

THE NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF ROUNDHAY PARK
SPRING 2015



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Tour de Yorkshire

A Lost House and a Memorial to a Gamekeeper

Oakwood Day

Cross Country Race

Congratulations to Jon Vogler



CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER - MARCH 2015

It's going to be a very exciting spring for us.

Tropical World will be opening its doors again – with a much bigger conservatory/cafe, lovely new aquariums and a brand new, more efficient energy system. With all the changes, it's bound to bring in more visitors than ever.

While last year's hugely successful Tour de France whizzed up Harrogate Road, missing out the park, this year's Tour de Yorkshire will have the park as a focal point. We'll have races from the park in the morning AND THEN we'll have all the fun of the grand finale!

In addition to giving us all a golden opportunity to see the action up close and to enjoy the event, the Tour de Yorkshire also provides a great opportunity to showcase our wonderful park. Although the media will obviously be giving great coverage to the cycling event, the park itself, with all it has to offer, is also bound to be the focus of media attention. I'm sure we, as well as all the park staff, will be doing everything we can to make sure it is looking its very best. There is no doubt that on the back of all the coverage, visitor numbers are going to be at a record high during the coming months.

It will be wonderful for even more people to enjoy our park, and I hope very much that they will respect it as much as we do AND TAKE THEIR LITTER HOME with them and park sensibly!

As if the reopening of Tropical World and hosting the finale of the Tour de Yorkshire are not enough, we also have Oakwood Day taking place on Saturday 2 May, the same weekend as the Tour de Yorkshire! We will see the unveiling (by the Lord Mayor) of the refurbished Oakwood Clock which marks the entry way to our park, and the revitalised area surrounding it. As one of the first local organisations to make a donation to the Oakwood Clock restoration fund, FoRP will be listed on the clock tower itself and our name will also be preserved for posterity on one of the paving stones in the area around the clock. It will be wonderful to see this well known local landmark restored to its former grandeur – and Oakwood Day itself should be great fun too, so put it in your diary!

Have a great Easter.

Julia Wilson



A Regular Party in the Park

Our thanks go to Tom Cooper who provided this account of the March working party. Thanks Tom, and all the stalwarts of FoRP working parties

A FoRP working party meets on the second Saturday and fourth Thursday of every month, usually at the car park behind Roundhay Mansion. We are a mixed bunch, some are knowledgeable, some skilled, but most just extremely enthusiastic and we plan our tasks accordingly.

At the turn of the year John Roebuck and his Parks Department team, along with some hefty equipment, moved a huge tree stump into position on the left bank of the stream, by the head of the upper lake. Our task was to spread barrow loads of leaf mould on and around this stump and then to plant the site with ferns. This completes the Fernery which we have been working on for several years. If you go and look at it now you will see cowslips as well as the ferns.

The next task was to give the path that winds down the side of the ravine some TLC. We cleared the leaves that had built up during the autumn and carefully excavated a long muddy section revealing the hard surface below, making walking along the path less of a daunting experience.

Our most recent working parties have concentrated on the grassy area below the Castle Folly. We removed brambles, branches and stones from the border of this area and then rough mowed it. Hopefully the regular park mower can take over from here and keep the weeds at bay.

The daffodils that we planted in profusion last year are just coming through and you should be able to see them.....

British Empire Medal to honour Jon's services to the community

Kind thanks to the Yorkshire Evening Post who printed this photograph of Jon and for some of the text which is taken from the article about the award.



He also mentioned that the Royal Horticultural Society recently named Roundhay as the best public park in the country which is a great source of pride to all of us. He commented that the park has everything - splendid lakes, formal gardens, acres of woodland and Tropical World. And of course Jon gets a lot of pleasure out of the work he and the other volunteers do.

Jon moved to Roundhay from London 43 years ago. The working groups meet twice a month and among their achievements is the creation of the Friends Garden, which has drawn support from local businesses and primary schools to keep it looking at its best.

Thank you Jon! From all FoRP members

Jon Vogler will be no stranger to members of the Friends of Roundhay Park, but some of you may not know that in this year's New Year's Honours List Jon, 75, was awarded a British Empire Medal to honour his services to the community in Leeds. Jon has spent 16 years as a volunteer working to improve and maintain Roundhay Park.

As working parties leader for the Friends of Roundhay Park, Jon has planned, led and executed many major projects in the park with the help of others. Whilst Jon is delighted to have received this award he maintains that it is the support of many of you that has led to this. Without the willing help of all the volunteers the park would not be the beautiful place it is today, and the success it is with the public.

Jon said, "This award is not really individual recognition as there are dozens of volunteers who make the park what it is today."



Celebrating a job well done.

..... *"Beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze"* by the time you read this.

New volunteers to the working parties get a warm welcome, good company and the satisfaction of keeping the park beautiful. Why not join them on the second Saturday or the fourth Thursday in every month, normally meeting at 10am in the Mansion car park. If you would like the opportunity to get muddy, but rarely wet, and have lots of fun with us, e-mail Jon Vogler who organises the working parties, at Jon@vogler.demon.co.uk and he will keep you updated on plans for each day and any change of meeting point. He will add you to the working party e-mail group. There is no commitment on your part, you can just decide whether you would like to join us for that session.

Tom Cooper



Chris, Jon, Cecily, Martin and Tom at the Fernery



Photo: Michaela Lyons



Photo: Michaela Lyons

Cross Country Racing in Roundhay Park

Once again our park is 'fit for purpose'!



Photo: John Ferguson



Photo: John Ferguson

On Sunday 1 March, 700 runners braved the predicted gale force winds and heavy rain to take part in the final cross country race in the 2014/15 'PECO' league, with the wonderful backdrop of Roundhay Park as its host. The league originated in 1987 with sponsorship from a local sportswear company called Sport Direct (nothing to do with the major UK company with a similar name!). In 2007 they changed their name to the Print and Embroidery Company (PECO) and continued to sponsor the league. Luckily, on the day, the rain held off and the runners took in the sights of Soldiers Field, the Lakeside Cafe, the Folly, the Gorge, and finally back up the infamous Hill 60 with a surprisingly small amount of mud being spattered around!

The juniors aged 8 to 17 kicked off the morning, braving some very strong winds that nearly blew some of the smaller ones off their feet, to complete either a 1 or 2 mile course. The 2 mile course involved running up Hill 60 twice, a feat that even the adults didn't have to complete! There were some great performances, and it was lovely to see every one of them finish, no matter how fast they achieved it.

The 600 senior runners then gathered for the starting gun at 11am, and headed off into the wind for their 4.5 mile route. It's always inspiring to see the big group altogether and hear the pounding of feet, with the runners quickly stretching out into a very long line. Runners reported that they really enjoyed the opportunity to race in Roundhay Park and the variety in the course, although it was very challenging and hilly including the biggie just before the final sprint to the finish. The first runner back arrived in just over 25 minutes, with the last finishers coming in over the hour mark, which just goes to show that running is for all abilities, as it's all about the challenge you set yourself, as well as against each other.

The PECO league has been held for many years and is a series of 5 races in parks and fields around Leeds each winter, attended by members from most of the West Yorkshire running clubs. Each race is organised and hosted by two local clubs. This was the first time that Roundhay Park has been used for a PECO race, and also the first time that Chapel Allerton Runners or Roundhay Runners have organised a race, so there was a lot of pressure all round! Roundhay Park is known and loved across Leeds and beyond, and its use on Sunday mornings by many groups of people with different interests made the location much more challenging to organise than the other races.

Chris Lyons from Chapel Allerton Runners was the race organiser and deserves huge thanks from everyone involved. Despite his increasing stress levels, making many visits to recce the perfect route, holding discussions with the Park Manager, communicating with a whole host of park users to make sure that they were aware of the event, and ensuring runners and non-runners would be kept safe, the feedback has been that it was a brilliant community event! The 80 volunteers from both running clubs, plus their families and friends, also must be thanked for their support, manning everything from car parking and setting up, to first aid, registration, marshalling, publicity, and those essential portaloos for the pre-race nerves.

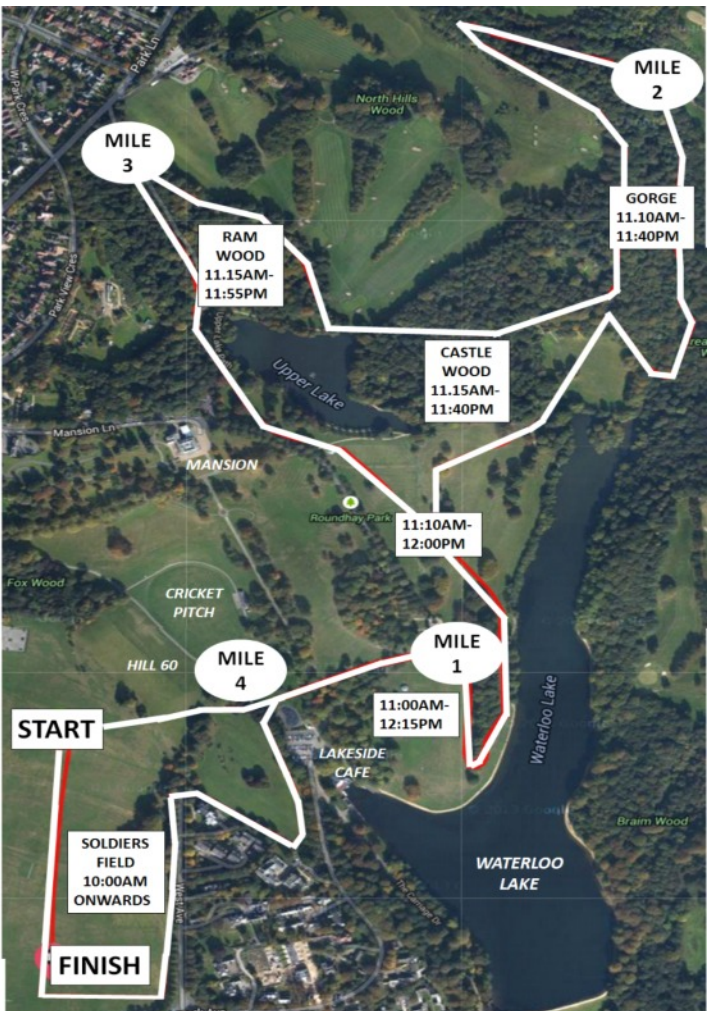




Photo: Michaela Lyons



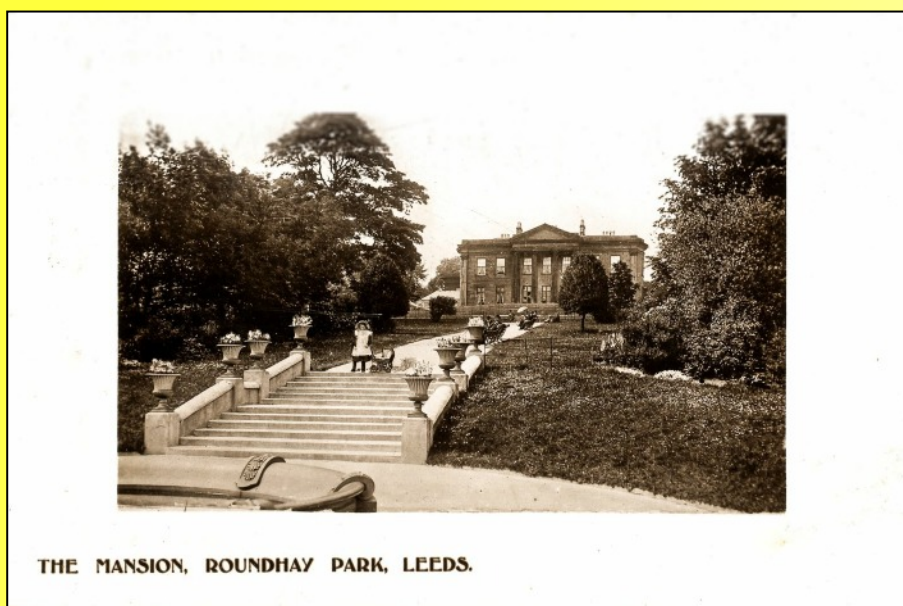
Photo: John Ferguson

After cheering everyone in to glory, the post-race social was held at the Chapel Allerton Runners' base at Gledhow Sports and Social Club on Gledhow Lane, where another team of hard-working volunteers dished up home-made soup for 300 people, plus the biggest selection of cakes and sandwiches ever seen at a PECO race. Chapel Allerton Runners and Roundhay Runners certainly upheld their reputations as enjoying cake just as much as running!

If you're interested in trying out a club then both Chapel Allerton Runners and Roundhay Runners would be delighted for you to run with them a few times before joining, to see if you like it. CAR trains on Mondays and Wednesdays, and RR on Thursdays: www.chapelallertonrunners.ning.com www.roundhayrunners.co.uk

CAR also has a Run England beginners group, with the next 8 week course starting on Wednesday 15 April at 6.30pm for £10. These sessions are led by Run England Leaders and vary depending on the abilities of those who attend, so you don't have to be able to run a particular distance. They can include a run/walk programme and a range of group exercises to make your introduction to running as fun as possible! The aim will be to work up to the 3 mile Roundhay Parkrun on Saturday 6 June, cheered on by the rest of the club who will take over all the volunteer roles that week. For more information contact Rebecca at chapelarunbeginners@gmail.com or on 07443 493 169.

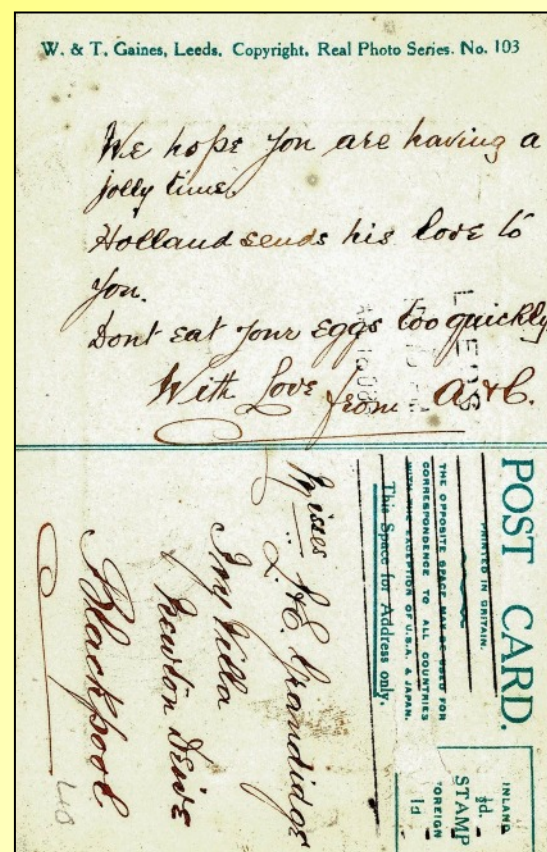
Lora Hughes
Chapel Allerton Runners



Postcard from the Park

Our thanks go to Cecily Jarvis for sending us this postcard, which was given to her by a friend who found it at Barnsley market. It is difficult to see a date, but could it be 1908? It certainly shows a wonderful picture of the Mansion, and a beautifully dressed little girl with her toy pram. In the foreground appears to be the edge of a fountain or stone bowl, which has long since been removed. Perhaps some members might remember what it was? The postcard is addressed to Misses L & E Grandidge (young sisters?), Ivy Villa, Newton Drive, Blackpool. The text – perfectly timed for Easter – seems to read:

"We hope you are having a jolly time. Holland(?) sends his love to you. Don't eat your eggs too quickly.



A Lost House and a Memorial to a Gamekeeper?

By Neville Hurworth



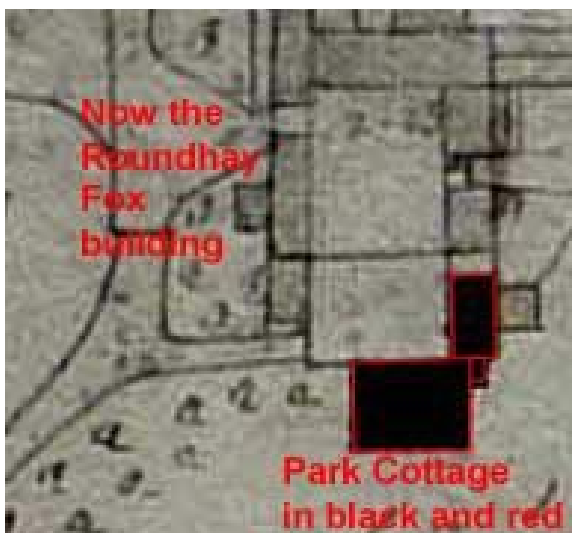
There are many beautiful trees in Roundhay Park but the one shown in my first photograph, which spreads its large beautiful branches over the tarmac path near the Roundhay Fox courtyard, is my favourite, not only because of its appearance but because it marks a historic spot.

Many of you will know of the unfortunate accident when Stephen Nicholson's gamekeeper was shot and fatally wounded by Stephen's nephew, William Nicholson Nicholson (WNN). Some would say this event took place outside the Mansion front door but they would be wrong. In fact the gamekeeper was at the front door of the house where WNN and his family were living. The squire, Stephen Nicholson, lived in the Mansion at this time while WNN was living in a house nearby called Park Cottage, the main part of which has disappeared. Just a part of it remains in the cottages in the corner of the courtyard of the Roundhay Fox. My second photograph shows these on the left hand side, and the tree I mentioned is on the right hand side casting the shadow.

WNN and members of his family are recorded as living at Park Cottage in the 1861 census. Among these was his sixteen year old son, 'scholar' William Gustavus Nicholson, who was later to become the head of the British Army in the years before WWI and Lord Nicholson of Roundhay.

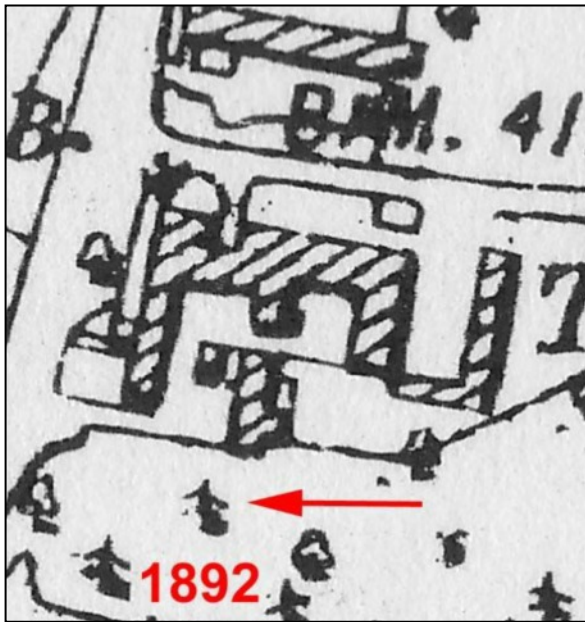


The location of Park Cottage is more clearly shown in an early map section of the Park, and the tree in the first photograph can also be seen on the Ordnance Survey map in 1892, see my diagrams. The tree must be close to the spot where the gamekeeper was shot in 1840. It seems that WNN demolished most of this house, where he and his family had been living for nearly thirty years, after he moved into the Mansion following the death of his uncle's widow, Sarah Nicholson, in 1862.



WNN died in 1868 and there is no mention of the house in Hepper's sale particulars in 1871 when two lots including the Park were bought by John Barran and his associates for the people of Leeds. It is also missing from a beautiful coloured map that accompanied these particulars and clearly absent from a very detailed map of 1873 in the lease agreement between the Corporation and the first tenant of the Mansion.

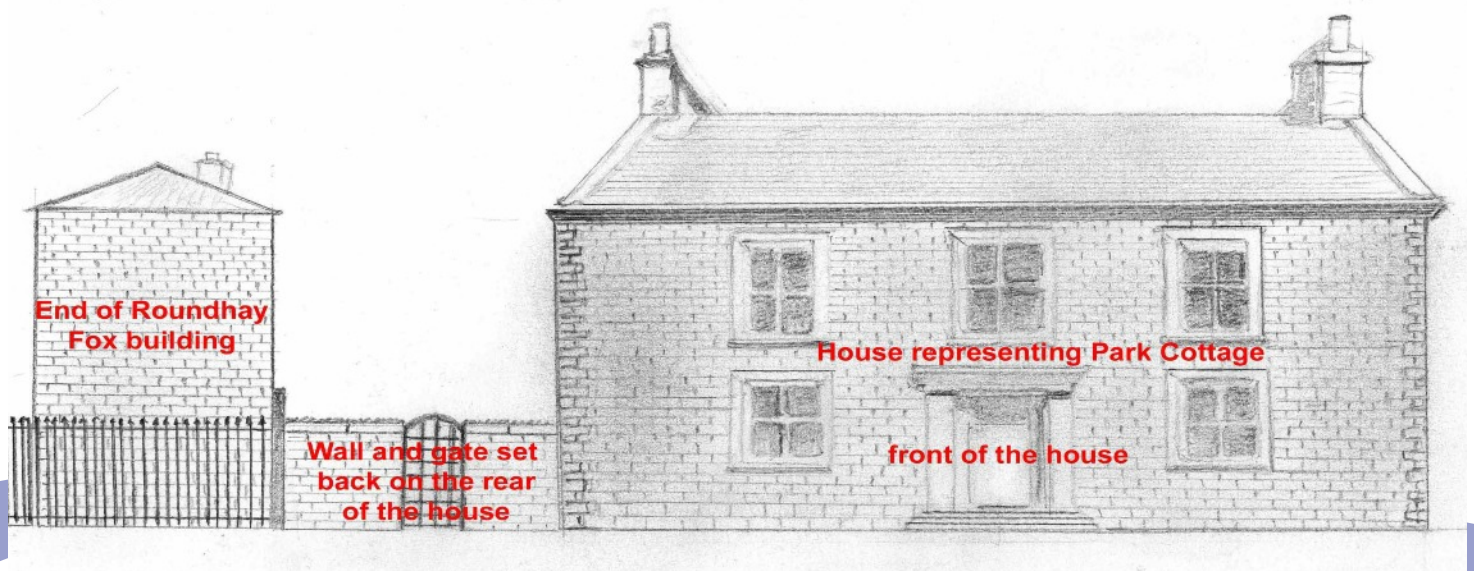
It is known that William was badly affected by the accident. Could it be that the main part of Park Cottage was demolished because it reminded him of that fatal moment when his nerve failed him and he pulled the trigger? Speculating further, I like to think he may have had the tree planted to mark the spot as a memorial to the gamekeeper.



Ordnance Survey map - 1892

The local newspapers covered the inquest of the shooting, giving excellent detailed accounts. There had been a spate of burglaries in the Roundhay area. Indeed, an attempt had been made some days earlier to force one of the window shutters on WNN's house. Unknown to WNN, Stephen Nicholson's gamekeeper was on watch and for some hours during the night he was sheltering in the front doorway of WNN's house. Mrs Nicholson repeatedly heard noises, later believed to have come from movement of the rifle in contact with the door, possibly as the gamekeeper drifted in and out of sleep and as he shifted about to get what comfort he could during his vigil. She awoke her husband and eventually, he agreed with her in thinking that someone was trying to break into the house. He summoned his groom whose room was in the attic.

The two of them left the house by the kitchen door at the back, into what is now the courtyard of the Roundhay Fox. They went through a gate in the wall and crept quietly round to the front of the house. WNN saw what he thought was a burglar in the doorway and he challenged him. Receiving no immediate reply, he fired his rifle and seeing the man raise his gun, he fired a second shot.



WNN said at the inquest that he had aimed low at the legs and ankles but the gamekeeper was in the sitting position. The first shot did the damage, badly wounding him in the abdomen. Charles George Thompson, gamekeeper to Stephen Nicholson, died the next day. He is buried in St John's Churchyard.

Today there is no gate in the Roundhay Fox courtyard wall but there is a discontinuity in the pattern of the stones, a clear vertical line, see my third photograph. Is this where the gate used to be, through which WNN and his groom went round to the front of the house? Whether this is the case or not, I am sure few of the customers enjoying the hospitality of the Roundhay Fox and the summer sunshine in the courtyard this year, will know they are only a few yards away from where a man lost his life and which tragic circumstance maybe cost us another significant building in the history of Roundhay.



Trees of Roundhay Park

Our thanks once again go to Cecily Jarvis for providing another great example from the Roundhay Park Tree Trail.

Have you done the Tree Trail yet?



Red Norway Maple
Acer platanoides

The Norway Maple is native to the rest of Europe and the Caucasus but not to Britain and Ireland. Records show it was introduced to Britain as early as 1683. From England, Norway Maple was taken to the USA in the early 20th century where, having escaped into the wild, it has become very invasive, out-competing the native sugar maples.

The specimen in Roundhay Park (alongside Mansion Lane) is an ornamental red-leaved form, possibly the variety 'Crimson King'. It is at its most attractive in spring. When the leaves first begin to open they really are crimson and are accompanied by acid yellow flowers so that in sunshine the whole tree seems to light up.

As they mature the leaves fade to a dark red colour not unlike those of copper beech but the tree flares again into lovely orange-brown autumn colour.

Cecily Jarvis



Photo from Wikipedia

It's another duck!

....And one which is not featured on our beautiful new 'Waterfowl of Roundhay Park' information board. It is the first time the editors have spotted this bird on Waterloo Lake (- but maybe other members have seen more?). On about 11 March we saw a solitary male Goldeneye in amongst the scrum of Mallards, Canada Geese and gulls by the Lakeside Cafe. It was much too dignified to join the scramble for crusts of bread being tossed into the water, but spent its time diving gracefully and spending extraordinary lengths of time under the water. A beautiful bird, and one of our less frequent sightings in the park. Apologies for the quality of the photo which was taken from Wikipedia as we did not have a camera at the time.

Coming soon

A new web site

We owe a big vote of thanks to John Ferguson for all his hard work in leading us towards achieving a new, improved website. John writes:

I am sure many of you will agree that the existing FoRP web site contains far too much text, too few photographs illustrating our wonderful park, and has very limited information to tempt people to visit the park or to join FoRP. Well, change is underway. One of our members with considerable experience in web design, Martin Kelly, is beavering away, and with input and, hopefully, helpful suggestions from a small sub-committee, we will soon have a site worthy of "the Friends of Britain's Best Public Park".

In addition to lots of photographs

of the park,
together with

a few videos, the site will include the facility to purchase membership of the Friends, and also to purchase items such as the Tree Trail and Geology Trail leaflets directly from your computer, iPad or mobile phone.

You will also find information on coming events, clubs and societies who use the park on a regular basis, FoRP working parties and lectures etc. In addition you will be able to identify the trustees and committee members from their photographs on the site. It is also planned to update the site regularly with the latest news, new photographs and linking to our Facebook page. So watch this space – or, more accurately, your computer screen.

John Ferguson



Work in progress - some draft pages from a possible design.....
But still gathering ideas and subject to further changes.....



Continued Work of the Litter Picking Regulars

Many thanks to all the litter picking regulars. There is always room for more. We meet about once a month but some have their own favourite patches which they do independently. If you are interested in joining this determined group please contact Bob Reid (randnreid@btinternet.com) who will be able to give you all the details about our next group session.



Tour de Yorkshire

Grand Finale in Roundhay Park

Following the huge success of the 'Grand Depart' in Yorkshire last year, a collaboration between Welcome to Yorkshire, the Amaury Sports Organisation (ASO) and British Cycling has set up the first ever 'Tour de Yorkshire'. This has already come to be recognised as a major international cycling event attracting many of the world's top teams and riders, including our own Bradley Wiggins. We are delighted that Roundhay Park has been chosen to be the finishing point for the race. This is a fantastic opportunity for the park, and surely there is no better place for the climax of this great event.

Stage 1 (Friday 1 May) will run from Bridlington to Scarborough taking in the glorious North Yorkshire coastline from Whitby to Scarborough. Stage 2 (Saturday 2 May) follows a circuit starting in Selby and finishing in York

Stage 3 (the final stage) of the Tour de Yorkshire will take place on Sunday 3 May. The 167km course will start in Wakefield, first travelling south to Barnsley, before heading to Holmfirth, Ripponden, Hebden Bridge, Oxenhope and through the cobbled

streets of Haworth. A steep climb at Goose Eye brings the riders towards Ilkley, with another famous climb up the Cow and Calf. There follows a sprint at Arthington, before what will surely be a spectacular finish in Roundhay Park. Congratulations to Welcome to Yorkshire, and the other organisers for their success in setting up the Tour de Yorkshire – a wonderful advert for the whole of Yorkshire, and for Roundhay Park and the city of Leeds. Is it possible the weather can be as beautiful as it was for the Grand Depart? Let's hope so.

You can find more details of the route for Stage 3 at <http://letouryorkshire.com/stage-3/map>

You can find out more details about the Tour de Yorkshire, and keep up to date with developments through:

Website: www.letouryorkshire.com

Twitter: [@LeTourYorkshire](https://twitter.com/LeTourYorkshire) #TdY

Facebook: [Facebook.com/LeTourYorkshire](https://www.facebook.com/LeTourYorkshire)

So it's time to dust off that bike in the shed, get some air in the tyres and be ready to join in the party!

The logo for the Tour de Yorkshire, featuring the text 'Tour de Yorkshire' in white and yellow on a blue background, with a stylized yellow and blue graphic element.

Photo courtesy of Welcome to Yorkshire

OAKWOOD *day* 2015

Oakwood Day – The Return of Oakwood Clock

At the beginning of May, Oakwood Day 2015 will celebrate the return of the newly restored Oakwood Clock to its pride of place as the gateway to Roundhay Park in north Leeds.

For the past two years, many local residents and organisations have been working to save the Oakwood Clock, and fundraising to ensure that the clock will be present for future generations to enjoy. The Heritage Lottery Fund as well as generous donations from Marilyn and Graham Stowe and many local residents have helped to raise the funds for the restoration of the clock.

Oakwood Day will be held on May 2nd 2015 from 12pm to 9pm on the area surrounding the clock and will commemorate the restoration of the clock and celebrate all things Oakwood.

OTRA (Oakwood Traders and Residents Association) will be organising the Oakwood Day event and the Lord Mayor will be officially unveiling the Oakwood Clock at 1.30pm. There will be music to rock around the clock from local musicians as well as local artisan stalls, food stalls and you will get the chance to have your photo taken in the Oakwood Clock photobooth. There will be a wide variety of activities for children including face painting. 'Preston' of Oakwood will provide a bar. Visitors to the day will also be able to leave their memories of the clock and the day in a visitors' book. A time capsule will be buried at the base of the Oakwood Clock by the first chair of OTRA, Roger Williams and will contain contributions from local schools and residents, not to be reopened until 2112. Engraved paving slabs bought by local residents as part of the fundraising effort will also be unveiled. There will be an open air cinema 'experience' in the evening for locals to also enjoy.

To find out more about what is happening at the Oakwood Clock and on Oakwood Day go to the <http://loveoakwood.co.uk> webpage.

Contact details for more information: alexiskeech@hotmail.com or 07968 129131
Alexis Keech

Oakwood marks the entry way to our Park and on Oakwood Day (May 2nd) when the renovated Oakwood Clock will be revealed, a new history trail will be launched by OTRA. Here is the first glimpse of it. Hope you enjoy this little trip around the lovely area which is so close to our park. Thanks to Tony Quinn. www.imagesofleeds.com. More on Facebook!



1. Oakwood Trail:
Start the walk at
the Clock Tower at
Oakwood.



2. Blue Plaque

There is a blue plaque across the road on the estate agent's building related to the clock (it states that the clock was moved to Oakwood in 1912, but other sources date this as 1913). The estate agent's building itself has a bit of a past and previously, from 1962 to 1991, it was a branch of Lloyds bank. Before that it was the original Oakwood Post Office.



3. Semi - detached stone built houses

Head down the hill with your back to the park. Cross Gledhow Lane with care. See the two stone built semi detached houses in front of you. They were probably built at the same time as Woodlands, the large house at the top of the hill on your right, at the corner of Gledhow Lane and Old Park Road (late 18th century).



Tour de Yorkshire

STAGE 3 OF THE TOUR DE YORKSHIRE
WILL TAKE PLACE ON MAY 3rd 2015



Tropical World Leeds.

TROPICAL WORLD RE-OPENS ON TUESDAY
MARCH 24th 2015 FOLLOWING EXTENSIVE
REFURBISHMENT

Annual General Meeting

The AGM for the Friends of Roundhay Park will take place on
Wednesday 10 June 2015 at 7pm in the Education Room at the
Mansion, Roundhay Park. All members welcome!

Space needed for
Address labels

Please note that photographs are normally reproduced here with the permission of those concerned. However, on some occasions photographs are taken from FoRP archives of previous events.

Your contributions

We welcome your articles of up to 800 words accompanied by photographs wherever possible. Copy due date for the next publication 1st July 2015

We also welcome your bite sized items. Please send contributions to editor@forp.co.uk