mid-1800s lived and worked in the property that is now a barber's. Apparently, he was a phrenologist: observing and feeling the skull to determine an individual's psychological attributes e.g. personality and character – this was taken very seriously in that era.

Turn left along Wilford Road (north, away from the village centre). At the junction with Clifton Road is a building converted to apartments, now named Victoria Court. As can be seen from the 1901 map (a couple of pages above) this used to be hosiery works.



On the opposite side is the Victoria Tavern, the 6th (of 7) pubs in the village, and



....a little further along is the last (7th) pub, formally the Jolly Farmers but renamed the Ruddington Arms in 2014 after a major refurbishment.



Continue along Wilford Road and on the left at the edge of the village is Sellors' Playing Field on which the annual village fair has been held since 1968. In 1947 the field was gifted to the village in perpetuity by Frederick William Sellors. It has a covenant to protect it and is registered as an Asset of Community Value – factors which spared it from the threat of new housing recently after a long battle by villagers to save it.



Nonetheless, there remain a number of housing development proposals around the village, both approved (i.e. in the Rushcliffe Borough Council's adopted Local Plan) and in recent proposals 'for consultation'.

See [Further Info. 3. Sellors' Field](#) and [4. Ruddington Housing Proposals](#)

Leaving the village, the road passes open land on one side, with views across to Clifton, and trees on the other, behind which is a golf course.



After just under 1km is the entrance to the Ruddington Grange Golf Club and Wedding Venue.



The Grange was a manor house built in 1828. It had some interesting owners over the years but was demolished in the mid C20th and in 1988 the site was redeveloped as the golf club and wedding venue. See [Further Info.5. Ruddington Grange.](#)

Some of the features of the old Grange remain including this rotunda and, in a very poor state, boarded up and, hopefully, awaiting repair, a greenhouse which is Grade II Listed.



Just beyond the golf club is Grange Court which has a number of homes in converted buildings originally part of the old manor – Keepers Cottage, Grange Cottages, The Stables, Gardener's Cottage, Carpenters, Grange Mews, Westgate Lodge and Sheltons Barn.



A few yards further along is Grange Farm.

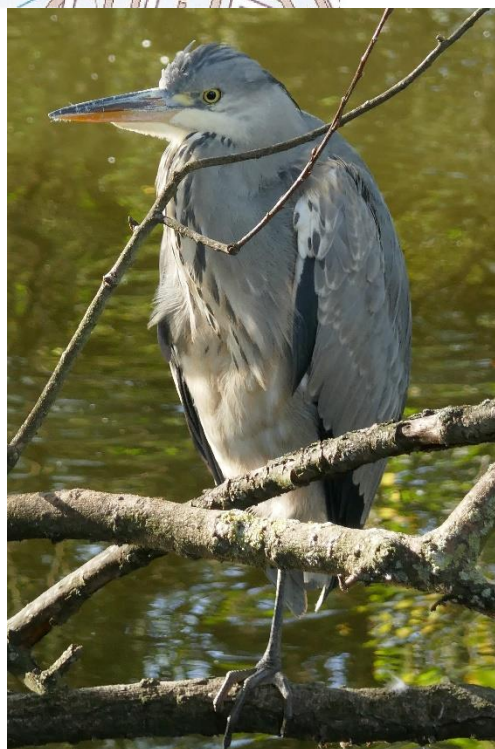
Continue along Wilford Road for about another 1km, past the entrance to Wilwell Farm Cutting (Walk No 10) and under the A52, and then turn right at the tram crossing. Follow the tram line to Compton Acres tramstop and turn right and follow the route on the map below past the pond at Lyme Park, over Compton Acres road and along the path to the next pond and then out onto the Rushcliffe Arena access road and onto Rugby Road (as walks 5 & 10 but the opposite direction)



Just a couple of bird photos – one from each of the two ponds.

A stern looking heron....

...and a group of ducks pre-empting the 'rule of six'



Finally, I started the Walk 13 descriptions with an amusing photo of a masked sheep.

Unfortunately, I feel I must end with evidence of one more effect of Covid-19 – a new form of litter. Sadly, these are just a sample of the many I have seen during my walks.

Is this the result of the instruction to “dispose of the mask after a single use”?



Further Information on Sites along the Walk

1. Framework Knitters' Museum

The museum tells the history of framework knitting in the village and elsewhere and also provides insight into the life of a knitter. I provide only a very brief introduction here.

Ruddington's association with the knitting industry had begun by the start of the 19th century after the invention of the knitting frame in Nottinghamshire (see 13A 'Framework Knitting in Nottinghamshire – from invention to dissension').

The industry attracted new inhabitants and the population grew to 2,500 during this time, becoming the largest frame knitters' village in Nottinghamshire south of the Trent. In 1851, about 50% of all households in the village were engaged in the industry in some way. New houses and frameshops, including the site occupied by the present-day Ruddington Framework Knitters Museum, were built to provide homes and workspace for the knitters and families. In addition, new housing was built to accommodate those involved in subsidiary trades such as framesmiths, needle makers, sink makers, seamers and bobbin-boys at Wilford Lane, The Leys and Chapel Street.

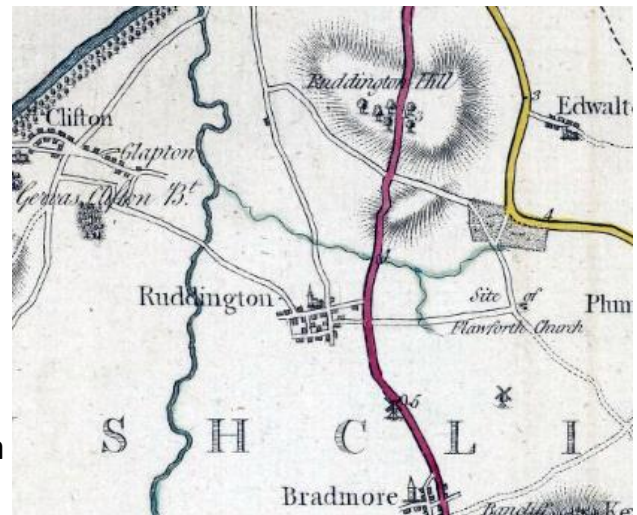
Most of these buildings are now private homes and businesses; many are Grade II Listed, the most important being those that comprise the Framework Knitters Museum, which is one of the only places left in the country where you can actually experience the working and living conditions of framework knitters in Victorian times.

2. Flawforth & Ruddington Church

Flawforth (or Flawford) is a 'lost village' once located about 1½ miles to the east of Ruddington, where present-day Flawforth Lane changes direction at a right angle.

Prior to the Saxon settlement at Ruddington there is evidence to suggest Bronze and Iron Age occupation at Flawford. Later there was a Roman Villa and, after 663AD, a Saxon church building, the foundations of which are marked out in the ground at the site.

It is unclear whether or not there was a village here, perhaps a few houses near the church – St. Peter's Church, which was on a crossroads and is thought to have served the villages of Ruddington, Plumtree, Edwalton and Bradmore.



From John Chapman's 1774 map of Nottinghamshire



Flawford/Flawforth church

From Throsby's Antiquities of Nottinghamshire, 1790-6, Vol I

The church is famous for the discovery of three Nottingham alabaster figures, representing Our Lady, St. Peter, and a bishop, which were discovered during the demolition of the church in 1779. They now form part of the collection in Nottingham Castle Museum. It is thought that they would have been hidden around 1539 during the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

It is believed that Ruddington was the last of the surrounding villages to acquire its own place of worship, partly because it was relatively close to Flawford, and because it seems at some point to have enjoyed exclusive use of the church.

The Southwell & Nottingham Church History Project (southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk) tells how Ruddington village eventually got its own parish church:

The parish church in Ruddington originated as a manorial chapel of St Mary [in around 1292-94] attached to the adjacent manor house (now the Hermitage), and the instigator of its building would have been the lord of the manor.

The gradual growth of the village and the increased reluctance of the parishioners to walk over a mile to Flawford for their children's baptisms led in 1479 to the grant of a licence for a new font and for the sacraments to be administered at the chapel. However, there was still no graveyard and burials continued to take place at Flawford.

... By 1718 Flawford church was in a ruined condition, and four of its bells were transferred to St Mary's... and St Mary's was enlarged.

In 1773 it was decided that Flawford church should be demolished. Some of the stone was taken to Ruddington to enlarge the chapel and to build walls to enclose the churchyard and form a graveyard. The spire from Flawford was also re-erected at the chapel.

The Nottingham Journal for 9 October 1773 recorded: Thursday morning the Archbishop of York... changed ... the chapel of Ruddington to be hereafter... the parish church [renamed St Peter's] in lieu of the ancient church of Flawford.

Two years later the churchyard was consecrated.

[There were later enlargements but there was a] radical decision in 1884 to rebuild the church completely [the old tower was retained].

All Saints' Day (1 November) 1888 was a memorable day for the parishioners... [the] consecration of the church of St Peter by the Bishop of Southwell.

3. Sellors' Field

In September 2015 Ruddington Parish Council agreed to enter negotiations for the sale of 'Sellor's Playing Field'. Members of the Council said that any sale would fund additional play facilities on a new, bigger play area a couple of hundred metres away and the development of a new community centre to replace the Village Hall. It was proposed that around 180 homes could be built on the Playing Field and the fields surrounding it. As noted in the main walk description, the field had been gifted to the village in perpetuity by Frederick William Sellors and has a covenant to protect it. The threat of the development resulted in a fight by villagers to save it and also a strongly worded letter from Roger Sellors, the grandson of Frederick William Sellors (I particularly like his strong objection about the misuse of an apostrophe!):

“Dear Ruddington Parish Council

I would like the contents of this letter to be read out at the next full meeting of Ruddington Parish Council. I am writing to you after being informed of your proposal to enter into negotiations with a developer, who wishes to purchase a piece of land which was given to the village of Ruddington by my Grandfather, Frederick William Sellors.

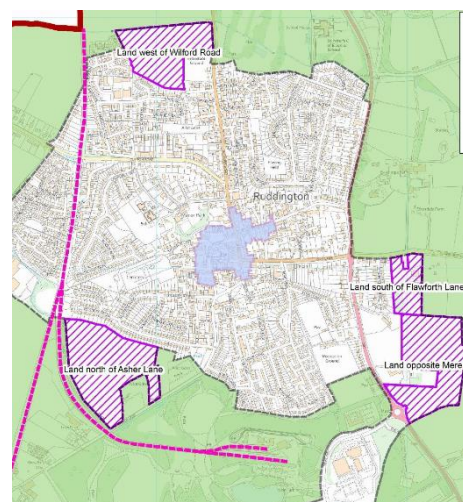
This land was generously donated to the village, and Covenanted, so that it could be enjoyed by all villagers, as I understood, in perpetuity. It wasn't given for a certain period of time so that after that time the Council could do with it what they wanted.

If the Council wanted to change its use during his lifetime I am sure that he would not have given permission for any change. If the Council had come up with this plan the year after his death then I am sure most people would say 'it is too soon'. How soon is too soon? If he had mentioned in his Will that after his death they could use the field for what purpose they wanted, then I am sure he would have said so. He did no such thing so to me the original Covenant should still stand.....

I am also writing to you to express my disgust at your total disregard for the English language, which manifests itself in your incorrect use of an apostrophe. A small point you might think but my family name is Sellors (not Sellor) and Fredrick William Sellors gifted Sellors' Field. On this issue the Council have not had the decency to check how an individual's name is spelt. You have now put on record, in a consultation document, which has over 30 references to Sellor's, that my name and that of my ancestors has been changed from Sellors to Sellor. (It is now being quoted incorrectly in the Nottingham Evening Post. thank you very much!). Would you like your name to be changed by a Council, or anyone else for that matter? Whilst on this subject I am also aware that there is a road in Ruddington called Sellars Avenue. I would like you to confirm whether this road/avenue was named after Frederick Sellors. If so no doubt you can see what I am getting at.....”

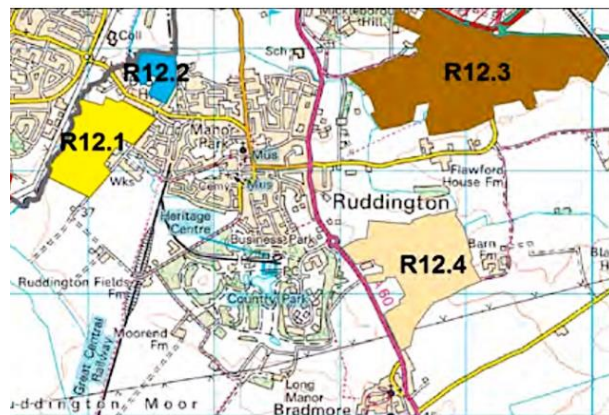
4. Ruddington Housing Proposals

Rushcliffe Borough Council adopted the Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies on 8 October 2019. This includes these areas around Ruddington



Further proposals were reported on the Ruddington Info website on September 3, 2020:

“A new document called the ‘Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Growth Options Consultation July 2020’ is now out for ‘consultation’ – with remarkably little fanfare – published by Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (GNPP). This is a body set up in 2008 which includes not only Rushcliffe Borough Council but also those of Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling and Nottingham City, plus the Hucknall part of Ashfield District, and the two associated County Councils of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. The partnership’s stated aim is “to prepare statutory strategic development plans which are consistent and provide a coherent policy framework across the area”. Evidently that ‘consistent and coherent policy framework’ involves DOUBLING the size of Ruddington by 2038! “



Ruddington Extension – Village Expansion:

- R12.1 West of Pasture Lane
- R12.2 North Road
- R12.3 East of Loughborough Road
- R12.4 Land south of Wheatcroft Island, Flawforth Lane

5. Ruddington Grange

Ruddington Grange was originally a large mansion built and occupied in 1828 by Charles Paget, a local landowner, JP, High Sheriff and, from 1856 to 1865, Liberal MP for Nottingham. He and his second wife were drowned by a freak wave near Filey in 1873.

The Grange was then sold to Sir Thomas Isaac Birkin who owned the Birkin Lace Company in Nottingham. During his ownership 'The Grange' was known locally for its monkeys which used to roam around the house. Sir Thomas had two famous sons of motor sport, Archie and Tim. Archie was killed during practice for the 1927 TT Races in the Isle of Man and Tim, who won the Le Mans race in 1931, died in 1933 after developing septicaemia from a burn on his arm caused by the exhaust pipe of his car.

In the 30's The Grange was occupied by Frank Bowden founder of Raleigh Industries, who then sold it to Thomas Farr founder of Home Ales. Thomas Farr went on to demolish the big house and replace it with a smaller building and ran the estate as a stud for his Race Horses.

Farr died in 1970 and the site stood empty for seven years until Jack Johnson, a local property developer brought it for his home and to develop the surrounding buildings until eventually in 1987 he decided to convert the land into a golf course – the redevelopment in 1988 changed the Grange into the present-day event venue and golf course.