



In Buckingham's Old Gaol Museum



The base of our Market Cross, which anciently stood in the Horse Fair and then for many years marked the site of the church door in the old churchyard, can be seen in The Old Gaol's Exercise Yard, where it was relocated for safety around 2000.



The Museum has an exhibition about Flora Thompson, writer of the semi-autobiographical trilogy 'Lark Rise to Candleford'. The exhibition, which the Museum Development Service called "of national importance" traces her life and works, and was formally opened on 25th May 2007 to coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of her death. It is the only permanent, viewable exhibition of Flora Thompson memorabilia in the world, and also contains some "props" from the acclaimed BBC TV series.



The lace produced in Buckingham was originally known as Point d'Angleterre but local prominence in its manufacture was so great that it was commonly called Bucks Point; and there are several lace artefacts on display there. It was supposedly Catherine of Aragon who introduced the craft of lacemaking to the area. Catherine, Henry VIII's first wife, visited Buckingham in 1513, staying in Castle House. An Ivory crucifix, which is said to have belonged to her, can be seen in the Museum.

Did you know...?



... the name Bristle Hill derives from a local industry making brushes from pig bristles? Pig markets were held in the triangle of land in front of Bristle Hill. Elm Street which runs from the junction of Castle Street and Bristle Hill was formerly called Hog Lane.



... that the first person buried in Brackley Road Cemetery was Elizabeth Buckingham in 1856? Perhaps you can find the grave next time you visit. There are several notable grave stones to study.



... when Edward VI died Buckingham gave its support to Mary Tudor, who in return, on 17th January 1554, issued a Royal Charter that declared Buckingham a borough and granted a weekly market and an annual fair. This was then followed by another Charter in 1684, from Charles II, who established our current market days and the two annual fairs that we still have today. A copy of the 1554 Royal Charter is located in the Council Chamber.



... that close to the old Fleece Inn on Market Hill, now a shop, was a wool hall. A short distance further on you pass Fleece Yard, formerly of the Fleece Inn, a reminder of Buckingham's past importance in the wool trade.



... election results used to be announced from the balcony of the White Hart Hotel on Market Square.

Discover the special places and features of Buckingham that are perhaps not so well known. You may have moved to the town recently or have lived here for years, but here are The Hidden Treasures of Buckingham...



THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF BUCKINGHAM



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BUCKINGHAM – THE HISTORIC CORE

24 The Chantry Chapel – Originally St John's Hospital, the Chantry Chapel on Market Hill is the oldest building in Buckingham, dating in parts to the 12th century. Rebuilt in 1475 incorporating a Norman doorway, the chapel was dissolved in 1536 by Henry VIII. It was then home to the Royal Latin School for almost 400 years, before they moved to larger premises. By 1781 it was also a Sunday School, said to be only the second such school in the country. It was restored in 1857 and again in 1879 by Sir George Gilbert Scott. The Chantry was bought by public subscription and passed to the National Trust in 1912 as one of their earliest properties. It is now run as a second-hand book and coffee shop, open to all.

25 Barton's Chantry & Hospital – Founded by John Barton in 1431, the almshouses comprised six tenements. The almshouses were rebuilt in 1701 and again in the late 19th century.

26 Tanlaw Mill – Originally the Town Mill, it occupies the site of an ancient mill mentioned in The Domesday Book. Described in 1770 as a fulling mill, by the late 19th century it was used as a corn mill. It was purchased and converted by the University of Buckingham in 1981.

27 Buckingham Parish Church – The new Parish Church of St Peter and St Pauls was built following the disassembly of the previous church and was consecrated in 1780. It stands on Castle Hill; site of Edward the Elder's stronghold against the Danes during the 10th century and later a Norman castle, hence the name Castle Hill. It is believed that much of the fabric of the old church, which you can still see the site of in the old churchyard, was reused in the construction of the new church. Indeed, the story goes that Church Street was so named because the old church was carried up it to be rebuilt on Castle Hill.



28 The Old Churchyard – The original medieval church in Buckingham stood in Prebend End, near Hunter Street, until 1776, when the spire fell down for a second time damaging the structure of the building and it was decided to build a new church. The site also contains a plaque showing where St Rumbold was buried in the old church.

29 Twisted Chimney House – At the bottom of Church Street, this Elizabethan house so-named for its red brick twisted chimney, is unique as it is the bricks themselves that are twisted.

30 Manor House – Dating from the 16th century, and originally built as a prebendal house, the building was held by successive prebendaries until the dissolution, when it passed into private hands. Local legend says that Queen Elizabeth I dined in the building in 1568. On the side of the house is an infant cherub, possibly a representation of St Rumbold.

31 Tanning Industry – The earliest mention of tanneries in Buckingham comes from the mid-16th century at what is now Bridge Street, although nothing of this early site remains above ground. However, in the 18th century most of the town's tan yards were based near Prebend End. The industry lasted until the 19th century when the remaining tan yard was closed following the last tanner, William Sowerby's death. Of these tanneries, several buildings survive including workers cottages and outhouses, most of which are now owned by the University of Buckingham.

32 Christ's Hospital – Built on what is believed to have been the site of the early 14th century Hospital of St Lawrence, the hospital was first founded in 1597 by Queen Elizabeth I to house 'maimed soldiers'. By the 17th century it had become an almshouse for elderly women and when it was rebuilt in 1897, the 60th year of Queen Victoria's reign, with the present row of almshouses it housed unmarried women. It was also heavily re-furbished and modernised in 2013, the 62nd year of Queen Elizabeth II's reign.



THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF BUCKINGHAM

Historic Features

1 The Golden Swan – The 18th century Golden Swan crowns the Old Town Hall. It has a long and chequered history, being lost for many years. By repute when the swan turns its back on the town it is a bad omen – perhaps because it means the wind is blowing from the South. (Yes, the Swan is a weather vane.)

2 Wine Merchant Sign – A similarly lost and found Buckingham landmark is the notice quoting the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam on Market Square, over what used to be a wine merchant.

3 The Swan Child – A bronze sculpture by local artist Freya Boyesen, mounted on a plinth near The Old Gaol. She was unveiled on July 26th 1997 by the then Mayor, Cllr. Ruth Newell.

4 St Rumbold's Well – Tucked away on the western side of town, it is the site of a medieval holy well.

St Rumbold was a Saxon infant who was reputed to have lived only three days and performed many miracles in that short time. The well was rebuilt in 1673 as a conduit house, providing water to Castle House, supposedly the first house in Buckingham to have running water. It was restored in 2002.

5 The Cannon – Restored by local apprentices and now resting at North End Square, it used to stand at 'Cannon Corner' by The Old Town Hall.

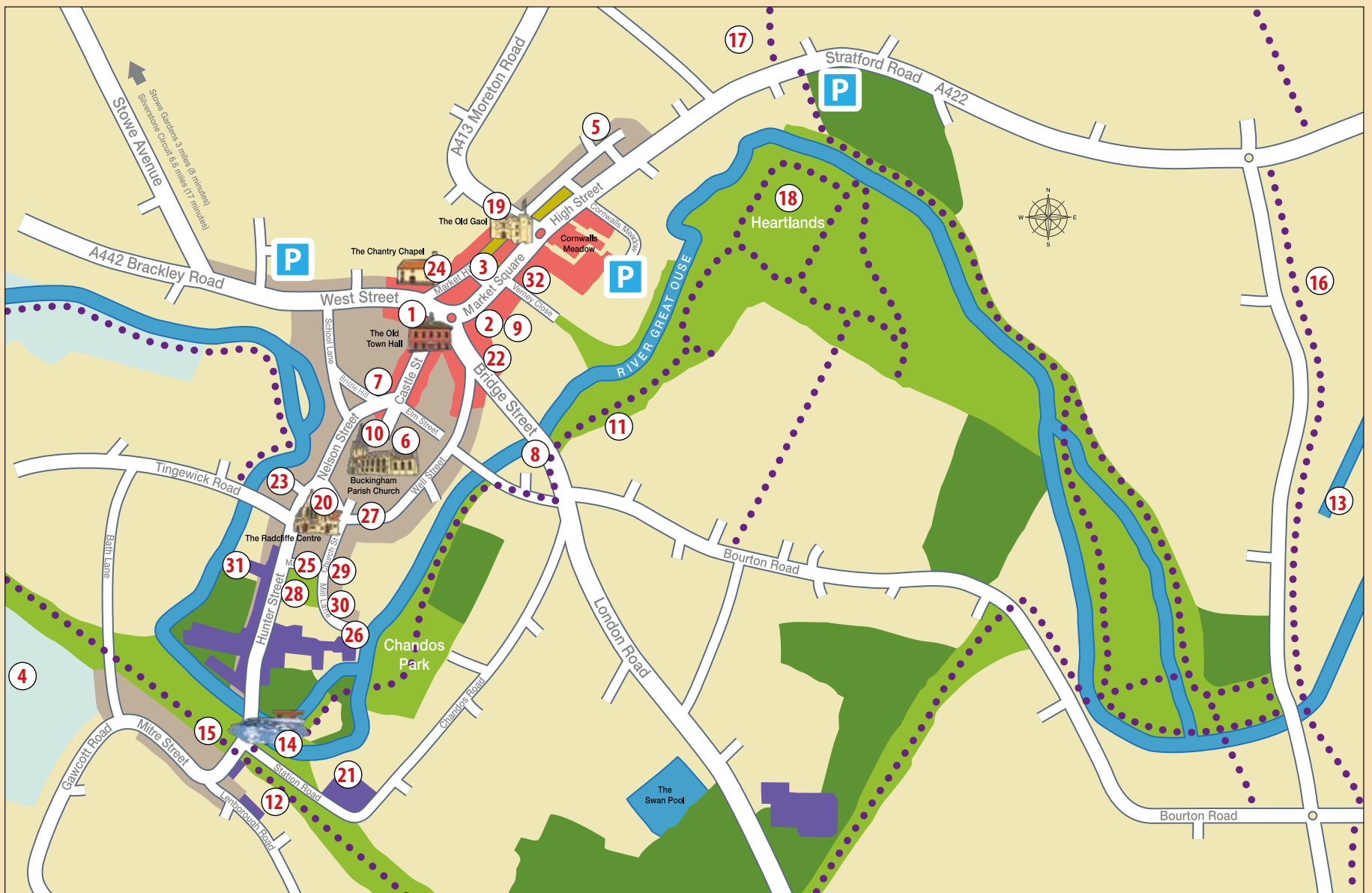
6 Coronation Trees – These trees were planted outside the Parish Church on the Coronation of His Majesty King Edward VII, August 9th 1902, by the Mayoress of Buckingham. The spade used is now in the Old Gaol Museum.

7 Bristle Hill Ammonite – Henry Clements, a bricklayer by trade, built the ammonite into the building on the corner of Bristle Hill and Castle Street.

8 London Bridge – Buckingham was once an important coaching centre situated on the main routes from London to the Midlands and from Oxford to Cambridge. Until the 19th century the principal route was over the Sheriff's Bridge on Ford Street, which was a six-arched stone bridge mentioned in Samuel Pepys' diary. Now a modern footbridge provides pedestrian access across the river. In 1805 the Duke of Buckingham paid for the construction of a new bridge called 'Long Bridge' (now London Bridge) creating Bridge Street. At the centre of the upstream side of the bridge is a relief of the Swan of Buckingham and on the opposite side is the coat of arms of the Marquis of Buckingham who paid for most of the cost of the bridge's construction. There are matching coats of arms at Stowe, in the conduit house and the pebble alcove.

9 Town Pumps – All Buckingham's water was gathered from public or private pumps until 1893 when a waterworks was built off the Moreton Road. All of Buckingham was connected to the water supply by 1908. Thereafter, one by one, the old pumps fell from use, though you can still see the ones in Markham's Court.

10 Sunflowers – When Edward Swinfen Harris, a leading member of the Aesthetic movement, extended a cottage at the end of Castle Street in 1875, he added sgraffito panels decorated with sunflowers and a rear 'Juliet' balcony, plus a separate, pretty carriage house towards the church covered with yet more sgraffito work. The whole ensemble is set off with ironwork – also shaped into flowers. Why not see how many sunflowers you can find?



Green Spaces

11 Circular Walk – Follow the Circular Walk from Bourton Park, taking in the University, Chandos Park, the River Great Ouse and the site of the old railway. It is a leisurely walk, which is clearly waymarked and includes alternative routes, which are suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

12 Railway Walk – The last passenger train from Buckingham stopped on 7th September 1964, though the line to Buckingham was visited by The Queen on 4th April 1966, when The Royal Train travelled from Euston to North Buckinghamshire. While the line no longer exists, you can walk along the refurbished railway walk with its pockets of wildlife and still see some of the station's construction.

13 Canal – The Buckingham Arm of the Grand Junction Canal was 9¼ miles long and took 8 months to complete, opening in 1801. The canal brought cheaper coal and building materials to the town and was used to export agricultural produce and wood to London. Competition from the railway and silt build-up meant it was disused from 1931 before being finally abandoned in the 1960's. It is now being restored by Buckingham Canal Society.

14 Flish – A wonderful spot to sit and watch. It was created by the efforts of navvies when they moved the river to make straight the way of the train to Buckingham Station in 1850. The original line of the River Great Ouse ran roughly where the railway embankment was built. The feature has been rebuilt several times since, though its initial appearance was a weir. Why it received its name 'The Flish' we don't know, for that word is usually associated with stagnant ponds. It was built to maintain a head of water for the Town Mill (now called Tanlaw Mill – see **26**). At the Flish, water tumbles down a rough incline that makes it 'boil'.

15 Berties' Walk – A pleasant riverside walk running from Hunter Street to Bath Lane commemorates the lives of two men, both known as Bertie. In the autumn, there is much fruit for free from the trees located alongside Berties' Walk. The orchard was planted by railway worker Mr. Herbert Williams, who rented the land from the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company. Mr. Williams tended his plot along the old railway embankment for 60 years, and Mr. William Bertram Jones, who worked at United Dairies in Chandos Road, sublet an allotment from Mr. Williams for 40 years.

16 Long Distance Walks – There are a number of long distance walks which go through or near the town including the Bernwood Jubilee Way and the North Bucks Way.

17 Maids Moreton Avenue – With wonderful trees, shrubs and wildlife this is a most peaceful walk. Look out for the green man carving.

18 Ridge & Furrow Field – Located in the Heartlands, this is an example of the pattern of ridges and troughs created by a system of ploughing used during the Middle Ages. The ridges were made by ploughing in a clockwise spiral, starting in the middle, with the plough throwing the soil to the right.

Historic Buildings

19 The Old Gaol – There is a veritable cornucopia and wealth of history to be discovered at The Old Gaol. Built in the style of a castle in 1748 and paid for by Viscount Cobham of Stowe, with later additions in 1839 by the famous local architect George Gilbert Scott. The purpose-built prison is now a museum, a tourist information centre, a gift shop and a venue to hire. The shop is also a huge source of useful local information.

20 The Radcliffe Centre – Constructed in 1857 as a nonconformist church, the building, which is wheelchair friendly, is named after local MP John Radcliffe (1713-14). Now part of the University of Buckingham and a venue for concerts and lectures; keep a look out for upcoming music events.

21 The Chandos Road Building – At the junction with Station Road, this building has had many uses, including an iron foundry manufacturing agricultural machinery and steam cars, a steam powered corn and cake mill, a condensed peptonized milk company making Bivouac drinking chocolate, and 'Buckingham marble' was quarried there. It has been owned by the University since 1989.

22 Markham's Court – This early to mid-19th century building was formerly a shoe factory and was later used as a drill hall and armoury for the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry. During WWII it was a factory making Goya fragrances and following the war it served as a warehouse to Markham's ironmongery.

23 Barham Lodge – Early 19th century in date, with later alterations, it was originally a miller's house and is now the only surviving element of the former Castle Mill that stood at the junction of what is now Nelson Street and Tingewick Road, until it was destroyed by fire in the 1960's. The Mill was originally water driven, but was later powered by a steam engine and was in operation well in to the 20th century.

