



# Swadlincote Heritage Trail No.1



## Swadlincote Town Centre

Our trail takes you on a journey through the Town Centre's past. We start at Sharpe's Pottery Museum on the corner of West Street, Alexandra Rd and Grove Street and work our way through stories of mining, pottery and people towards High Street, up through the Pipeworks and back to Sharpe's via the Rink — with a few small detours along the way.

If you need a map, ask at Swadlincote Tourist Information Centre at Sharpe's.

Our Trail is also online at  
[www.south-derbys.gov.uk/  
HeritageTrails](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/HeritageTrails)

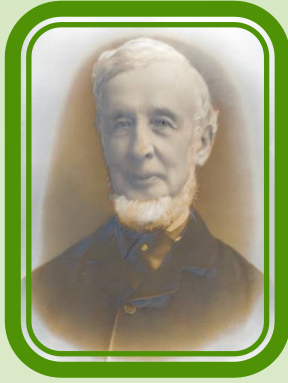


From late 2017 you will also be able to download a Heritage Trail App for your phone



PART OF M.A.G

Photo:  
Sharpe's  
Pottery  
Museum



### 1. Edmund Sharpe c 1811 – 1894

The youngest and most influential brother at Sharpe's Pottery (est 1821) was the patentee of a successful variation of the "flushing rim" for water closets, in 1855.

Sharpe's Pottery and Edmund's enterprising personality were driving factors behind Swadlincote's growth from a small hamlet to a bustling town.

**Sharpe's Pottery Museum,  
West St, Swadlincote DE11 9DG**



### 2. Majestic Cinema

Nothing remains of 'The Majestic' Cinema which opened on 15th May 1933. It was advertised as the 'Majestic Super Cinema'.

There were five dressing rooms, a 33 feet wide proscenium and a 25 feet deep stage. It was fitted with CinemaScope in 1956, and the first film to be shown in that format was "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" on 25th February 1956. In January 1957 the pantomime "Sinbad the Sailor" was produced on the stage.

The Majestic Cinema was closed in the early 1960s and was converted into a bingo club. In the 1970s it became Royall's Theatre Club, which attracted stars like Tommy Cooper and Arthur Askey. This did not last long as the owner went bankrupt. The empty building became derelict and was demolished in 1984.

The land has been redeveloped for housing, but the cinema is remembered in the name 'Majestic Place'.

In its time the Majestic showcased stars such as Max Bygraves and Larry Grayson (then known as Billy Breen!).

The Magic Attic has film clips of John Avery and cinema guests here.

Main source: <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/45022>

**Majestic Cinema (now demolished).  
'Majestic Place', 21 Alexandra Road,  
Swadlincote DE11 9AZ**



### 3. The Snooker Hall

The snooker hall was originally a barn which was part of the Sharpe family farm "The Grove" - which was demolished in 1972. The raised brick coped gables are typical of buildings from the 18th century.

Later, the building became the birthplace of The Magic Attic, Swadlincote's very own local history group, started in 1987. The Magic Attic moved to Sharpe's Pottery when it was restored as a museum in 2002.

**Snooker Hall/ Magic Attic  
42-44 Grove Street, E11 9DD**



### 4. Diana Memorial Garden

Dedicated as a garden in 1981 by Chairman of the Council, Councillor Roy Nutt & HRH The Princess Anne.

Amongst other things this garden may have been the site of a clay hearth, part of Sharpe's Pottery and before that it was part of

the garden at Grove House which covered the site between the garden and the Leisure Centre.

The memorial tree to Diana, Princess of Wales, is also here.

The garden has been transformed thanks to a grant from Heritage Lottery Fund (Swadlincote Townscape Heritage Scheme)

### **Diana Memorial Garden**

**Corner of West Street and Grove Street  
DE11 8HL**



### **5. Old Midland Co-op building**

The semi-circular shape of the shop frontage is built on the site of one of Sharpe's Pottery's early bottle kilns (kiln built c.1831).

The building is being restored as part of Swadlincote Townscape Heritage Scheme.

### **Old Midland Co-op building**

**1 West Street Swadlincote DE11 9DG**



### **6. New Empire Cinema & Theatre**

In December 1912, The Empire Picture Palace opened, presenting 'Pictures & Varieties' to a hall seating 500 people on one level.

In the 1930s, this building was demolished and replaced by the New Empire Cinema, seating 716 people.

The Cinema closed in the early 1960's and has been used for a variety of different businesses since then.

**New Empire Cinema & Theatre,  
21 West Street, DE11 9DG**



*Photo:  
Eric &  
Olwyn  
Hardy*

### **7. John Avery / The Bear**

John Avery was born in 1927 at the Bear Inn, Swadlincote, which was managed by his parents.

He served as a Bevin Boy as a welder at Church Gresley Colliery during the war, before working at the Empire Cinema and the Majestic Cinema in Swadlincote in the 1950's. In 1974, he was appointed general manager of the London Palladium, where he worked until his retirement in 1992. He died on May 11th 2016, aged 89.

The Magic Attic Archives have film footage of John at Majestic.

**The Bear Inn—now flats, 17 West Street,  
DE11 9DG**



### **8. The Nag's Head**

The Nag's Head was a large public house which stood here until the 1960's.

The England football caps worn by Ben Warren, the first husband of the landlady, Mrs. Hall were displayed behind the bar.

There are recollections of the pub being packed to capacity, especially on nights when big dance bands attended the Rink.

See also "Out of the Dark—Swadlincote stories" p63: available in The Magic Attic

**Now demolished—site now occupied by  
Grimley & Glynn Opticians 15 West Street,  
DE11 9DG**



## 9. Swadlincote Town Hall

Also known as Swadlincote Market Hall  
Built in 1861 from money raised by public subscription

Below the clock face is the slogan 'Time the Avenger.'

Henry and Lady Sophia Des Voeux both contributed towards the building of the town hall.

The inscription 'Time the Avenger' refers to the transience of life & the inevitability of death. At the time that Henry Des Voeux was approached for the money, he was embroiled in a bitter lawsuit, and insisted, he would only provide money (the sum of £44) if 'Time the Avenger' was inscribed underneath. At the time he was suffering from financial losses and gout and so perhaps thinking of the inevitability of death.

The Feb 1863 Derby Advertiser (in the Magic Attic Archives) has more information.

There have been several changes to the ground floor frontage over time and to suit local needs, and the area under the hall has been used to store fire hoses as well as for shops and market stalls.

Every Tuesday for around 100 years, a petty Crimes Court' was held "under the clock".

The clock and motto are said to have inspired Chrissie Hynde of The Pretenders to write her song 'Time the Avenger' which was included in her 1984 album, 'Learning to Crawl'.

**Swadlincote Town Hall,  
The Delph, DE11 0AH**



Photo:  
Royal  
Armouries

## 10. Richard Holden

Richard Holden was an armourer from Swadlincote

He was apprenticed to a London armourer in 1658 and was working in his own right from 1665 as a member of The Armourers Company

From 1673 he was supplying munition armour to the Board of Ordnance, and by 1681 he had become the armourer responsible for Royal commissions.

He died in 1709, one of the last of the London armour makers.

<https://royalarmouries.org/line-of-kings/line-of-kings-objects/single-object/358>

**Location unknown but will be commemorated with a plaque by the Town Hall steps on The Delph, Swadlincote**

## 11. Anne Beverley (nee McDonald) *Sid Vicious' mum*

The mother of 'Sid Vicious' from the Sex pistols band, had a turbulent life.

She died in 1996 at her home in Hastings Road Swadlincote of an overdose.

There is a mystery surrounding her son's ashes—apparently she used to pace around with them on High Street and rumour has it they may have spilled out on to the Delph!

More on her story at:

<http://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/tale-murder-mayhem-punk-rock-ended-unlikely-streets-south-derbyshire-pit-town/story-11611909-detail/story.html>

**The Delph, Swadlincote**



## 12. Sabine's Munitions Works

Sabine and his brother were blacksmiths who lived in Swadlincote in the early 1800s and invented the extrusion machine for sockets used by the pipe manufacturer, Thomas Wragg.

Part of Sabine's Munitions works, active during the second world war, remain on Belmont St next to the passageway.

Sabine Brothers (Engineering) Ltd are still based in Swadlincote and run by Mr Tim Sabine, the 5th generation of the family to run the firm.

**Sabine Brothers, Muniton works were down Belmont St (site remains at the bottom of the road, Town Centre side)**

*Photo: Wikipedia*



## 13. Helen Allingham

Helen Mary Elizabeth Paterson (Allingham) was born here on 26th September, 1848. She was the eldest of seven children born to Alexander Henry Paterson, a rural doctor, and Mary Chance Herford.

She became known for her watercolour paintings of the countryside, flower gardens, her children and especially picturesque old country cottages.

Her paintings were sometimes used on the tops of chocolate boxes, biscuit boxes etc.

**Helen Allingham**

**7 High Street, Swadlincote DE11 8JES**



## 14. Harold Waterfield

Mr. Waterfield was a local businessman who developed a large and successful bakery business. His bakery was on Regent St, Church Gresley (now houses). He also ran tea rooms on High Street in Swadlincote, where Boots The Chemist is today and had a reception room on the corner of New St, opposite the Victoria Pub.

*Photo shows the High Street and you can just make out the tea rooms.*



## 15. The original Salt Brothers Stores

In the 1890s, brothers Enoch, Joseph and Hezekiah Salt opened their first shop in Swadlincote on the High Street.

Eventually, this extended to three stores which included a haberdashery and menswear shops and, in the late 1920s, a hardware store. They also had a store in Moira.

Salt Brothers' finally closed all its Swadlincote shops in 1982, after almost a century of trading.

Our plaque marks the site of one of several Salt's stores—which included a number in this block and a large shop opposite.

**Salt Brothers Stores**

**26a High Street, DE11 8HY (one of several Salts properties on High Street)**

Paramount Car  
(Wikipedia)



## 16. Paramount Cars

This British company produced the Paramount automobile between 1948 and 1956.

Founded by WA Hudson and S Underwood from Derbyshire, the company initially manufactured cars in Swadlincote.

You can still see part of the workshop behind Ladbroke's, and the showroom was in the area now occupied by Clarks shoes. Some work was also carried out in one of the workshops behind Bretby Art Pottery.

Some of the joinery for the cars was done in Melbourne and production moved there.

Fewer than 10 cars were actually made in Swadlincote

**Paramount Cars( Now Ladbroke's/ Clark's)**  
**50 High Street, DE11 8HS**



## 17. Foresters Arms

The Pub may have taken its name from the Foresters 'Friendly Society'. The Society was established in Lancashire in 1834 and offered 'penny' insurance schemes – aiming to support working men and their families as they "walked through the forest of life".

Pubs all around the country are named after it.

Celebrating the presence of a Foresters Public House in Swadlincote is a nice link with The National Forest: visit Swadlincote Woodlands or Rosliston Forestry Centre to find out more about The National Forest and enjoy a walk in the woods.

**Foresters Arms**  
**67 High St, Swadlincote**



Joe Jackson performing  
in Arizona, July 1982  
(Wikipedia)

## 18. Joe Jackson

Born in Burton Upon Trent in 1954, Joe Jackson lived on Coronation Street, Newhall and spent a lot of time at his granny's at Vicarage Rd, Swadlincote.

He later moved to New York and became well known as a singer/songwriter. He recorded 19 studio albums and received five Grammy Award nominations during his career.

His first hit, named "Is she really going out with him?" made him an overnight success in 1979.

In his biography 'A Cure for Gravity' there are several references to Swadlincote including "this unearthly landscape still haunts me" (p3/4 about the house and unearthly landscape)

You can find out more about Joe's career and performances at:

<http://joejackson.com/home>

**Joe's Granny's house, referred to in his autobiography, was on Vicarage Rd, Swadlincote (near junction of Civic Way/ Church St)**



## 19. Hill Street Baptist Church

Founded in 1867, Hill Street Baptist Church has been home to a growing group of Christians for nearly 150 years. Since its establishment, the building has been extended and modernised. The spectacular pipe organ inside this church is the main reason for its inclusion here and musicians and music lovers are welcomed here for a varied programme of musical performances.

During the war several aerial mines were dropped and one landed in a clay hole behind the church. All the windows were blown out and the glass was replaced with all kinds of second-hand pieces—a real patchwork job. Some pieces of the mine are stored at The Magic Attic .

**Hill St Baptist Church,  
16, Hill Street, DE11 8HL**



## 20. Swadlincote's Mining Heritage

The mining of coal is first recorded for this area in February 1293 (Phillipps Charters) but it was not until the Industrial Revolution, with its increased demand for fuel, that it became a major local industry.

Many collieries were established in the area, of which these are a few: Granville Colliery (1823), Church Gresley (1829), Stanton (1854), Bretby (1855), Gresley Wood (1856), Cadley Hill (1861), Netherseal (1872), and Coton Park and Linton Colliery (1875) By the time the industry was nationalised in 1947, 6,600 men were employed in local mines. The last pit, Cadley Hill, closed on Friday 25th March 1988 – this marked the end of deep coal mining in South Derbyshire

**Swadlincote's Mining Heritage and Sanitary Ware: The Pipeworks, DE11 9AA**



## 21. Sanitary Ware

Two local potteries, Wragg's & Sharpe's, became famous for their production of sanitary ware & associated pipework. During the 1850s, for public health reasons there was an 'explosion' in the sanitary ware market and the local clay was ideal for the

production of such items. This, together with the patenting of the successful 'rim flush' toilet by Sharpe's, led to the factory concentrating on sanitary ware. The pottery exported pipework and toilets around the world for over 100 years and its water closets were considered status symbols in Russia! Wragg's, the other big local pottery, also produced vast quantities of pipes suitable for sewerage and drainage which were exported internationally. The Wragg's factory site (previously known as John Hunt's, then Woodward's, then Wragg's and Woodward's) is marked by the remaining tall chimney which can be seen from most of Swadlincote.



## 22. Alexandra Rink

The Alexandra Rink Dance Hall started in 1909 by Ben Robinson as a roller skating rink and was also used for dancing, boxing, wrestling, bingo, cinema and as a film studio. At one point it was known as the Alexandra Palace of Variety.

Lots of well known dance and popular music bands appeared there—including The Searchers, Gene Vincent & The Blue Caps, Black Eric Delaney and other UK and US acts.

Ernie Hall, "The Law of the Floor", ran The Rink for a long time and brought in many acts.

The Rink drew its final audience in 1991 when it burnt down shortly before it was due to be demolished.

*Audio clip/ more info*

<http://www.landshapes.org/newsandevents/news/WalkaroundWestStreet4.php>

<http://www.burtonmail.co.uk/rink-dance-hall-in-swadlincote-went-out-in-a-blaze-of-glory-in-1991/story-29813278-detail/story.html>

<http://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/bygones-derek-recalls-his-swadlincote-dance-hall-days/story-29553648-detail/story.html>

**Alexandra Rink (now DCC Youth Information)  
Rink Drive Swadlincote DE11 8JL**



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The App has been designed by staff and students from Burton and South Derbyshire College

Our logo has been designed with ideas from: Elsie-Mae O'Neill, Jazzmyn Moore, Barnaby Morley, Tia Power and Polly Budworth

Trail content , design and layout: South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) July 2017

Contact SDDC's Environmental Education Project / Swadlincote Townscape Team for more information on Heritage Trail activities and Town Centre school visits  
Telephone: 01283 535039 or email: [rosliston@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:rosliston@south-derbys.gov.uk)



Environmental Education  
Project



@Roslistonenvd



Swadlincote Townscape

School opportunities will also be advertised here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SchoolActivitiesSDerbys/>

### Also available in Swadlincote Town Centre:

Regular events and walks across the town including:  
Sharpe's Pottery Museum, Swadlincote Library, local parks and on The Delph  
Traditional Market Days: Tues, Fri, Sat  
Speciality Market Days every month

For information about these and other local events go to:  
Swadlincote Tourist Information Centre  
Sharpe's Pottery Museum, West St, Swadlincote DE11 9DG  
01283 222848 [tic@sharpepotterymuseum](mailto:tic@sharpepotterymuseum)  
[www.south-derbys.gov.uk/swadlincotetic](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/swadlincotetic)

