

Repton Rink

Roller skating has been popular in this country since 1870. The popularity of roller skating was at its height between 1908 and 1912, when it was known as 'rinking'. Repton's very own rink was a single storey wooden structure, measuring 80 feet by 40 feet, with a wooden floor and a corrugated iron roof. It was built opposite St Wystan's School, on the left side of the site now occupied by a row of town houses and hard standing at the front.

1911 Census, High Street, Repton. Number of rooms – 5.

					Birth Year Approx	Occupation	Where born
Annie Elizabeth	Turner	Head	Single	Female	62 1849	Shop Keeper China And Fancy Dealer Skating Rink Proprietress	Repton Derbyshire
Arthur Henry	Turner Senior	Brother	Married	Male	52 1859	Railway Clerk	Repton Derbyshire
Elizabeth Emma	Turner	Sister	Single	Female	49 1862	Maker Tailoress Skating Rink Proprietress	Repton Derbyshire
Annie Maria	Turner	Sister In Law	Married	Female	48 1863 -		Rolleston Staffordshire
Arthur Henry	Turner Junior	Nephew	Single	Male	15 1896	School	Repton Derbyshire

In 1911 the Turners lived in Jessamine Cottage; the first house in High Street. This was a tied property and was allocated to the person/persons responsible for the day-to-day running of the roller skating rink. The shop run by Annie Turner was to the left of the cottage, followed by Repton Rink. The policeman, William Pett, lived in the house beyond the rink. Annie, Arthur and Elizabeth were the children of Henry Turner, a tailor. The family had lived in High Street (on the opposite side of the street).

The Parish Magazine of January 1912 reported that a successful social gathering had been arranged at the rink, which was lent for the occasion by the Misses Turner. The purpose was to welcome the new Vicar and his wife. Tea was provided for the 341 people that had bought tickets.

In January 1915 the Derby Daily Telegraph stated that the rink hosted its fourth annual parish tea. About 400 people attended. After the entertainment Miss Turner played the piano for a dance. According to the newspaper report, "Belgian refugees had been invited to be present and separate dances were arranged for them to participate in, which they performed with marvellous rapidity and obvious enjoyment."

At Repton Petty Sessions in 1915 Misses A E and E E Turner applied for the renewal of a cinematograph licence at Repton Rink.

SALE OF WORK AT REPTON.
 The postponed annual sale of work for Home and Foreign Missions and "Our Day" was held at the Rink, Repton. In view of the fact that many patrons were unable to attend, the amount realised, viz., £102, was considered very good. The stalls showed an attractive array of plain and fancy goods, mostly useful, and a produce stall, and also refreshments were obtainable. Mrs. Fisher had some interesting knick-knacks from Palestine.

Derby Daily
 Telegraph, 11
 December
 1918.

In 1920 Captain Frazer was granted the cinematograph licence. The building was in frequent use and was the centre of community life.

Herbert William Whitehurst, a furniture broker from Derby, applied to take over the licence in 1922. Having spent £111 on fitting out the building, the cinema re-opened in 1923. After losing 30 shillings per week for a considerable time, he was declared bankrupt in 1926.

During this time the rink was still being used for other purposes, e.g. a whist drive in aid of St Dunstan's Mission Church, Derby, a public meeting under the auspices of the Repton branch of the Women Citizens' Association, church socials, St Wystan's annual 'Harvest Home' evenings, a lantern lecture on Chinese Medical Missions and a variety of fundraising dances. Miss Turner was still involved and played the piano at events. Local bands also provided music for dances, e.g. The Reps Dance Band and the Ideal Band.

In 1927 Allen & Farquhar, Auctioneers of Derby, used the premises to sell the New Inn, cottages and a croft at Park End, land known as Peasey Flatt and a house and shop in Boot Hill.

PARISH ROOM FOR REPTON.
 The following ladies organised a very successful dance in the Repton Rink on Wednesday evening (about 100 persons taking the floor) in aid of the proposed parish room, viz.: The Misses Battersby and Bell, Mesdames Matthews, McMicken, Spiller, Daniel, and R. Smith. The Swastika Band played from 8 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.

Derby Daily Telegraph, 13
 April 1928

The Turner sisters are buried in the same grave in St Wystan's Churchyard, Repton. The kerbstone is inscribed with:

In Loving Memory of
ANNIE ELIZABETH TURNER
At rest October 15 1934
Age 86
Also of ELIZABETH EMMA TURNER
At rest Nov. 11 1943
Aged 83 years

On Saturday, 19 February 1938, Mr Neale D Thomson re-opened the building as Repton Village Hall. The money to buy and pay for alterations to the building was made up of £100 left over from the 1935 Jubilee celebrations, public subscriptions, a donation and fundraising. Jessamine Cottage was still a property tied to the hall.



Derby Daily Telegraph, 21
February 1938

Repton Village Hall was destroyed by fire on Saturday, 14 April 1962. In response to a telephone call raising the alarm, a fire crew from Swadlincote was on the scene within seven minutes. The flames were 50 feet high and all that was left was a smoking shell. The local library of approximately 1,000 books that had been housed in the building were destroyed or made unusable. Fortunately the youth club that had been built about 18 months previously at the rear of the hall was unaffected by the fire. Firemen managed to save a tin box belonging to the scout and cub groups. It had contained some newly purchased equipment but on inspection it was discovered that the contents of the box had been destroyed.

It was a sad end to a fascinating building that had been an integral part of the community for nearly sixty years.