

## King's Park History

### History

68 acres of the King's Park was gifted to the city in 1930 by Sir John Mactaggart of the house builders Mactaggart and Mickel fame. Another 29.5 acres - being the former golf course - was gifted in 1934 by the Western Heritable Investment Co. Ltd.

Also gifted was Aikenhead House, situated in the centre of the park - the country residence of West India merchant John Gordon, after whom Gordon Street in the city centre is named. John Gordon's town house in the city centre was on the east side of Buchanan Street, now occupied by the Princes Square Shopping Mall.

The central block of Aikenhead House was designed by the architect David Hamilton and was built in 1806 for the West Indies merchant and prominent Glasgow Tory, John Gordon. The wings were also designed by Hamilton and were added in 1823.

The mansion was built on the site of a house originally built for James Hamilton, the first Earl of Abercorn. He was Provost of Glasgow at different times between 1614 and 1629 and died in 1633 having made his fortune as a merchant. In 1710 it became the home of Provost Hamilton's great-grandson James, twice Rector of the University of Glasgow. His son, also James, succeeded him and later sold the estate to Colin Rae of Little Govan. John Gordon died in 1828 and was succeeded by his son.

The legendary song "The Dairy Maids Of Hundred-Acre Hill", from Old Glasgow Street Songs etc, 1850 is held at the Mitchell Library. The song is a tribute to the fine features and qualities of the dairymaids who live on Hundred Acre Hill, an area in modern King's Park which is described by Hugh MacDonald in his book Rambles Round Glasgow (1854).

In 1930 the estate was gifted to Glasgow Corporation and opened to the public as King's Park. During the Second World War the park served as the Anti-Aircraft Head Quarters of the Royal Artillery, with a hutted encampment in the grounds. In 1986 developers converted Aitkenhead House into fourteen individual flats, the first time that a building within a Glasgow park had been adapted to private housing.