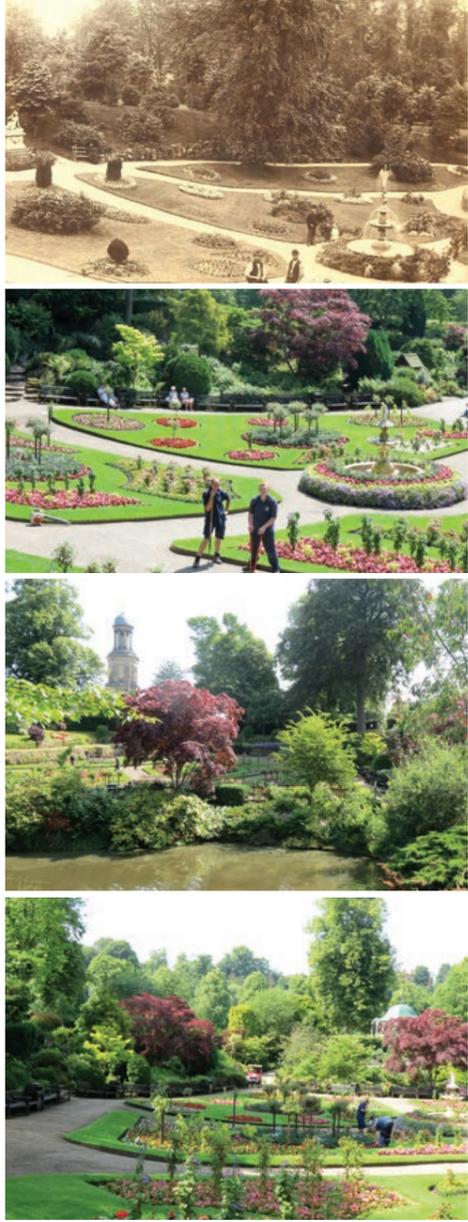


Then & Now

Whilst the Quarry Park has had a number of uses over the years and has been developed to the park we see today, the Dingle has undergone only some minor changes over that time, which you will be able to see from the selection of old photographs of the Dingle paired together with their modern counterparts.



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Shrewsbury 
in Bloom
The Quarry



50 YEARS
RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM
Champion of Champions 2014



The Quarry is located in the centre of Shrewsbury and for many working in the town, the park is an ideal route in. The Greyfriars Bridge, Kingsland Bridge and Porthill Suspension Bridge were installed to replace the original three ferry crossings, the posts of two can still be seen. Shropshire Horticultural Society has invested heavily in the appearance of the park over the years and has contributed many of the key features, such as the cast and wrought iron gates to the main entrances and the bandstand as well as aiding in general improvements in the Quarry. In July 2005, the Mayor of Shrewsbury & Atcham unveiled the refurbished park. This was the result of a successful Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £1.5m towards the total project cost of £2.3m. The grant bid was promoted jointly by the then Borough Council and the Horticultural Society, both of whom funded the scheme. The Quarry Park has been awarded numerous accolades over the years including the Heart of England in Bloom's Horticultural Excellence Award in 2012 and Britain in Bloom Best Public Park Award in 2013.

The Quarry lies in the heart of Shrewsbury and is the main recreational park in the town; located within the loop of the River Severn it is approximately 11.7 hectares in size. It is a special area of Shrewsbury with a varied history dating back to the medieval period, yet has developed to its present state over the past 130 years as a Grade II historic park. It has a wide variety of interesting statuary and stonework, the most significant being the Farnese Hercules situated at the bottom of Gloucester Avenue.

Open views are an important feature of the Quarry, as is the richness of the surrounding buildings and landscape, such as Pengwern Boathouse, Shrewsbury School, St Chad's Church and the attractive red sandstone buildings along Quarry Place. These features contribute to a sense of tranquillity and grandeur to the park. The Quarry's riverside setting and associated activities such as rowing, fishing and boat trips attract many visitors to the park. There are also several annual events, the largest being the Shrewsbury Flower Show, which attracts more than 200,000 people over a two-day period in August each year and is the longest running event of its kind in the world. Horticultural expertise and bedding displays are concentrated within the Dingle and provide a strong contrast to the open grass swards and lime tree avenues which dominate the remaining landscape of the park.



Features of the Quarry

Queen Mother's Garden

The Garden was opened in July 2001 to commemorate the Queen Mother's Centenary and was funded by the Shropshire Star.

Porthill Bridge

The bridge was built and presented to the town by the Shropshire Horticultural Society and the residents of Porthill & District in 1922.

Hercules

The statue is a lead copy of the famous Farnese Hercules and was moved to its present position in the early 1800's.

The Dingle

Visit Shrewsbury's hidden gem in the Quarry Park behind the beech hedge and railings and only a short walk from the main entrance. The Dingle started out life as a wet quarry providing a poor quality red sandstone which was the main source of the town's building stone. The gardenesque design you now see was created by the Shropshire Horticultural Society between 1875 and 1879. The design combines irregular forms, winding paths and an intimate scale.

East of the lake, there are richly planted beds cut into manicured grass and a floral clock. The Dingle is the perfect place to relax – the central focal point is full of colour during the summer and the benches just above are perfect for those hot summer days in the shade.

The Dingle received a Horticultural Excellence Award from Heart of England in Bloom in 2012 and 2013.

The Quarry Lodge

The Quarry Lodge was once the home of Percy Thrower who lived here from January 1946 until April 1974 while Parks Superintendent for Shrewsbury Borough Council and is now the home of the Shropshire Horticultural Society. The Society was founded in 1874 to promote the traditional pursuits of gardening. In 1875, a successful exhibition was held in The Quarry which became an annual event. It is now the Shrewsbury Flower Show which is believed to be the longest running event of its kind in the world.

Percy Thrower's Memorial

The Dingle was Percy Thrower's personal garden, which has been encapsulated inside the Quarry, although it remains separated by its high hedges and fences around the perimeter. Inside the Dingle, there are many little passages, allowing you to walk around. During the Second World War, the Quarry was used for farming. Percy Thrower was appointed the Parks Superintendent in 1946, and transformed it to what it is today setting out a gardening culture that continues to this day.

Kingsland Toll Bridge

The Kingsland Toll Bridge is constructed of iron on stone piers and has a single span of 212ft. It was opened in 1882 by the Kingsland Bridge Company. Shrewsbury School also moved to Kingsland in this year, helping the area to establish itself as a wealthy Victorian suburb.

Bandstand

The bandstand was restored to its former glory in 2003 and officially opened for the 2004 Shrewsbury Flower Show. It provides an attractive venue for small musical events.

War Memorial

The Shropshire War Memorial is a Grade II Listed Building, designed by George Hubbard & Son and built between 1922-23. The figure, by A G Wyon consists of a granite plinth and columns carrying a canopy over a bronze statue of St Michael with vast wings wearing armour.

Children's Play Area and Splash Pool

Shrewsbury Town Council invested £375,000 in a new play park at the existing children's site in the Quarry and the revamp has transformed the facilities into Darwin's Islands of Adventure. The design incorporates traditional play equipment such as slides and swings, as well as fountains and water features which were built in place of the old paddling pool. The former paddling pool has been completely removed, along with a section of hedging to open up the area for the exciting new splash park.

Harley's Stone

The small boulder is said to be the anchor stone of the last surviving grazing allotment in the Quarry. This belonged to the Harley family. Livestock were tied to the stone by a leash of no more than 16 yards in length. These "circular" allotments once made use of "the entire herbage" ensuring that the grass was kept short throughout the year.

1st Light Infantry Association Memorial – St Chad's Bed, The Quarry

The Ballygawley bus bombing was a roadside bomb attack by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) on a bus carrying British soldiers in Northern Ireland. It occurred in the early hours of 20 August 1988 in the townland of Curr near Ballygawley, County Tyrone. The attack killed eight soldiers and wounded another 28 with many coming from Shrewsbury and Shropshire. It was the second-deadliest attack on the British Army in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, after the Warrenpoint ambush of 1979. In the wake of the bombing the British Army began ferrying its troops in and out of County Tyrone by helicopter.



PC425 Richard Gray – The Dingle

Pc Richard Gray was shot dead while attending the scene of a domestic argument in Shrewsbury on 6th May 2007. A former soldier who served with the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch in Northern Ireland, Germany, England, Scotland and Hong Kong, he had received five Police commendations for bravery. PC Gray - known to his colleagues as Ricky - was a popular figure in the force.



Did you know...

- The Dingle, known in the 14th Century as the wet quarry, was quarried for red sandstone, which could only be used for foundations of buildings due to its poor quality. The first recorded minutes for quarrying the stone in the Dingle was in 1585: "Agreed that the Quarry of Stone being in the Water Quarrell behind the walls shall be reserved for the sole use of the Corporation".
- Grazing of cattle in the Quarry continued up until the late 1800's, and the Dingle was used for watering the cattle.
- The creation of the Dingle was recorded on 15 January 1719 during the Mayoralty of Henry Jenks and by the Order of the Corporation.
- The Dingle pool was surrounded by eight large cobb trees; when the pool was cleaned out and enlarged in 1879 as part of the Corporation's improvements of the Quarry, all but one survived. In 1881, the Dingle was enlarged once the railings had been removed with cattle no longer allowed to graze in the Quarry.
- In 1776, the Corporation permitted inhabitants of Shrewsbury to dump their rubbish in the Dingle, to reduce dumping of rubbish into the Severn and also possibly to reduce the size of the Dingle.
- In the 18th Century, the Dingle was planted with horse chestnut and limes. It was described as a "fairy ring".
- The statue of Sabrina was offered to the town by the Earl of Bradford in 1879 and has had a number of locations within the Dingle until its present position at the far end of the pond.
- The Shoemakers' Arbour of 1679, with statues of Crispin and Crispian (patron saints of shoemakers) is a relic of the past and a reminder of the old Shrewsbury Show when the different Guilds built elaborate arbours with handsome stone entrances. Now a grotto, this is the only one that remains and was moved to the Dingle in 1880 when the site on Kingsland was sold to the school now known as Shrewsbury High School.
- The Dingle is sometimes known as Shrewsbury's Enchanted Garden and was originally created between 1875 and 1879, although the Dingle dates back several hundred years before that.
- The fountain is made from cast-iron and dates from around 1889. It was made by the Coalbrookdale Company and presented to the Quarry by the Independent Order of Oddfellows.
- Percy Thrower, a famous TV garden presenter, was in charge of the town's parks before he became famous and was partially responsible for the development of the Dingle.
- It is rumoured that the Dingle is haunted by a ghost, identified in the 1800's as Mrs Foxhall, who was burnt at the stake in 1647 for poisoning her husband.
- That over 30,000 blooms make up each seasonal technicolour display in the Dingle.
- Sabrina is the goddess of the River Severn in Brythonic mythology.
- The Quarry Park was formally designated as a public park in 1878. The Dingle, formerly a hard rock quarry in the centre of the park, was laid out at this time, with the lime avenues and the open views of the River Severn as the key framing features of the park.
- In 1897, the Clements memorial was relocated from the Railway Station Yard to the Dingle and removed and relocated in 1938 to the St Julian's entrance to the Quarry.
- The perimeter gates around the Quarry were erected in 1912.
- A new watering system was installed for the Dingle flower beds in 1996.