Welcome to

BELPER

part of the DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Derwent Valley Mills Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

BELPER IS PART OF THE DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE.

This board is one of a series about features of interest in this internationally important landscape and the people who lived here and shaped it.

The World Heritage Site runs for 15 miles along the Derwent Valley between Matlock Bath and Derby. Look out for more interpretation boards which will help you explore the mill communities.

The map will help you to find the other boards in Belper, as well as supplementary information points (waterwheel plaques) which have information and a weblink to more about Belper's history.



Green Hall and the Paddock before the First World War

GREEN HALL AND THE PADDOCK

These gardens were known, before 1921, as the Paddock, a green space belonging to Green Hall, built c.1810 for Jedediah Strutt, one of the family who owned the town's mills. Green Hall was on the other side of King Street, to your left. It wasn't a large parcel of land, so as well as the Paddock, the gardens on the far side were constructed on the rooftops of houses (later, shops) on King Street. After Jedediah's death, Green Hall became a school.



On the other side of the street, the Green Hall gardens extended over shops



Green Hall and Memorial Gardens

THE MEMORIALS

After the First World War, Herbert Strutt gave the Paddock to the people of Belper as a Garden of Remembrance for the local men who had died in the conflict. An obelisk-style memorial was erected. For the centenary of the war, a new memorial, 'Sacrifice', designed by Andy Myers, was unveiled at the rear of the gardens, depicting the face of one Belper man who died in the conflict, Lance Corporal Jim Green. In one of the flowerbeds, you will also find a memorial slab commemorating the 100th anniversary of Gunner Charles Stone receiving Belper's only Victoria Cross for valour in the presence of the enemy. Charles is seen here holding the first wreath to be laid at the memorial during a remembrance ceremony in November 1921.



Charles Stone and the first wreath for the memorial in 1921

INFORMATION POINTS (waterwheel plaques)

HERITAGE BOARDS



WHERE FROM HERE?

Continue down King Street to enjoy Belper's award-winning high street, with independent and traditional shops, and a range of eateries. Ambassadors in the shops and businesses will help you get the most from your visit.

Walk around the Memorial Gardens – at certain times of the year, you'll see the kind of displays that have helped Belper repeatedly win Gold in the East Midlands in Bloom Competition. There are plenty of seats as well, in this oasis of calm in the busy town centre.

One of the wards in Green Hall

THE HOSPITAL

During the First World War, Green Hall was converted into a Red Cross Hospital, funded by Jedediah's grandson, Herbert Strutt. About 3,000 men were treated at the hospital over the course of the war. The Paddock was used extensively to provide open-air concerts and entertainments for the men. Green Hall later became flats, before its demolition in 1956.

A scout parade passing the air raid shelters in the 1960s

LOOK OUT

The building behind this wall was originally built as a public hall for the town, with large arched windows on the ground floor which were blocked up when it became a cinema after the First World War. If you look at the walls, you can still see where the windows once were.

AIR RAID SHELTERS

Early in the Second World War, the King Street side of the Memorial Gardens was built up so air raid shelters could be built underneath, allowing users of the Ritz Cinema next door to have safe shelter in the event of an air raid. As you walk down King Street you can still see the two shelter doors in the wall.

THE BRIDGE

In 1832, to celebrate the passing of the Great Reform Act, Jedediah Strutt decided to have a tea party in the Paddock. In order that food and other supplies could be brought to the Paddock without being taken through the street, he had a wooden bridge built across King Street. He was so taken with it that he had it rebuilt and it remained a local landmark until 1867. By then the bridge was deteriorating – with Green Hall converted to a school, the structure may not have been robust enough for use by schoolboys, so it was demolished.

King Street bridge before 1867

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BELPER

Click on the QR code or use this link:

www.derwentvalleymills.org/belper

Belper Historical Society

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