

WEATHER MEMORIES

First hand or vicarious experiences of unusual or extreme weather events play a powerful role in shaping memory; but bad weather does not necessarily equate with negative memory. Many weather memories are tinged with nostalgia and some events are commemorated with souvenir pamphlets or referred to as 'benchmarks' against which later events are compared.

"In a modern civilisation, the existence of a public memory of the weather is essential". (Gordon Manley, "The great winter of 1740", *Weather* 13 (1958): 11)



Weather memories are often connected to important milestones in life such as birthdays, anniversaries and holidays.

There are also links between weather memories and childhood experiences. Different generations have their own specific weather 'extremes', which become embedded within individual, familial and collective memory. Current weather, however, is often related to memories of previous events or to others' experiences from previous generations.

"Sunday 21 January 1838 – It is 24 years since we had so severe a frost as to freeze the Trent over that time. 1814 the first I believe continued 16 weeks. The Trent and Thames were then so frozen that a fair was held and oxen, sheep and pigs were roasted whole upon the latter river. The frost has now only continued about 12 days but with greater severity than is remembered with any person with whom I have conversed. Many thousands from Nottingham went to see the Trent today". (Diary of William Parsons, MS 489)

Popular experiences of weather shape people's sense of place, and memory can be strongly attached to key locations and landmarks, such as homes, local churches, parks and bridges, as well as celebrations, traditions or folklore.

What extremes of weather do you recall? How do you remember weather events? Are these memories linked to key places or life events?



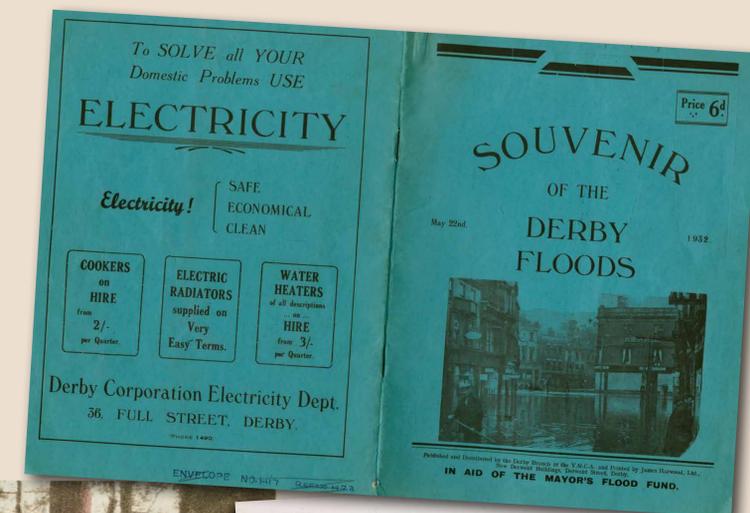
THE PINE WALK, BOURNEMOUTH.



Picture published by J. Welch & Sons, Portsmouth, c.1930. Bowley Collection of family postcards, MS/192/103.

Flood marks at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, 2016.

WEATHER EXTREMES
Making and breaking records in Nottinghamshire



AERIAL VIEW OF THE PRINCE OF WALES' FARM AT LENTON. NOTTM.

Souvenir OF THE GREAT FLOOD MAY 1932

THE GREATEST DELUGE FOR 40 YEARS

Souvenirs of the Nottingham and Derby floods, 1932. Papers of HR Potter, HRP/F/1/3/3. Trent River Authority Engineers Department Records, RE/DOP/H42/23.