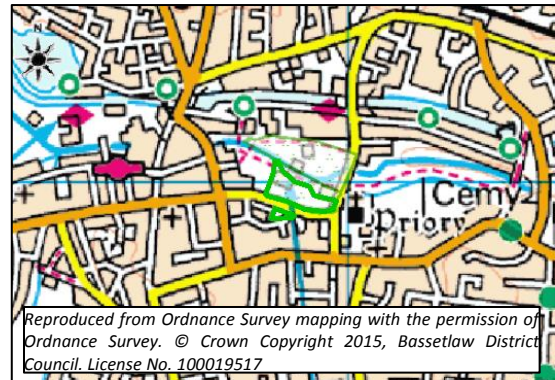


Unregistered Park & Garden:
Memorial Avenue Gardens
(Workshop)

NCC/BDC Ref:
UPG36

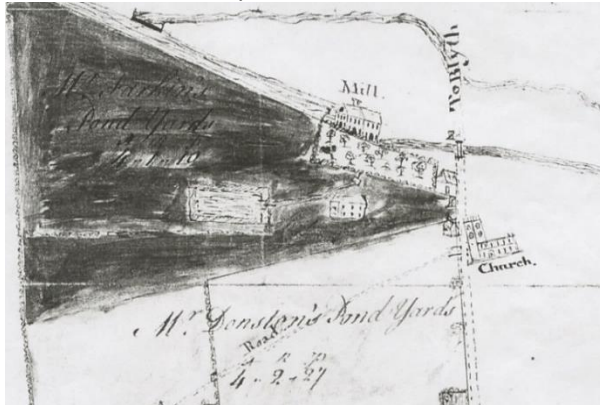
Date(s):
 1928-1938, c1970



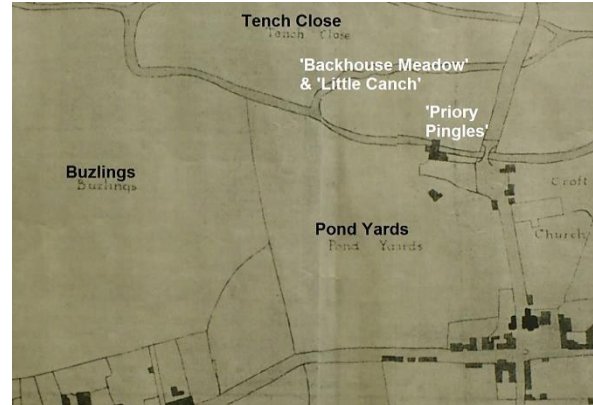
Description & historic information:

Public gardens on the ceremonial route of Memorial Avenue (road opened 1928), with a small garden on the south side (dated 1933, closed c1970) and a large garden on the north side (connected to the Canch Recreation Ground) associated with the library (opened in March 1938).

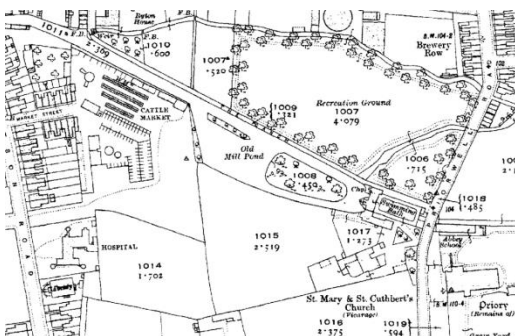
In the medieval period, this area was associated with the Augustinian Priory to the east. The land in question was referred to as pond yards, first described as such in Harrison's survey of 1636 and referred to as 'Mr Dunston's Pond Yards' on a mid-18th century map. Immediately to the north was the Priory Mill, together with its leat, a separate sluice and the original course of the River Ryton. Part of that land, historically water-logged meadow, was referred to by Harrison as the 'little canch', the term 'canch' surviving today. In c1820, the mill leat was dammed to form a mill pond. On much of the site, in 1910-1912, the Canch Recreation Ground and open-air swimming baths were established, incorporating the remains of the Priory Mill and the land around it, up to and including the former mill pond (which was turned into a boating lake). The land to the south, however, remained undeveloped.



Early/mid-18th century map of 'Pond Yards' (source: Sheffield Archives).



1775 – Kelk's Map of the Manor of Worksop – the field names from Harrison's 1636 survey are in white (source: Worksop Library).



1920 OS Map – The 1910-1912 Recreation Ground is to the north of the mill pond.



View of mill pond in c1900 (source: Bassetlaw Museum).

On the 30th May 1925, the Worksof Cenotaph (commonly referred to today as the Worksof War Memorial) was unveiled, together with an extension to the hospital immediately to the south. Around the memorial, a ceremonial roadway was constructed, which connected the town (to the west), with the memorial, hospital and Priory Church (to the east) – the restoration of the Priory Church's 'Lady Chapel' in 1922 had been undertaken as the town's first war memorial. Memorial Avenue was officially opened on by King George V and Queen Mary on the 9th July 1928.



*Official opening of Memorial Avenue
(source: www.britishpathe.com).*

Adjacent to the new processional route, a small garden was laid out on the south side of Memorial Avenue, sandwiched between the 1925 hospital extension and the 1924 school. This was first proposed by the Cemetery, Recreation Grounds and Baths Committee of the Worksof Urban District Council on the 30th May 1928ⁱ, but only opened in 1933ⁱⁱ. It was designed and maintained by the Borough Council's Parks' Superintendent, Charles Haslehurstⁱⁱⁱ, who had considerable experience with landscaped parks, earlier working at Shadwell Court (Norfolk) and the Royal Gardens at Buscot Park (Oxfordshire). The garden was soon noted for its roses and featured meandering crazy-paving paths and hedge boundaries. Several of the hospital extension's wards overlooked the garden, which was also used extensively by the patients. Numerous local benefactors contributed to the upkeep of the garden, including Councillor Middleton, who provided 2000 bulbs in February 1934^{iv}.



View of original Memorial Avenue Gardens in April 1937 (source: Worksof Library)



Extract from 1959 OS Map, showing original Memorial Avenue Garden on south side of Memorial Avenue.

Throughout the early 1930s, there was a growing desire, both in the Council (which became Worksof Borough Council in 1931) and in the local population, for a municipal building in the town, particularly with an expanded library and museum. The Canch Recreation Ground (opened 1912) had also become increasingly inadequate for the growing population of the town. In 1933, the Council voted to sell the existing library and museum (located on Watson Road). Shortly after, it began to demolish the (primarily 18th century) 'Priory Farm' buildings at the east end of the Memorial Avenue site, in anticipation for a large municipal building incorporating a town hall, library and museum and indoor baths, together with an extension to the existing park. This was officially proposed at Committee in early-February 1934 by Councillor Porter^v. Then, on the 12th February 1934, a motion was passed by Worksof Borough Council for the construction of a new library and museum^{vi}, to be located at the western end of the new gardens^{vii} (this was after discounting Scofton House on Park Street), although the other proposed municipal functions (town hall etc) were not included in the scheme. The design of the building would be decided by way of a competition, with £50 offered to the winning entry. In March 1934, the competition was officially opened^{viii}.

On the 10th May 1934, the winning design, by local architect firm John Haslam, Hollely & Son, was announced^{ix}. This was one of 300 applications the council received for the completion, with 27 individual designs^x. The scheme would also see the adjoining land "*laid out with flowers and shrubs*"^{xi}. Work was due to begin on the new building soon after, although this was delayed due to repeated alterations being made to the scheme (mostly internal) to accommodate the various competing library and museum functions. Throughout 1935, lengthy discussions took place between

the architects and library/museum staff to achieve a suitable layout. Further discussions were also had with regard to the remainder of the site, with a meeting of the 15th May 1935 first seeing a plan of new ornamental gardens^{xii}. In November 1936, plans were requested by the Parks, Burial Grounds and Baths Committee for the new 'Memorial Avenue Rest Garden'^{xiii}. The final plans for the new library and museum were ready in late-1936, although due to a steel shortage, construction didn't begin until January 1937^{xiv}. The contractors were Worksoop builders Leverton & Brown^{xv}.

On the 9th May 1937, a Portland stone sundial was unveiled in the small garden by the Mayor of Worksoop, given by the town's Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in commemoration of the coronation of King George VI^{xvi}. The work was carried out by local masons Lidster & Brammer. The location of this sundial is now unknown.



Photo of sundial unveiling in May 1937 (source: Worksoop Library).

On the 25th August 1937, a plan for the layout of the new gardens adjacent to the library (on the north side of the road), designed by borough engineer C.O. Allsopp and assisted by the Council's Parks' Superintendent, Mr Hazlehurst, was approved by the Parks, Burial Grounds and Baths Committee. The approved garden layout would cost £113 to be completed^{xvii}. Of the budget, £12.17.5 (£12.87) was allocated for 287 bush roses, £28.2.11 (£28.15) for trees and shrubs from James Smith Nurseries (Scotland), £33.0.0 for wrought iron gates and fencing and 16.6d (0.88) for 6 'Please keep off the grass' metal plates. One notable feature was the distinctive 'crazy paving' walkways, typical of landscaping in the 1930s/40s period. The garden also featured a raised flower display, again common to gardens of this period.



1951 View of Memorial Avenue Gardens (Source: Bassetlaw Museum).



Surviving 'crazy-paving' adjacent to the former library & museum.

The new library and museum opened on the 24th March 1938^{xviii}, located at the western end of the new gardens. It was Formally opened by Colonel J.M. Mitchell of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees, the Trustees having given £500^{xix} towards the total cost of £23,000^{xx} (paid by Worksoop Borough Council). The gardens were also opened, although were not entirely completed – throughout the latter half of 1938, various finishing works were undertaken, including new benches being added, grass seed was sewn and bulbs were planted. In November, the design of the new gates at the front of the library were approved, also drawn by Haslam & Son.

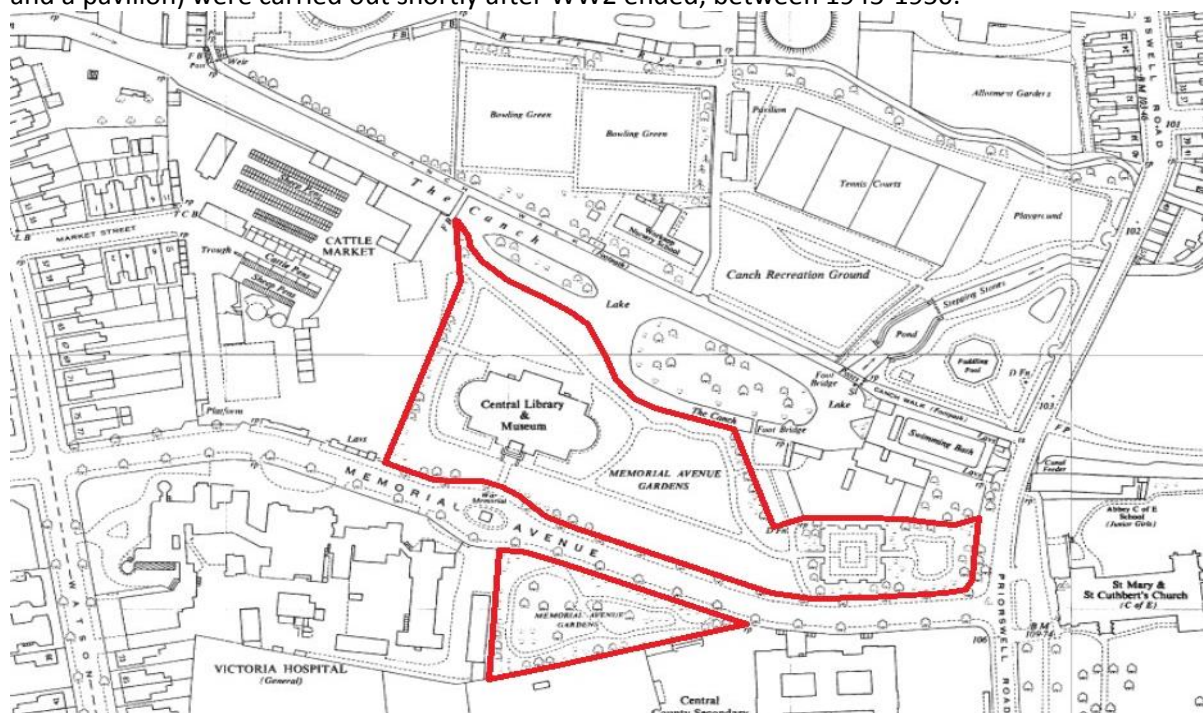


View of library & museum immediately prior to opening (source: Worksoop Guardian, 25th March 1938).



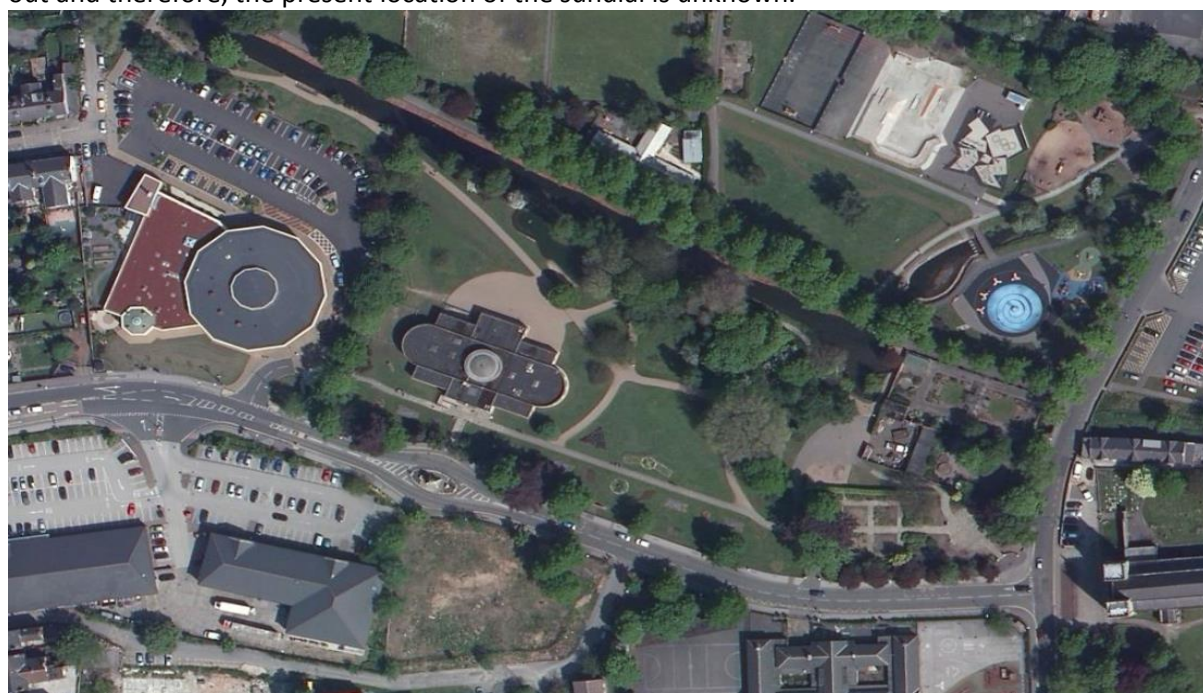
View of former library & museum, present day.

Following the completion of the new library/museum and adjacent gardens, plans were requested by the Council, in December 1938, to redevelop the Canch (to the north) with new facilities to cater for the expanding town's population^{xxi}. Those improvements (including bowling greens, tennis courts and a pavilion) were carried out shortly after WW2 ended, between 1945-1950.



1959 OS Map, showing original garden to south of road, with 1938 garden and library to north.

In the c1969, the small garden on the south side of Memorial Avenue was sold to the NHS. Shortly after, in c1970, a new orthopaedic ward was constructed on the west half of the site and in c1971, a new access (for new nurses housing to the south) was constructed through the east half of the site. The sundial (referred to as 'the monument' in the 1970 planning application for the new access road) was to be relocated elsewhere on the site. However, it is not known whether this was carried out and therefore, the present location of the sundial is unknown.



Aerial photo of Memorial Avenue Gardens in 2010 (source: Bing Maps).

In 1998, the Victoria Hospital was demolished and new supermarkets were constructed on the site. As the 1925 hospital extension was itself a war memorial, the dedication stone/foundation stones from that building were relocated onto the Memorial Avenue Gardens, set within a new brick wall.



Dedication stone and foundation stones, as set in 1998 brick wall adjacent to the former library & museum.

A new library was constructed in 2009/2010, on the former cattle market immediately west of the 1938 library. The landscaping around the new library included crazy-paving linking the new library to the old library/Memorial Avenue Gardens site. The Memorial Avenue Gardens were also altered, with a new entrance and railings added in the south east corner and a new pond created to the north of the former library & museum.

Features of significance:

Former library & museum and associated brick boundary wall, iron railings and iron gates (grade II listed); Former Victoria Hospital dedication stone and foundation stones; horse trough; Tree and plaque dedicated to Sgt. William Henry Johnson VC; Mature specimen trees and groups of trees; formal walkways including several 'crazy-paving' paths; rose garden; areas of lawn with flower beds.

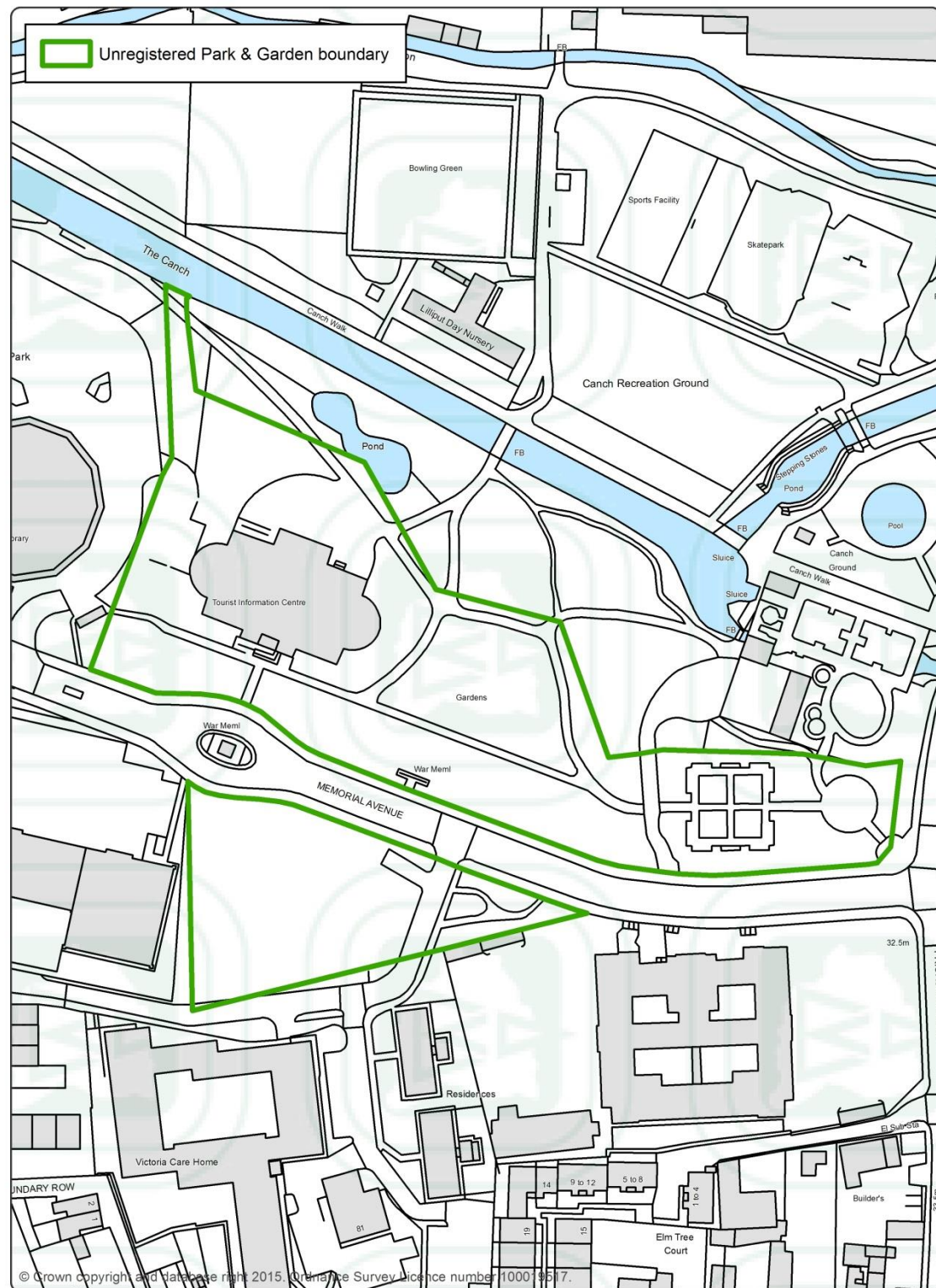




Various photos of Memorial Avenue Gardens including view from south-east corner towards Worksop Priory Church, the formal walkways, the brick boundary walls/railings and the horse trough. Also included is an aerial photograph of the original c1928 garden on the south side of Memorial Avenue, taken 2007 (source: Bassetlaw District Council).

Listed Buildings:	Worksop Library, walls, railings and gates (grade II)
Scheduled Ancient Monuments:	n/a
Conservation Area:	Worksop Conservation Area (last designated 6th April 2011) – All relevant unlisted buildings and structures within the Conservation Area are regarded as ‘positive buildings’
Local Interest Buildings:	n/a

Memorial Avenue Gardens



References:

- ⁱ Worksop Urban District Council; *Council Minutes – 1928*; p26.
- ⁱⁱ Worksop Borough Council; *Council Minutes – 1933*; p161 & p427.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Worksop Borough Council; *Council Minutes – 1933*; p51.
- ^{iv} *Worksop Guardian*; 9th February 1934.
- ^v *Worksop Guardian*; 9th February 1934.
- ^{vi} *Worksop Guardian*; 9th March 1934.
- ^{vii} Worksop Borough Council; *Worksop Library Accounts – 1934-5*.
- ^{viii} *Sheffield Independent*; 7th April 1934.
- ^{ix} *Sheffield Independent*; 21st May 1934.
- ^x *Worksop Guardian*; 29th June 1934.
- ^{xi} *Worksop Guardian*; 29th June 1934.
- ^{xii} Worksop Borough Council; *Council Minutes – 1935*; p259.
- ^{xiii} Worksop Borough Council; *Council Minutes – 1936*; p676.
- ^{xiv} *Sheffield Independent*; 19th January 1937.
- ^{xv} *Sheffield Independent*; 24th July 1937.
- ^{xvi} *Worksop Guardian*; 14th May 1937.
- ^{xvii} Bassetlaw District Council; *The Canch, Worksop – Management Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16*.
- ^{xviii} *Worksop Guardian*; 25th March 1938.
- ^{xix} *Worksop Guardian*; 30th October 1936
- ^{xx} *Sheffield Independent*; 23rd March 1938.
- ^{xxi} Worksop Borough Council; *Council Minutes – 1938*; p875.