

## Alexandra Park History

### History

The Park takes its name from Princess Alexandra, the wife of the future King Edward VII, who officially opened the Park in 1870.

- The City Improvement Trustees purchased Alexandra Park in 1866 from Mr. Walter Stewart of Haghill under special powers conferred upon them by legislation. The grounds were acquired to provide a park and recreation ground for the north eastern section of the City.
- At the time of purchase the land was cold, barren and bleak with very few trees upon it.
- Between 1867 and 1868, during the great trade depression, several hundred unemployed and starving artisans and labourers were employed in the initial work of the formation of the park and the laying-out of the park.
- The Park initially extended from Monkland Canal to Cumbernauld Road, and was known as Wester Kenny-hill. It was principally an agricultural ground which had been held in the possession of the Stewart family for several generations.
- Mr Alexander Dennistoun, the proprietor of the adjoining estate of Golfhill, gifted five acres of land to the City Improvement Trustees. This ground was situated near the south-west corner adjacent to Alexandra Parade, which now forms the principal pedestrian entrance.
- Great difficulties were experienced initially with the desired plantings due to the thick impregnate industrial atmosphere. In general, they found that many of the evergreen trees and shrubs had great difficulty in establishing, coping and withstanding the winter and the atmospheric pollution. However, they found that the broad-leaved hollies, rhododendrons and acubas with stood this environment. Many of the deciduous trees excelled in this atmosphere and to this day form the main planting structure.

### Outstanding Features

- The A listed **Saracen Fountain** from 1901 was sculpted by David Watson Stevenson and the foundry was Walter Macfarlane & Co at their Saracen works in Possil. The 40 foot high / 38 foot basin cast-iron structure remains one of the most significant iron fountains in Europe. The 40 foot cast-iron Walter MacFarlane Saracen Fountain was gifted to the City after the 1901 International Exhibition and remained in Kelvingrove Park for 12 years after the exhibition. In 1914 Glasgow Corporation took the decision to re-site this magnificent piece of industrial architecture to its present location in the park.
- The **Cruikshank Drinking Fountain** with Cherub. This exquisite B listed cast iron fountain from 1880 is enclosed in a canopy consisting of an ornate dome raised on four slender stanchions. Moulds were recently taken from the Alexandra Park cherub to restore both the Stewart Memorial Fountain and the Aitken Memorial Fountain in Govan.