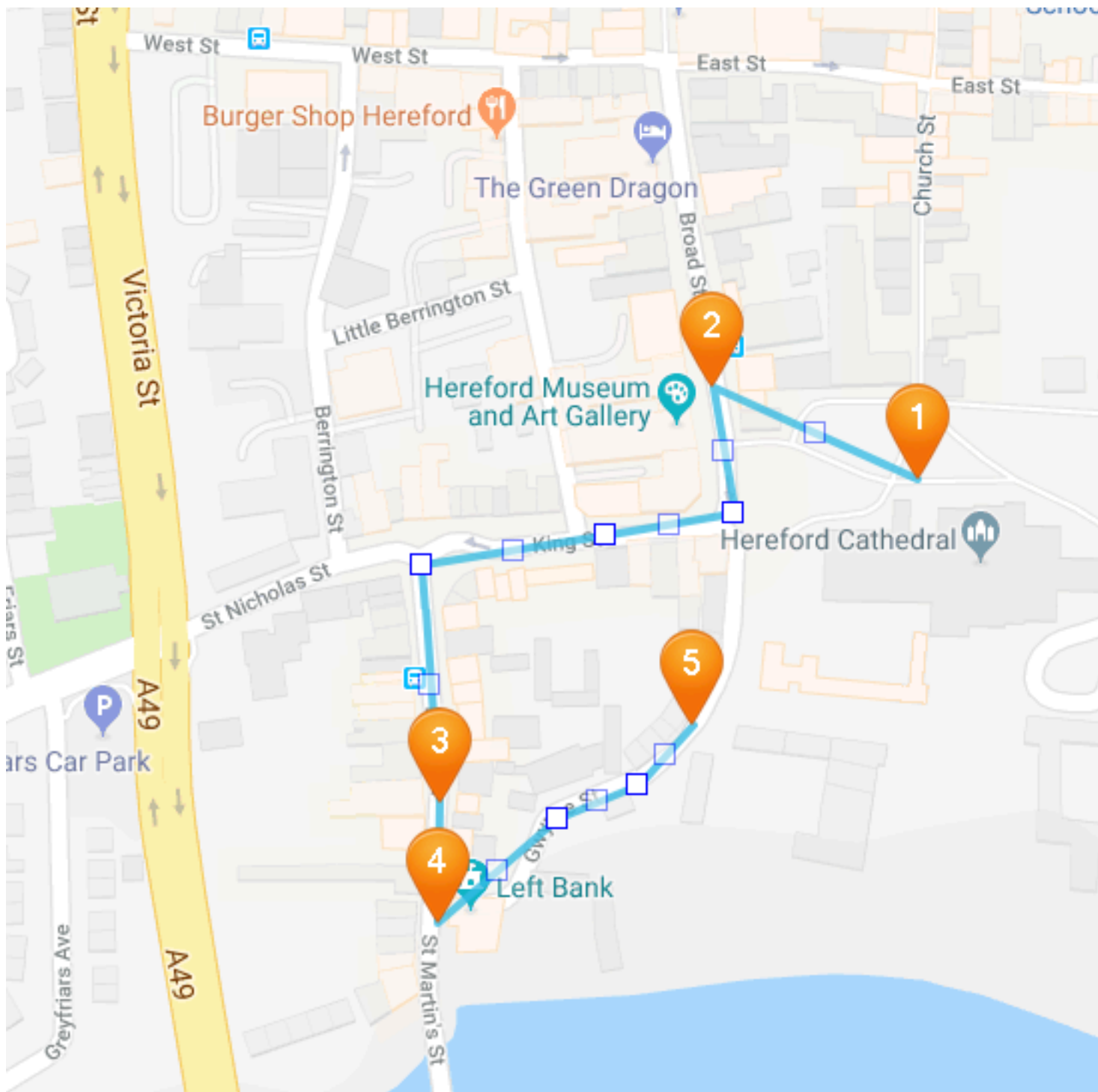


This project marks the start of a programme of seasonal walks which Hereford College of Arts wishes to explore. Part of the unique quality of Hereford is its status as a small, specialist arts college situated in a beautiful landscape that has been mostly untouched by industrialisation.

The walk intends to celebrate International Women's Day by sharing short narratives of some of the women whose stories wound through Herefordshire in some way; stories that are creative, militant, courageous and inspiring.

International Women's Day Walk:

This is a very short (0.8 km) walk which takes you in a loop through the area around Hereford Cathedral and Broad Street.



Mrs Davies, 'Ardent Suffragette' (1)

The suffrage movement in Herefordshire was slow to start in a conservative county, but four years later a further meeting was hailed by the press as the 'largest public meeting held in Herefordshire' and in 1879 the debating society voted in favour of women's suffrage (Crawford, 2006). In 1913, Mrs Davies, protesting that the fathers of illegitimate children should be held accountable for their actions made the papers as far afield as [Cheltenham](#) and [Chester](#).

Tensions in introducing and debating women's suffrage within a conservative county are clear from the following [article](#) which details how a 'special meditation' around the enfranchisement of women due to be held in Hereford Cathedral was cancelled due to local opposition. Mrs Davies was wife to Reverend G.H. Davies, assistant vicar choral at the Cathedral, suggesting perhaps that the Cathedral community had a more liberal attitude towards women's suffrage than many in the wider community?

WALK LOCATION: Cathedral Close (1)

To get to the next stop, walk North along Palace Yard to reach King Street, and take a slight right onto Broad Street. If you walk a short way down Broad Street just past Hereford Museum and Art Gallery you will reach the old site of the Kemble Theatre.

Sarah Siddons (2)

Sarah Siddons was one of the best-known actresses of the 18. She was famous for her tragic roles, such as Lady Macbeth. She entered the theatrical profession at a time when it was unusual for women to do so, and achieved celebrity status in London.

Although Sarah was born in Brecon, her story crosses Hereford several times. Her Father was theatre manager Roger Kemble, who was born in Hereford in 21-29 Church Street. Sarah Siddons performed at the first Kemble theatre on Broad Street, Hereford despite being a cultural icon in London.

WALK LOCATION: Kemble House, Broad Street (2)

To get to the next stop, walk south on Broad Street towards King Street, then turn right onto King Street, and left again on Bridge Street. where the Bridge Street Lecture Hall once stood.

Agnes and Rhoda Garrett (3)

Agnes Garrett and her cousin Rhoda Garrett sisters of the famous Suffragette Millicent Fawcett-Garrett embarked on a women's suffrage tour of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire together with the prominent suffragist Lillias Ashworth Hallett in 1872. They held a suffrage meeting on the 8th April in the Bridge St Lecture Hall, Hereford and two days later in Leominster, together with some local non-conformists.

The suffrage movement was slow to start in Herefordshire, but it is worth noting that women's suffrage in Herefordshire was not limited to the middle classes. Crawford (2006) states: *In 1912 the society demonstrated that it was not only interested in attracting the middle classes to the cause, holding open air-meetings for factory workers in Hereford and at Bulmer's Cider Works.*

WALK LOCATION: Bridge Street (3)

To get to the next stop, walk south on Bridge Street towards Gwynne Street. You will reach St Martin's Street, once home to a female artist whose work is admired internationally.

Alice Blanche Ellis & Edith Elizabeth Bull (4)

The Herefordshire Pomona was published by the WNFC and issued in parts between 1878 and 1884. It was written in response to the disappearance of local varieties of apples and pears and the need to conserve local cultivars.

Alice Blanche Ellis, recipient of the Gold medal from the Bloomsbury School of Art, a professional artist and Edith Elizabeth Bull, Dr Bull's daughter produced the watercolours which were reproduced as hand-coloured lithographs for the 600 books published.

To be involved in this project reflects the fact that drawing and painting – in watercolours - were two of the accomplishments valued and encouraged for women in the C19th. There were so many restrictions on the lives of women that this must have been a welcome opportunity to participate in a prestigious project. Today the Pomona is valued as an excellent reference book, but much of its appeal and information lie in the beautiful illustrations. [More information](#)

WALK LOCATION: St Martin's Street, Hereford (4)

To get to the next stop, walk North on St Martin's Street towards Wye Street, and turn right onto Gwynne Street.

Nell (Eleanor) Gwynne (5)

Reputed to have been born in Hereford, Nell Gwynne is famous for being one of the first female actresses in England and as one of the mistresses of Charles II. Although born in Hereford most of her life was spent in London, and her work in the theatre started by selling oranges to theatregoers – oranges being the C17th equivalent of popcorn. The reopening of theatres in the reign of Charles II following the end of the Protectorate also saw, for the first time, female actresses on the stage; previously female roles had been taken by boys and young men. Nell first appeared on the stage at the age of 14 and was a hit playing roles in light comedy. Samuel Pepys referred to her in his diaries as 'pretty witty Nell'. She only retired from the stage after the birth of her first son, the Duke of St. Albans but never returned to Hereford. However, another of her 'Royal' sons, Henry Beauclerk became Bishop of Hereford.

WALK LOCATION: Gwynne Street, Hereford, formerly Pipe Well Lane. HR4 9DP (5)

You have reached the end of this short walk - but more will follow. In the meantime, have a look at the stories [on our webpages](#) for more amazing women in Herefordshire.