

Derby marks the 200th anniversary of the Lady with the Lamp

(Stay in Florence's childhood home close to Derby)

Derby will be playing its part in commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale in 2020.

Although Florence Nightingale is a familiar historical figure, most people do not know that her early years, and plentiful summers throughout her life, were spent in Derbyshire, where her family had built a home and owned a large estate.

She was deeply attached to Lea Hurst, the family's summer home, writing that "it breaks my heart to leave Lea Hurst". And it is easy to see why. The house sits on the edge of the village of Holloway, overlooking the Derwent Valley.

Better still, it is now possible to stay at Florence's childhood home in Lea Hurst, which very recently opened 'The Florence Nightingale Suite' to overnight guests. Lea Hurst is also a convenient base from which to explore the city of Derby, and The Peak District. For further details, about The Florence Nightingale Suite at Lea Hurst, visit:

<https://www.visitderby.co.uk/stay/bbs-guesthouses/florence-nightingale-suite-at-lea-hurst>.

Nightingale was born in the Italian city that she was named after, on May 12, 1820. But while she was still a baby, her parents moved to the village of Lea in Derbyshire, close to the industrial town of Cromford and the spa town of Matlock. This was the source of the family's fortune, thanks to the industrial success and connections of her great uncle Peter Nightingale.

After the family moved to Embley Park in Hampshire in 1825, they retained the Derbyshire home, Lea Hurst, as a summer house, spending around three months a year there. At the age of 17, Florence claimed to have had her calling from God while in the gardens at Embley, the family's Hampshire home.

Florence herself is credited with reforming nursing in the mid-19th century. Her papers on hospital planning and organisation are said to have had a profound effect on nurse training in England and throughout the world.

Florence Nightingale died in 1910, and is buried in the family grave at East Wellow, Hampshire.

In Derby, visitors can find reminders of her time in the county – and for 2020, the nursing pioneer will be back in the city once more as one of the 'stars' of a new virtual tour.

She is part of an augmented reality walk of fame, 'Made in Derby II', which superimposes a computer-generated image of 10 famous Derby-connected characters past and present, via a smart-phone.

Elsewhere in Derby, a stone statue erected in 1914, which stands outside the former site of the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary on London Road, shows Nightingale famously holding a lamp.

When the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary closed in 2009, a stained-glass window, previously located in the DRI chapel and commissioned in the 1950s, was moved to St Peter's Church, in Derby City Centre. The window commemorates Nightingale's life and connection to the hospital.

Opposite St Peter's Church in Derby is the former Boots the Chemist building, which was built in 1912. The building features a statue of Nightingale alongside other historic figures associated with the city's industrial heritage including John Lombe, who created Britain's first successful silk throwing mill, and industrial pioneer Jedediah Strutt.

And in 2014, a plaque in commemoration of Florence was dedicated at Derby Cathedral to mark International Nurses Day.

For 2020, there are plans to theme the Derby Book Festival around Florence Nightingale; and the local Florence Nightingale Society is also planning a series of events and exhibitions.

Florence's connections with Derby also feature in the second phase of the innovative augmented reality city trail called Made in Derby: www.visitderby.co.uk/madeinderbyII.

And for further details of Derby's plans to commemorate Florence Nightingale, visit <https://www.visitderby.co.uk/whats-on/200th-anniversary-of-florence-nightingale/>.

The Florence Nightingale Museum in St Thomas' Hospital, London, meanwhile, is currently leading the "Bicentenary celebrations for #Nightingale200": <https://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk/bicentenary/?v=79cba1185463>