

Derby Tourism

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“Florence and the Machine”

...or, “The Lady with the Lamp”.

However you think of her, Florence Nightingale has a very special place in British history. And in this, the 100th anniversary of her death, The City of Derby is set to commemorate one of the greatest heroines of the 19th century.

A nurse, and hospital reformer, Florence took her name from the town in Italy in which she was born in 1820. On their return to Britain from Florence, the family had a new house built at Lea in Derbyshire, called Lea Hurst, which then served as a summer residence for the rest of Florence’s life.

During the Crimean War, she volunteered for duty and took 38 nurses to Scutari in 1854, where – as Superintendent - she established a military hospital, imposing strict discipline and standards of sanitation. This substantially reduced the mortality rate amongst the wounded soldiers, and her work became part of British folklore as her night-time inspections led to her becoming world famous as “The Lady with the Lamp”.

In future years, she was to become instrumental in improving living conditions in the army, and also wrote *Notes on Nursing*, which was subsequently reprinted through many editions.

In 1860, Dr William Ogle was appointed to the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary in Derby at a time when the mortality rate amongst patients was at its highest. After much lengthy correspondence with Florence, it was decided that the DRI should be rebuilt along the lines suggested by her. Designed by H.I.Stevens, the new DRI opened in 1869 with a wing named after her.

Florence Nightingale died in 1910. She had a lifeboat presented to the RNLI in her name by the people of Derby – a city which, to this day, is always eager to celebrate its links to The Lady with the Lamp. Three statues in the city centre help to mark those links: one outside the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary, one in St Peter’s Street, and one above the Nightingale-Macmillan Continuing Care Unit opposite the DRI.

The city has also created a wide-ranging programme of events, exhibitions and workshops to commemorate the 100th anniversary of her death (on August 13th).

Collected together under the “Illuminate” banner, the year long programme of events will include a new theatrical production at Derby Theatre based on Florence’s life; exhibitions at various museums; a film season at the city centre Arts Centre, QUAD; well-dressing decorations; and a new piece of music dedicated to the world’s most famous nurse.

For further details visit www.visitderby.co.uk. For accommodation enquiries and recommended places to eat, please contact Derby Tourist Information Centre on Tel. 01332 255802.

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