



Summerstown182
GREAT ESCAPES

'CORRUGANZA!' HISTORY WALK

2.5 miles, (30-45 minutes)
Start at **ST MARY'S CHURCH, SUMMERSTOWN, SW17**

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Earlsfield

fit Cocktail Bar

Bean & Hop
Temporarily closed

The Earlsfield Practice

Leather Bottle
Temporarily closed

Garratt Park Allotments
Garratt Park

Arrow Electrical Lighting & Electrical Store

Malcolm Ryan Studios

Wimbledon Art Studios

Mirage Heating & Plumbing Supplies

Jordans Wood Floor Warehouse

National Grid Wimbledon

Tile Giant

Lidl

Wickes
Temporarily closed

Dees Ford Wimbledon

Manheim Auctions

Lambeth Cemetery

The Gate House

McChina

Noble Wheels

UK Young Autism Pr

The Spencer Lawn Tennis Club

Battersea Ironsides Sports Club
Temporarily closed

Brendoncare Gibson

Springfield Hospital

Share Gard
ebb Memor

Horton Halls

Streatham Cemetery

Vega

Mandys Irish Shop

Lambeth Crematorium

Tooting Leisure
Tempo

St George's Hospital

CORRUGANZA! (2.5 miles, 30-45 minutes)

Originally devised to help everybody through the lockdown, these great downloadable walks take in significant features of historical interest for you to enjoy in the **Tooting/Earlsfield/Wandsworth/Wimbledon** area. There are now multiple flavours of Summerstown182 'Great Escapes' to choose from, every one a winner! **Perfect for mind, body and spirit.**



This walk pays tribute to an event in 1908 which was an extremely important moment in the struggle for women's rights in the workplace. It centres around the Corruganza Works cardboard box factory on the banks of the River Wandle and the courageous strike action of a group of 44 women workers organised by one of the first prominent women in the trade union movement, Mary Macarthur. On a wet summer's day she famously lead the women to Earlsfield Station then via train to a much-publicised rally in Trafalgar Square. The women won their case when the factory relented and the advantage of collective strength was powerfully demonstrated.

1 START **ST MARY'S CHURCH, SUMMERSTOWN** - Home to the famous 'Summerstown182' [First World War memorial](#), the church was built by Godfrey Pinkerton in 1904 and features stained glass windows from the William Morris Works in Merton. The original church, located at the other end of Keble Street near Tesco Express had to be demolished due to subsidence in 1893. A reminder that this area is in the flood plain of the River Wandle.

2 The traffic can be bad here and the best crossing is via the central island on Wimbledon Road. Then proceed towards the [Wimbledon Stadium](#) development, crossing Blackshaw Road past Summerstown Mission and between two old pubs which are currently tile and flooring shops. This was the site of London's last greyhound stadium, soon to be home to AFC Wimbledon football club. The dog track was opened in 1928 by [Tallulah Bankhead](#) in front of 20,000 people. It was also an extremely important venue for the sport of [speedway](#).

3 Cross the road and divert into historic [Copper Mill Lane](#) - the original road connecting Wandsworth and Merton. Now submerged between car showrooms and the National Grid's Wimbledon Substation, you can still sense the past. At one time the [Copper Mill](#) at the end of the road had one of the largest mill wheels in Europe. In its later years until the 1950s it was a leather works.

4 Return to Plough Lane and cross the Wandle, turning immediately right onto the [Wandle Trail](#) and a rustic path which runs alongside the river for just over a mile. On your left is a housing development on the site of the old Plough Lane football ground, home for many years to the original [Wimbledon FC](#) whose fairytale rise from non-league to FA Cup winners in 1988 is unparalleled. Their return to the area after almost 30 years of exile is much anticipated.

5 A little further on beyond the Cappagh gravel works on the right hand side of the river is the site of Hugh Stevenson's box factory. Dating from at least 1776, this was once the [Garratt Print Works](#), producing textiles and garments. In 1850 it was noted as 'employing about a hundred persons who print annually 25,000 pieces or dresses'. From about 1890 it was a box-making enterprise, one of the largest employers in the area, known as the [Corruganza Works](#). In July 1908 Mr Stevenson cut the pay for a section of his workforce and provoked the strike action. This was a very brave and courageous act by a young, uneducated and unorganised workforce who stood to lose everything. The involvement of [Mary Macarthur](#) and the recently formed [National Federation of Women Workers](#) was crucial to their victory.

6 A long leafy section of the Wandle Trail allows a view over the river to the extensive Garratt Park allotments. Two permanent travellers' sites along this section, largely hidden from view and a legacy of the enduring gypsy/traveller heritage in this part of south London. The London Gypsies and Travellers organisation have created a very good [heritage mapping project](#) that people are encouraged to add their contributions to.

7 At Trewint Street, a bridge over the Wandle marks the location of another remarkable piece of industrial heritage, the [Garratt Mills](#). This site manufactured a variety of products in its 250 year life. At one time it accommodated the second largest supplier of gunpowder to the Royal Ordnance. It later produced snuff, oil, bone

meal and paper, before being largely destroyed by a fire in 1890. The mill owners traditionally lived in the large adjoining Garratt House. In its later years this was the home of ecclesiastical architect Edward Mountford who designed many town halls and the Old Bailey. There are current plans for [extensive re-development](#) of this area including a continuation of the path alongside the River Wandle.

8 Turn left into Summerley Street and follow the road as it bends round and meets Garratt Lane. Many houses at the Wandle end of the road were destroyed in WW2 bombing but at the other end it contains some of the finest old terraced houses in Earlsfield.

9 Turn left again into Garratt Lane and admire Earlsfield Station with its bright recently-painted bridge. It opened on 1 April 1884 and gave its name to the area. An Irish-born entrepreneur called [Robert Davis](#) sold land to the railway company on the assurance that they named it after his own property Earlsfield House on All Farthing Lane (this in turn was named after his mother's maiden name). Here on 22 August 1908 the Corruganza Boxmakers and Mary Macarthur set out with their placards and songs on a momentous journey to [Trafalgar Square](#).

10 Turn back and walk down Garratt Lane stopping to admire Mountford's St Andrew's Church and its beautiful garden. The church is also home to the outstanding Home Community Cafe and currently [Earlsfield Foodbank](#).

11 Opposite the church, the re-inforced basement of Mr Patel's newsagent (No 420) was the site of a series of highly unusual photographs of local residents sheltering from WW2 bombing. They are rare because of their domestic setting.

12 Cross Garratt Lane and go down Trewint Street, along which once ran a branch line of the [Surrey Iron Railway](#). Just before the bridge, turn left into Steerforth Street named after a character in Charles Dickens' 'David Copperfield'.

13 Follow the road into Weybourne Street. A very tall building at the end of this on your left is Earlsfield Police Station. Turn right into Garratt Park, laid out in 1906 on the site of Garratt Mills. The small oval track as you enter was the site of the very popular 'Cycle Speedway' sport which flourished in the 50s and 60s. President of the local club and regular visitor was musician Winifred Atwell.

14 Follow the path left behind the back of the Leather Bottle pub. A little way beyond this is the Burtop Estate, built on the site of a number of [terraced streets](#) which were demolished after the Wandle burst its banks in September 1968. Among them Turtle Road and Headworth Street. The playing field here was used by the box factory employees. Various [films of the staff](#) competing here on their sports days in the 1930s can be viewed online on the BFI website.

15 Exit the park through the gate in the fence to the left of the football pitch and turn right following a path behind the back of the Burtop Estate. To your right, the sprawling Riverside Industrial Estate now occupies the location of [the box factory](#). Some of its buildings still stand though much of the original works were destroyed by a fire in 1926. At its height over 2,000 local people worked here and though it changed hands in its later years, business carried on until the early 80s. St Martin's Way leads you onto picturesque-sounding Riverside Road. Turn left onto what was once a leafy country lane that generations of workers must have walked down on their way to the mill or the factory.

16 Across the road from the [Corner Pin pub](#) was a collection of prefabs, one of which was home to the Feld family whose son become one of Britain's biggest pop stars in the 1970s, [Marc Bolan](#). Turn right onto Summerstown and follow this ancient lane back towards Plough Lane before taking a left into Wimbledon Road and returning to St Mary's Church. This was once the centre of the tiny village of Summerstown, home to many families who worked in the local Wandle industries. As the towers of the Stadium development rise it will once again soon be repopulated.

FOR INFORMATION AND MORE WALKS: summerstown182.wordpress.com  [@summerstown182](https://twitter.com/summerstown182)

If you enjoy your walk, please consider making a donation to CriticalNHS, sustaining local business by keeping the St George's frontline staff fed www.criticalnhs.org