

Springburn Park History

History

Glasgow Corporation acquired the land for Springburn Park in 1892. At this time the land was indifferent agricultural land with the remains of an ironstone pit at one corner and an old quarry at the other.

- Sir James Reid of the Hyde Park Locomotive Works (1823-1894) lived nearby at Belmont House and contributed to the park's development.
 - A monument to Sir James was erected by public subscription in 1903
 - His sons contributed to the purchase of the lands of Cockmuir farm when the park was extended in 1900
- The Winter Gardens were built by Glasgow Corporation as a condition for accepting a £12,000 gift from Hugh Reid of the North British Locomotive Company to finance the construction of the nearby Springburn Public Halls.
 - The Winter Gardens were much loved by generations of Springburn residents for their displays of exotic plants and for the concerts and exhibitions held there
 - Classified as an A-Listed building, the Winter Gardens have remained derelict for the last 20 years due to major structural problems
 - At present the City Council is attempting to raise funds to restore this site to its former grandeur
- The existing Mosesfield House stands near the site of the old Mosesfield House, occupied from 1790 by William Moses a merchant who made his fortune from selling sedan chairs
 - The new Mosesfield House is a two storey ashlar house, built in 1838 by the renowned architect David Hamilton for a bookseller called James Duncan
 - It later became the Manse of one of Springburn's churches
 - As a member of the 'Mo-car' syndicate (effectively an early menage) George Johnston, the minister's son, built the first motor car ever produced in Scotland at Mosesfield yard in October 1895. With finance from Sir William Arroll, Arrol-Johnston motor cars were produced for the next 30 years
 - Mosesfield House was presented to the Corporation in 1904 by Hugh Reid of Belmont and the lower part of the house served as a museum until just before the second world war, after which it was converted for use as an old men's club, which is still functioning today

Outstanding Features

- Springburn Rockery
 - Springburn Park has one of Scotland's most beautiful rockeries. The recently refurbished rockery was previously the site of an old quarry and the Glasgow Corporation created the rockery following the purchase of the land in 1892. It is one of the few reminders that Springburn was once a mining and quarrying area. The

refurbishment was the result of substantial sums being allocated by The North Area Committee and Land Services and also with the assistance of the Friends of Springburn Park.

- Nature Trail
 - The nature trail in the park has recently been redeveloped with cairns and interpretation boards which will provide visitors with a direct informal, educational and recreational experience using the natural environment as a tool to illustrate a conservation message. The cairn at the start of the route gives information on the 1km trail, which is the home to a surprisingly diverse range of wildlife. Ponds, woodlands and meadows are all found within a relatively small area, making the north side of the park a great place to experience Glasgow's wildlife at first hand. The markers posts lead the visitors to stone cairns along the route where particular aspects of the environments will be interpreted. The trail is open 52 weeks of the year and has been designed for casual walkers and wheel chair users alike.

- Birch Avenue
 - 30 semi mature beech trees were planted on a grass plot adjacent to the Robert Reid statue by Land Services, with the assistance of the friends of Springburn Park and 130 primary one pupils from Albert, Balornock, Barmulloch and St Martha's primary schools. Alternating on either side of the path the 30 *Betula Pendula Dalecarlica* (Swedish Birch) and *Betula Nigra* (River Birch) were planted on the 7th March 2006. The avenue is marked with a plaque at the south west side of the avenue.

- Springburn Park is situated on the crown of Balgrayhill, one of the highest areas in the North of Glasgow. At it's peak you will be standing 364 feet above sea level and have impressive views of Ben Lomond, the Trossachs, the Kilpatrick, Campsie and Kilsyth Hills, and the hills of Argyllshire. If the weather is kind the peak of Goat Fell on the Isle of Arran can be seen.

- One of the most charming features of this rustic park is the Peace Garden dedicated to the late Lord Provost, Bob Innes which features beautifully laid out gardens and heather beds, with memorial seats, pergolas and a 'Peace Pole', donated by Japanese atomic bomb survivors.

- The North of the park has been designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The extensive woodland in the park attracts many birds such as robins, blue tits, chaffinches and wrens. There are two ponds where waterfowl live and breed and the City Council has recently created a third pond by naturalising a redundant boating pond. Herons are regularly sighted near these ponds. Mute swans, coots, moorhens, mallards, little grebe and tufted duck all nest in the islands. There are also less common visitors such as American Wigeon. A fourth pond can be found at the rockery.

- Foxes, squirrels, hedgehogs and rabbits are abundant and roe deer have been sighted in the park. There is a wildflower meadow along the North and West edges of Stobhill Pond, this features Ox-Eye daisy, Yarrow, Meadow Crane's Bill, Cuckoo Flower and Black Knapweed. There are literally dozens of aquatic plants, in particular Yellow Flag, Bottle Sedge and Bulrush.

- The Cockmuir Reservoirs, managed by Scottish Water, sit in the centre of the park. These are built on Cockmuir farmlands, once occupied by a family of Stewarts in the mid 19th century. Cockmuir farm buildings survived well into the 20th century and were sited near the present football pavilion. Although concealed from view, since the demolition of the landmark water

towers, these reservoirs retain a capacity of some 1,000,000 gallons and supply much of North Glasgow.

- There are several significant statues in the park, the Balgray Fountain by Doulton and the statue of Sir James Reid.
- The derelict Winter Gardens is a grade "A" listed building. There is a campaign by Springburn Winter Gardens Trust to bring the Winter Gardens into some use. Mosesfield House is also a listed building.