

WHAT'S INSIDE:



River of Stone - read about the Friends' Garden latest project



Sporting history in the making as Yorkshire launched its first ever Tour de Yorkshire



New lease of life. Clock back where it belongs.

PRESIDENT: MARJORIE ZIFF MBE

CHAIRPERSON: JULIA WILSON

THE Newsletter

Friends of Roundhay Park

SUMMER 2015

ALSO

The Shooting in Roundhay Park, May 1840

Leeds Walking Festival

PLUS

Regular features and events in the Park

Friends of Roundhay Park, PO Box 129, Leeds LS8 1WY website: www.forp.org Email: news@forp.org

Emails to the Editors: editor@forp.org

Thank you to Cecily Jarvis and Tom Cooper for providing this article, and to all the volunteers who have worked on the Friends' Garden to achieve a clever solution to a tricky problem.

River of Stone - Friends' Garden



The Mud

With the water level in Canal Gardens dropping because of a mysterious leak, the water in the Friends' Garden wasn't being topped up. Eventually the pond there dried out entirely and left a very unattractive patch of deep black mud. Investigations into the leak have been carried out, but because of the costs involved, it is unlikely that repair or renovation of the canal will happen for some time.

Much discussion followed on how FoRP could best tackle the "pond" in Friends' Garden. We needed an attractive feature which would fit sympathetically into the existing nature of the garden. Many ideas were considered and finally, with advice from John Roebuck, Estate Manager for the park, the working party committee and Friends' Garden group settled on creating an area of river cobbles.

Jon Vogler has been the driving force behind this project and thanks go to Jon and his enthusiastic Thursday working party members, together with volunteers from Lloyds Banking Group for all their hard work in constructing the new "river of stone". Unsurprisingly none of the FoRP volunteers were looking forward to the digging out phase, and we are especially grateful to the Lloyds Banking Group volunteers for taking on much of the heavy work in this muddy challenge. *They came – They dug – They cobbled.*

Now if you look at the Friends' garden, you will see a pond after heavy rain. Otherwise you can meditate by looking at a Japanese-style pebble stream. Whatever the weather, it looks beautiful.



Digging out



The finished job



With water

CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER AUGUST 2015

It was in my first year as chairperson (5 years ago) that we produced our first FoRP Calendar. You may recall that FoRP had very little money at the time and so we financed its production by borrowing £100 from each of 13 FoRP members who had faith in the project and we also raised £700 in sponsorship. I'm happy to say that we are now in a much healthier financial position (partly as a result of the calendar venture) and **we now have a wonderful 2016 calendar available for purchase**. It is packed with lovely pictures of the park and makes the ideal gift – though you can also treat yourself to one too! You can place orders on our new FoRP website www.forp.org and calendars will also be on sale at the October Farmers Market, through our usual outlets, and from David Binns by email (news@forp.org) or telephone (0113 2932893).

Around the same time that we were producing our first FoRP calendar, one of our older members (Dr. Donald Nicholson), happened to mention at one of our meetings that because trees in the park nowadays are not labelled, people – and especially children – no longer know the names of the different trees. Donald's comment influenced Cecily Jarvis to produce our Tree Trail booklet which not only identifies the different trees in the area between the main park gate and the Mansion, but also gives some detail about each of them. The Tree Trail

booklet has proved very popular with both adults and children. To support the Tree Trail and further enhance the experience of park visitors we have, thanks to the work of John Ferguson, now installed two new interpretation boards – one at each end of the Tree Trail walk. If you've not seen them already, go and have a look. They feature a little creature who is designed to capture the interest of our younger visitors! I think you will agree that they look great and provide enough information to spark interest in the beautiful and unusual trees we have in this area of the park.

In July we were again visited by the Britain in Bloom judges who met with several FoRP Members and heard about some of the work we do in the park to support park staff. They also visited Oakwood Clock, which is technically within the park, where they met representatives of OTRA and the REAP Gardening Group who designed and look after the beautiful edible bed. They were very impressed by what they saw and heard and I'm hoping that once again our hard work will be rewarded. The results are not available until October so keep your fingers crossed for us. I hope you've had a wonderful summer.

Julia Wilson

On the Tree Trail - The Fern-Leaved Beech

(Fagus sylvatica 'Asplenifolia')

Thanks once again to Cecily Jarvis for helping to educate us all about some of the wonderful trees in the park. This is certainly a new one for the editors – maybe for you too?

This tree is one of the many variants of our native common beech. The leaves are finely cut and feathery, quite unlike the common beech. The fern-leaved beech is actually a "chimaera" which is a plant originating from the fusion of genetic material from two species. The core of the tree is the common beech contained within the "skin" of the fern-leaved type. The "skin" is just one cell in thickness. Chimaera may not be genetically very stable and if the tree is damaged, the new growth often reverts to the core type, in this case common beech. You can see where this has happened on our tree in the park. Amongst the feathery leaves are areas of oval shaped beech leaves.

Cecily Jarvis





Tour de Yorkshire 1-3 May 2015

Roundhay Park provided a wonderful location for the final day finish and climax of the 3-day Tour de Yorkshire cycle race (1-3 May). The whole event was a huge success with over a million people turning out to watch some part of the race, and television viewers tuning in from more than 150 countries world-wide. The 3rd stage (167km) on Sunday 3 May finished in Princes Avenue by the main entrance to Roundhay Park, and large crowds gathered to watch the riders approach along Wetherby Road, and sweep round the corner past the magnificently restored Oakwood Clock, gleaming in the afternoon sunshine, before sprinting to the finish line.

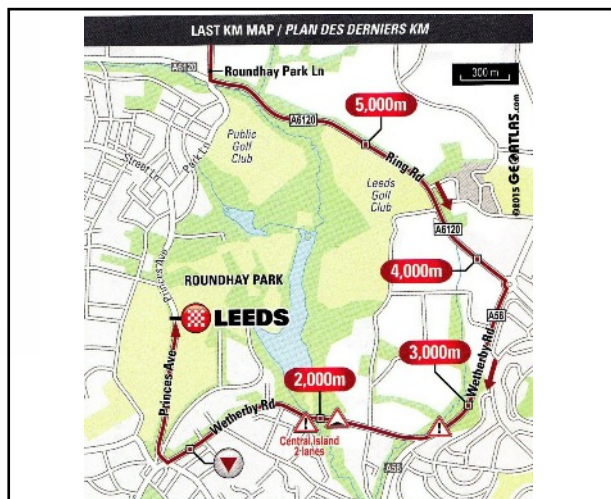


Photo: John Ferguson

Still smiling - Amateur riders approach the finish

The winner of the 3rd stage was the Belgian rider Ben Hermans. The overall winner of the Tour was the Norwegian, Lars Petter Nordhaug.



Photo: John Ferguson

The Professionals - Sprint finish

There was a real carnival atmosphere at the park, and a spirit of celebration following on from Oakwood Day on the Saturday. Many amateur riders took part in the 'Sportive' race, riding all or part of the course ahead of the professionals. The amateurs showed their dedication, being much less fortunate with the weather and having to ride much of the time in pouring rain – a truly impressive effort. It was great to see the sun come out later, showing the park in all its glory for the grand finale.



Photo courtesy of TV Calendar News

Ben Hermans winning Stage 3



OAKWOOD day 2015

Oakwood Day held at the beginning of May was a celebration of 'all things Oakwood' and the return of the iconic mini Big Ben of Oakwood, the Oakwood Clock. After nearly three years of fundraising from grants, Heritage Lottery Fund and the generous donations of many local residents, enough money was raised to restore the clock to its former glory.

Oakwood Day unveiled the clock to an excited community with music, food, beer and a giant screen. There was the unveiling of the local self guided historical walk around Oakwood. The oral history group showed off their work in collecting memories of Oakwood and Roundhay. A time capsule was buried at the base of the Oakwood Clock by the first chair of OTRA, Roger Williams, containing contributions from local schools and residents. The capsule is not to be reopened until 2112. Engraved paving slabs bought by local residents were also unveiled



Paving stones - to be unveiled

ceremoniously by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant. There was an open air cinema with Alice in Wonderland being shown to a very attentive young audience as well as a preview of the film relating to the restoration of the clock and the process of fundraising. One of the raised beds (the 'edible bed') is maintained by a local green group, Roundhay Environmental Action

Project, who will plant and grow vegetables, available for anyone to pick and eat. Oakwood Day was well attended with over 2000 people coming to see the unveiling.

The Oakwood Clock was designed to be located in Leeds covered market. However, it has been located outside at Oakwood since 1912. The British weather took its toll on the structure of the clock and its tower, leading to the deterioration of the cast iron. Structural analysis showed that within a few years the decay would cause this iconic and

historic clock tower to be dangerous and would have required its complete removal. In order to prevent this happening a concerned local group OTRA (Oakwood Traders and Residents Association) was formed with the purpose of rescuing this historical clock tower and working



The edible bed - early growth

to create a community around Oakwood. (You can find a fascinating diary, with many photographs showing the stages in the restoration of the clock on the OTRA Love Oakwood website at: <http://loveoakwood.co.uk/news-of-oakwood-clock/>).

The continued support of the Oakwood and Roundhay community has led to the renovation of the Oakwood Clock and is helping to rejuvenate the area. We look forward to more events.

Alexis Keech

In our Spring newsletter, Neville Hurworth provided a fascinating account of the tragic shooting of the gamekeeper of the Nicholson estate in what is now Roundhay Park. We are grateful to Neville for the following further information about this event, the subsequent inquest and some of the key people involved.

The Shooting in Roundhay Park, May 1840.

By Neville Hurworth

In the last FoRP Newsletter I wrote about the shooting of a gamekeeper in the Park by William Nicholson Nicholson (WNN), and also of the house where WNN lived, most of which was sadly demolished a long time ago. In May 1840 there had been several attempts to break into houses in the Roundhay area and WNN mistook the gamekeeper for a burglar. There are detailed accounts of the shooting in the local newspapers at the time, mostly verbatim reports of the inquest that was held only hours after the gamekeeper died. I found these fascinating and so here are a few more details of the same, which I hope readers will find interesting.

The twelve members of the jury were mainly gentlemen, merchants and tradesmen who lived locally in Roundhay and Seacroft. The foreman was John Goodman, a neighbour of the Nicholsons, who lived at Goodman House now known as 'Beechwood', off Elmete Lane. John later built Gledhow House on Gledhow Lane where he lived out the last few years of his life. Most of the jury would have been known to the Nicholsons and well-disposed towards them.

The main part of WNN's house was where the lower wall of the Roundhay Fox courtyard is situated and faced into the Park. After the shooting which took place at WNN's front door, the gamekeeper was carried into the kitchen at the back of the house and the groom, George Hudson, who had been with WNN during the shooting, was sent on

horseback into Leeds to fetch the family surgeon, Mr. Cass. William Reader Cass was WNN's brother-in-law, the husband of WNN's older sister, Elizabeth.

The noise so early in the morning, of men running about and shouting, woke up the Reverend Thomas Davis, who was the newly arrived incumbent of Roundhay St. John's Church. The vicarage on Wetherby Road had not yet been completed and according to the inquest account he was lodging with a farm hand, Benjamin Artkinson and his wife, 'near the [i.e. WNN's] house' probably in part of what is now the Roundhay Fox pub which would have contained some living quarters for the families of the married servants of the Nicholsons.

The Reverend Davis was the vicar of Roundhay St John's Church for nearly fifty years until his death in 1887 during which time he had a large family. One of his daughters, Harriet Albina Davis married Francis Martineau Lupton in 1880. These were great grandparents of Michael Francis Middleton who was born in Chapel Allerton, father of our future queen, Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge.

The Reverend Davis dressed immediately, ran to the back door of WNN's house and went into the kitchen where he found the gamekeeper Charles Thompson. Judging from the state of Charles' wounds in the abdomen he saw that Thompson was unlikely to survive. He prayed with him and also took down a statement from him of what had happened.

In the meantime WNN went over to Horsforth Hall (a part of which still exists in the park at Horsforth) and brought back with him, his fellow magistrate and great friend of the

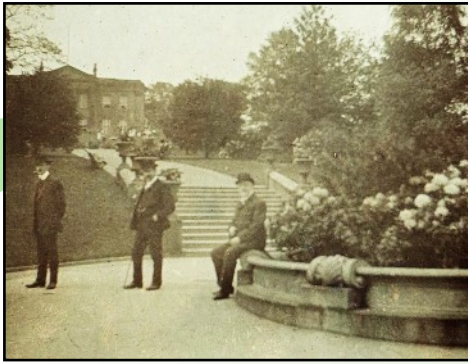
Nicholson family, the Reverend James Armitage Rhodes. Certainly this was a time to call in powerful friends, and Rhodes was indeed a public figure of some substance.

Only days earlier (17 May 1840) the Reverend Rhodes had written to a friend of the Nicholson family to say that he and his wife were looking to move from Horsforth 'to have a little place' ... 'in the neighbourhood of Chapeltown [Chapel Allerton] or Roundhay.' A few years later, they moved into a house that WNN's wife's father, Abram Rhodes, had built and lived in for a while. It later became known as Oakwood House, - as it is still called today, now part of Sabourn Court, the BUPA home for elderly residents on Oakwood Lane.

In his role as a magistrate, Rhodes also took an official statement from the gamekeeper, which was read out at the inquest. He brought with him details of a similar case in which the master of a house was exonerated of blame when he had run a rapier through a friend of a servant whom he too thought was a burglar.

Mr. Cass treated the unfortunate gamekeeper to leeches, and poultices and bled a pint of blood from him but hours later, Charles George Thompson, gamekeeper to Stephen Nicholson of Roundhay Park, succumbed to his injuries and died.

At the inquest, the Reverend Davis thought it his duty to say



Postcard from the Park

In the last newsletter, we featured a postcard with a photograph looking up towards the Mansion, with the edge of what looked like a large stone

bowl visible in the foreground. This structure has been gone for many years, and we asked if any FoRP members knew anything about it. We might have guessed (FoRP members being an endless source of local knowledge) we would soon find an answer. Our thanks go to Jonathan Brown who sent us these postcard pictures from different times – taken from his own huge collection of postcards of the park.

Jonathan says that *"In Victorian times it appears to have contained flowers but by 1905 a fountain was in situ. By 1937 The avenue of urns was removed and two statues on plinths overlooked the fountain."*

The message on the back of one card dated January 29 1908 addressed to a Miss Townend, "The Mansions", Roundhay Park reads *"Very sorry, shall not be able to manage the Park tomorrow, have got the*



gout. I went to see George on Saturday, then stopped in the City. I have been worse ever since". Oh dear! Was it George or the city of Leeds that brought on the gout, we wonder?



that Charles Thompson appeared to be 'in liquor' but not intoxicated. Mr Davis said this would explain why Thompson did not move away from the Nicholson's front door, when, at one point, he heard Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson talking inside the house, and indeed why he was there in the first place, on their front steps without WNN's foreknowledge or permission. Davis was quite sure that Mr. WNN would not have wanted him to be there all this time.

It came out too, according to the surgeon Mr Cass, that the deceased had told him his last meal was a supper of mutton and four 'horns' (about two pints) of ale. The Coroner agreed that the gamekeeper's behaviour

suggested he may have been affected by drink but he could not see how Thompson's sobriety or otherwise could materially affect the jury's verdict. Nevertheless, James Tuke, another gamekeeper, was summoned to give evidence on this point. Tuke had seen Thompson some hours before the shooting and he said that Thompson was then 'as sober as any man he had ever seen.'

According to his statements, Charles Thompson was sure WNN would not have meant to hurt him, had he known him and he absolved him completely of any blame for the shooting.

It was getting late but the jury still deliberated a further hour and a half before giving their verdict. Although they described Thompson as being 'improperly' positioned at WNN's front door, they did not speculate about his state of sobriety. It had been a tragic accident and nothing more.

The Reverend James Armitage Rhodes concluded by referring to 'the necessity of the most extreme caution in the use of fire arms.'

It was reported that WNN comforted the dying man by saying his family would 'never want'. Mrs. Thompson lived out her later years with her youngest daughter in the Nicholson almshouses near the Church and vicarage on Wetherby Road.

Leeds Walking Festival

Our thanks go to Lynda Kitching for this article on the Leeds Walking Festival which ran from 31 May to 7 June. At the time of going to press more information is still available at www.walkleeds.com. What better place could there be to start the festival than Roundhay Park – of course!

Despite a forecast for rain all day, around 60 people, young and not-so-young, gathered on Sunday 31 May at the bandstand in Roundhay Park for the launch of Leeds Walking Festival 2015. The Lord Mayor, Cllr Judith Chapman, spoke briefly to welcome everyone and give assurance that the council recognises the benefits of walking and is working hard to promote this activity. Janet Street-Porter did the honours, encouraging us to do more walking and to get young people interested too. She knows the area well, having a house just beyond Pateley Bridge for many years, and has walked in and around Leeds over the years. She praised the Ramblers and Leeds City Council for organising the week-long series of walks and linked activities.

With Janet leading the way, we then set off on a 2-mile stroll

around the top lake and

into the woods, past the 'sham castle' and through the Gorge, emerging at the top of Waterloo Lake, then back up to the bandstand. Did anyone try any of the other walks?

Lynda Kitching



Janet Street-Porter leads the walkers in Roundhay Park



Watch out..... just in case Giant Hogweed is

Although we have not heard of any confirmed sightings, John Roebuck has asked that FoRP members keep an eye out for any Giant Hogweed appearing in the park. This is a very nasty, invasive plant, which can reach well over 3 metres in height. It has large jagged leaves with serrated edges, thick hollow stems with bristles, and produces large flat-topped clusters of small white flowers. Giant Hogweed produces a very harmful sap causing skin to become photosensitive. Subsequent exposure to sunlight can result in severe blistering and scarring of the skin. In contact with the eyes, the sap can cause blindness.

Anyone who sees Giant Hogweed growing in the park should report this immediately to John Roebuck (John.Roebuck@leeds.gov.uk).



TENNIS COURTS - LET'S PLAY!

It is great to see the tennis courts fully refurbished and lots of people of all ages playing the game. In July, Gavin Sutcliffe (Yorkshire Regional Tennis Participation Manager) reported that Rob Ratcliffe has been recruited as Community Coach/Tennis Activator. Rob is taking a lead on the monthly 'Come and Try' sessions and coaching programmes. His

role is part funded by Leeds City Council and the LTA. By the end of July about 400 bookings had been taken for the 'Come and Try' sessions.

Leeds City Council Parks have given permission for weekly coaching programmes so Rob has started Mini Tennis Coaching sessions on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings. There is also a Women's only session being piloted on Tuesday evenings called 'Tennis Tuesdays'.

Through the LTA, free coaching is provided on the last Saturday of each month between 2 and 4 pm. In addition there are paid (£3) coaching sessions for 5-9 year olds on Tuesdays (16.45 to 17.30) and Saturdays from 10.00 to 10.45am. Sessions for those 10 years and older are held on Tuesdays from 17.30 to 18.15 and Saturdays 11.00 to 11.45am. For details

email robert.ratcliffe@lta.org.uk



ROUNDHAY PARK
 Leeds, Yorkshire, LS8 2ER
Mini Tennis & Junior Programme
Starts Week Commencing 06/07/2015

| Day | Age | Time | Cost |
|----------|---------------|--------------|------|
| Tuesday | 5-9 Year Olds | 16:45-17:30 | £3 |
| Tuesday | 10+ Year Olds | 17:30- 18:15 | £3 |
| Saturday | 5-9 Year Olds | 10:00- 10:45 | £3 |
| Saturday | 10+ Year Olds | 11:00- 11:45 | £3 |

For more information please contact Rob Ratcliffe via:
robert.ratcliffe@lta.org.uk

Book onto a session via:
www.playminitenis.com

Also in the Park - Heritage Day

Geology trail (A Heritage Open Day Event)

September 12 @ 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm | Free

Guided walks, led by the geologist, Bill Fraser, who created the trail. Walks start at the Mansion, by the cafe entrance, at 1.30 pm.

Why not join in – no previous knowledge of geology is assumed.

Allow 2 hours and please note paths may be muddy so sensible footwear is advisable.



One of the areas of interest on the trail

Roundhay Park - The Hidden History (A Heritage Open Day Event)

September 13 @ 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Heritage-open-day-ogo

Explore the lesser known areas of Roundhay Park. A leisurely walk led by a member of the Friends of Roundhay Park taking in the gazebo, fish pond and arboretum with information on the history from medieval hunting park to today's prizewinning park. Stout footwear advised as the paths are uneven. Not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchairs.

Start times 11.00am and 2.00pm (The walks will last approximately 2 hours)

**OUR NEW WEBSITE
 ADDRESS IS
www.forp.org.
 PLEASE VISIT US!**

A REGULAR PARTY IN THE PARK

Our thanks go to the regular FoRP working parties for their tireless efforts in improving the park. Tom Cooper has provided this update on more of their work.

During the spring and early summer the FORP working parties concentrated their efforts on the area around the beautifully restored and very colourful tennis courts. The work has involved cutting back the self sown tree saplings and clearing the undergrowth. We hope that this will make for better air-flow over the courts, helping them to dry out quicker after rain. Help in this task has been provided by volunteers from Lloyds Banking Group. It is great to see how much can be achieved by a large group of young and enthusiastic people.



An eyesore

Photo: Tom Cooper

Working on the Canal Gardens side of the park, drew our attention to the eyesore of the old toilet block. Our solution has been to plant a hedge around it. We used yew sapling, which will make a beautiful hedge, but it may only be younger FORP members will get to see the toilet block completely hidden. Who knows, by the time

the hedge is mature the toilet block may have fallen down.

Leeds City Council has a policy of developing wild flower areas to help bee numbers. There are two areas in the park that we have developed. The one just up the hill from the Lakeside Cafe produced a riot of daisies, dotted with brightly coloured violas. There were supposed to be red poppies in the mix somewhere, but despite sowing for a second time this spring, there was no sign of them. This is a great disappointment. Any ideas from readers on improving poppy germination and the wildflower meadow in general for next year will be greatly appreciated. To join the working parties, you can e-mail Jon Vogler at jon@vogler.co.uk. He will add you to the working party e-mail group and you would find out what we will be doing in each session (We meet 2nd



Photo: Tom Cooper

Planting Yew saplings

Saturday and 4th Thursday of each month.

We usually assemble at the carriage house behind the Roundhay Fox). There is no long term commitment and we would love to see you.

Tom Cooper

Our New Calendar will shortly be on sale.

The calendar for this year has now been proofed and is with the printers. Whilst we did not hold a competition for this year's photographs plenty of you, including many talented photographers from previous calendars submitted photos for consideration. The quality is as always very high, and the calendar is worth every penny. This year's calendar will retail at £6.99 and will make an excellent Christmas present. They can be found in all the usual outlets including City Stationers, With Love and many others. They can also be purchased at the Farmers Market in October.



Friends of Roundhay Park, Facebook pages

We are aware that some of you don't use Facebook or Tweet or use a smart phone. So you might have missed some recent announcements. So here in miniature are just a few recent notices.

Firstly we have had two new information boards installed in the "Pleasure Gardens", one at the entrance near the Mansion and



one at the entrance near the Roundhay Fox, each giving the layout of the Tree Trails. Further information is given in the Tree Trail Booklet (£2.00) available from Tropical World shop or www.forp.org.



Our park is going to play host to another amazing sporting event next year!!! Once more we'll be up there on the world sporting stage. General entries for next year's World Triathlon Series event in Leeds

went on sale at on Tuesday 18 August – and they're going to sell like hotcakes, say the organisers. Over 1,500 entries have already been sold to Home Nation members during a priority entry window, and more than 3,500 spots are now available to the general public across the beginner, sprint and Olympic distance events. The event will mark the final chance to see Britain's elite triathletes compete against their international rivals on home soil before they head off to the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. The point-to-point course begins with a swim in Roundhay Park, followed by a bike leg in and around Leeds city centre, finishing with a testing running course also in the city centre.

Also a big thank you to Roundhay Runners for joining our working party on the 8th August and doing such an amazing job.



OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FoRP Lecture Series

All lectures take place at the Education Centre next to the Mansion, Roundhay Park, on Tuesdays commencing at 7pm, priced at £3 for FoRP members and £5 for non-members.

September 15 2015 – "The Residential Estate called Roundhay Park". Helen Hodgart will provide an illustrated talk featuring early photographic images and extracts from estate agent's adverts from when the park was put up for sale in 1871.

November 17 2015 – "Cycling in Roundhay Park - 1871 to the present day"

Further lectures are being planned for 19 January and 15 March 2016 – details to be confirmed.

Heritage Open Days – Leeds Civic Trust and Leeds City Council are providing a range of free events (guided walks, talks and building tours) throughout the city from Thursday 10 to Sunday 13 September 2015. Two of these events will be in Roundhay Park – "A Walk Back in Time" on Saturday 12 September, and 'The Hidden History' a walk on Sunday 13 September.

For full details, go to www.heritageopendays.org.uk and/or look out for the leaflets now available.

FoRP Open Meeting - Wednesday 14th October 2015 at 7pm, Education Centre, the Mansion, Roundhay Park.

For information - The FoRP Action Plan Review for invited committee members will take place on Tuesday 6th October at 9 am onwards.

FAMILIES



ADDRESS LABEL

TRY TENNIS FOR FREE

Roundhay Park
Last Saturday of every month 2 - 4 pm

ADULTS

To book and find out more, go to
Lta.org.uk/gbtw



#Anyone For Tennis

