

Alana a Dale

Alana was born in 1176 on what is now Bulwell Forest Golf Course – then a royal hunting ground – where her father Dale a Dale was a underwoodsman (he planted trees after others had been chopped down for buildings or firewood). The family later moved to oversee planting in Vernon Park in Basford and then Coppice Woods in St Anns.

When living in St Ann's, Alana was one of the original allotment holders at what is now the St Anns Allotments at Hungerhill and would be seen out with her lute (a type of medieval guitar) singing in the fields and lanes of Mapperley top. It is rumoured that both Sneinton Dale and Daleside Road in Sneinton are named after her. At age 17, she began working as a well attendant in Bilborough, which was on the site of what is now Strelley Asda.

Alana first met Robin Hood in Clifton where she helped Robin and Will Scarlet save the food that the Sheriff was trying to take from the villagers there. She was with Robin at the Golden Arrow competition at the Forest Rec and wrote one of her most famous songs about it. She also made famous Robin's fight with Little John and his escape from the Castle through her songs.

Alana, with her musical skill, was very popular in the taverns of Nottingham – particularly around the Castle and Brewhouse Yard – singing songs about Robin and many daring deeds to help the people and dumbfound the Sheriff. It was in the Old Market Square, where she would weekly sing her ballads of Robin Hood, before being chased off by the Sheriff's goons. Her singing and lute playing was also used as a distraction in Mia's ambushes of the Sheriff's wagons in the Meadows and Wilford, which is now Wilford tram bridge.

After Robin's death and subsequent pardon of all of Robin's companions after King John's death, she moved to Radford and began a music school and lutemakers, close to what is now the Marcus Garvey Centre and Radford Recreation Ground. She died in Nottingham in 1241 and it is thought that she is buried near to her lutemakers on a site which is now Radford-Lenton Library.